

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework Convention 2013
INTERPRETING TRADITIONS TODAY
October 6–8, 2013

INSTRUCTOR'S BIOS*

Ita Aber - Workshop #106 – Torah Mantles: A Talk & Demo of Curved Needle **North Jersey Chapter**

Ita is a founding member of the Pomegranate Guild. As a Jewish art historian, she explores work on Jewish designs and studies in the ancient tradition of *Spanier Arbeit* and on historical torah mantles. She has written books on Jewish fiber arts. Her works are found in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum, Jewish Museum, Yeshiva University Museum, and B'nai Israel in Milburn, NJ. She has taught and lectured throughout the U.S. on textile conservation, contemporary art, symbolism, needlework and Jewish art.

Rita C. Altman, EdD – Workshop #303 – Floral Ribbon Embroidery Atarah **Masorot Chapter**

Rita is a native Philadelphian having received her B.A. degree from Chestnut Hill College and her Master and Doctor of Education degrees from Temple University. She discovered counted cross-stitch and needlepoint as a young adult, and her passion for the former continued into adulthood. Her association with the Pomegranate Guild began with membership in the 1980s with the Delaware Valley Chapter. Rita is a founder of Masorot: Traditions, the Philadelphia Chapter, which began in 1987 and has been its President several times. She teaches creative Judaic needlework as “visual midrash” and has encouraged and guided many women in making and wearing tallitot and creating contemporary Judaic artifacts. Rita and Arlene Diane Spector, own the Judaic needlework company, *Avodat Yad*.

Susan Big – Workshop #102 – Gefelted Fish: A Needlefelt Workshop **Peach State Stitchers Chapter**

Susan is a self-taught fiber artist and began her needlework with knitting. Later she started quilting and embroidering. She returned to needlework after her children were grown. She has a B.A. in Anthropology and has been a social work case manager and a certified high school social studies teacher. She has a quirky way of looking at the world and uses her needle skills and her sense of humor to create a variety of witty and provocative pieces. A major source of inspiration for her work is topics in Judaism. Among her juried and non-juried exhibitions in the Atlanta area, Susan's work is in the permanent collection at Emory University--Goizueta Business School.

Sivia Katz Braunstein – Workshop #201 – Hebrew Calligraphy: The Structure of the Alef-Bet

Sivia's background was a merging of Fine Art and Judaic studies; creating artwork based on the Hebrew letter was a perfect direction for her. One of the first women to bring the traditional Ketubah back into vogue and creativity in 1973, Sivia was the first to use the medium of “print” to make Ketubot in 1983 more affordable than it had been as “custom work.” Since then, the Ketubah in both design and textual context has gained great popularity and diversity and her own work has evolved and is quite personal. She studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Bezalel School of Art in Jerusalem. She has been a major influence on artists in developing Hebrew and Ketubah art.

Deborah Carasso – Workshop #105 – Star of David Wire & Bugle Bead Kippah **Masorot Chapter**

Deborah has been crafting her whole life. She has knitted, crocheted, done needlepoint, rug hooking and hairpin lace. Her love in recent years is counted cross-stitch and making beaded head coverings. Deborah finds a pattern and adapts it to her own style in the size and colors that she likes best. The current pattern has been taught at her local Philadelphia Chapter, Masorot:Traditions, with much excitement at their beautiful creation. Deborah was also the Editor of the *Paper Pomegranate* for three years before Aaron Sanofsky.

Elaine S. Carroll – Workshop #402 – Sh’viti: Writing, Fusing, Woven Ribbon **Independent**

Elaine is an artist who enjoys experimenting with and combining different forms of art. She frequently uses fiber, and Judaism is a predominant theme throughout her work. Teaching and encouraging creativity in others is also a source of joy and inspiration. In addition to stitchery, she has learned techniques from drafting to soldering, printmaking to painting. *Tallitot* are among Elaine's favorite commissioned works. Other commissions have included *chuppot*, *challah* covers, and a quilted and embroidered *matzah* holder made in the shape of a book. Elaine originated a series of adult education classes for the Jewish community, “Playtime for Grownups”, in which participants use a variety of media and creative approaches to explore text or holiday themes. Currently Elaine's diverse freelance work is produced under the business name Better Than Housework (www.betterthanhousework.com and Better Than Housework on Etsy.com). Elaine also was a founding partner in *Avodat Yad* collaborating on the design and publication of Judaic cross-stitch instructions.

Barbara S. Flexner – Workshop #404 – Sashiko Embroidery: Drawing with Thread **Peach State Stitchers Chapter**

Barbara has taught painting, textile surface design, weaving and spinning. Her nomadic background and training in anthropology and architecture have further formed her zest for travel and curiosity about culture. She has taught painting, textile surface design, weaving and spinning. Her critically acclaimed and award-winning works have been exhibited in galleries throughout the country. Barbara is a past president of the Peach State Stitchers Chapter of the Pomegranate Guild and an inveterate seeker.

Erik Friedman – Workshop #206 – Willow Tree with Beaded Text (Charted Needlepoint) North Jersey Chapter

Erik has been participating in the art of embroidery since 1984. Ever since he discovered a new embroidery shop close to his home, he has been hooked working on canvas both painted and blank. He is also pursuing his embroidery-teaching certificate through the National Academy of Needlearts. Currently, he is a member of the North Jersey Chapter of The Pomegranate Guild, which has infused his work with Judaic themes and symbols.

Deborah Kaplan – Workshop #101 – White Vine Design: A Decorative Technique

Deborah is a preeminent calligrapher. She is an alumna of the Philadelphia College of Art with a major in illustration. Her calligraphic experience exceeds three decades, including personal study with several noted calligraphers. She is a founding member of the Philadelphia Calligraphers' Society since 1979 and has been teaching calligraphy, helping others progress, and instilling her enthusiasm for the written word. She specializes in custom-made, one-of-a-kind ketubot and offers ketubah prints, certificates and general marriage contracts. Her other interests include sewing, knitting, quilting, dog grooming and painting.

**Eleanor Levie – Workshop #302 – Recycled Art Hamsa
Workshop #404 – Tree of Life Appliqué**

Eleanor produces quilt books that feature designs by celebrity quilters in addition to her own. *Quilt Blocks Go Wild!*, *Unforgettable Tote Bags*, *Skinny Quilts* and *Table Runners I & II* are some of her recent top sellers. Elly lectures and gives workshops to quilt guilds and quilt shops. She is the art specialist at the Sunday school of Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Elkins Park, PA.

Leslie Levison – Workshop #202 – French Wire Ribbon Flowers Pioneer Valley Chapter

Leslie is a long-time member of the Pioneer Valley Chapter. She currently lives in Waterbury, CT. Leslie's feature article, *Demystifying the Stitch*, appeared in the first 20 issues of Quilting Arts Magazine. She has taught crazy quilts and embellishment for 25 years. Her classes are fun, inspiring and eclectic.

Naomi Lipsky – Workshop #204 – Quilling – Mizrach with Seven Species Greater Boston Chapter

Naomi is best known for her quilling, an antique art in which paper strips are shaped and applied as ornaments. She also works with gold leaf, collage, gouache, and needle arts. The subjects of her work are primarily Jewish liturgy and history. Naomi's secular work includes surface gilding on stone, wood, and paper, glass gilding, and painted finishes on furniture and decorative objects. Her award-winning work has been exhibited in museums and galleries, and published in books, magazines and calendars. Naomi received her PhD in Biochemistry from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and recently graduated in the Master Seamstress program at the University of Rhode Island. She is an accredited member of the Quilling Guild, and belongs to the North American Quilling guild, the American Guild of Judaic Art, and is a Board member of the Society of Gilders. Naomi has been a member of the Pomegranate Guild for over 30 years.

Cheryl Lynch – Workshop #406 – Embellished Beauty: Quilted “Chic Shin”

Cheryl made her first quilt out of Marimekko fabric as an impoverished chemistry graduate student at M.I.T. It took another seventeen years for her to make a second one--and then she was hooked. In 1996 Cheryl began teaching quilt-making and then started a Judaic quilt pattern company, *OyVey! Quilt Designs*, in 1999 at the request of her students. Since then, Cheryl has had projects published in many national quilting publications, is the author of two books *!Quilt Fiesta!* and *Sew Embellished!* and has won awards for her quilts at major quilt shows. In addition she has done several commissions for American synagogues. To learn more about Cheryl, visit her website: www.CherylLynchQuilts.com or her blog: www.CherylLynchQuilts.blogspot.com.

Ellen Manson – Workshop #205 – Shabbat Table Runner (Appliqué, Quilting) Masorot Chapter

Ellen is an award-winning quilter and teacher. She started her sewing career making doll clothes at the age of eight and progressed through needlepoint, embroidery and counted cross-stitch to quilt-making fifteen years ago. Her latest fascination is with machine embroidery, using special Judaic themes. Ellen is one of the founding members of Masorot: Traditions (Philadelphia Chapter) and an associate member of the Long Island Study Group.

Karen Milano – Workshop #401 – Date Palm Needlepoint

Karen graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Design from Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA. She practiced interior design for twenty years prior to becoming the owner of Nimble Needle, located in Haddonfield, N.J., which is both a brick and mortar shop and an online Internet store for all (threaded) needlework materials. With a great eye for color and composition, she enjoys the challenge of bringing texture through a variety of threads and stitch types to make each piece a work of art. For more information, visit her website: www.thenimbleneedle.com.

Connie Pallas – Workshop #403 – Irish Crochet Pomegranate North Jersey Chapter

Connie learned to crochet at age five from her grandmother who made beautiful doilies and lace shawls. Knitting came later during the poncho craze of the 70s. While she has tried most of the various crocheting and knitting techniques available, lace in all of its forms in knitting and crocheting is her passion. Designing and creating knitted and crocheted lace objects to wear and use is the primary focus of her creative endeavors.

Harriett Ringold – Workshop #103 – Create a Tallit using Family Heirlooms **West Los Angeles Chapter**

Harriett was able to merge her passion for weaving with her love of sewing and free-motion/ computerized embroidery. Initially she used purchased fabric to make *tallitot* and the traditional *chuppah*; however, she discovered that she could make her own and has taken numerous courses in weaving, dying and other techniques including a four-year course of London City and Guilds Embroidery Certification. She works with children and adults as she translates their life experiences into unique and religious designs that will be interpreted through fiber, colors, structure, and picture embroideries on their *tallit* or *chuppah*. For the past six Handweavers Guild of America Convergences she has been juried into the Liturgical Show, had three garments in the Fashion Shows, and won Third Place in the Scarves Show at the Vancouver Convergence. Harriett's work has been displayed locally and nationally at various exhibits and museums. She also coauthored *Designs of Judaica, A Needleart Handbook*.

Laura Rosenspan – Workshop #104 – Free Motion Mizrach: Drawing with Thread **Greater Boston Chapter**

Laura has been teaching quilt making for over twenty years and has specialized in fiber arts for the past ten years. Her own prize-winning quilts have appeared in The New England Quilt Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts, the Fuller Craft Museum, various schools, libraries, and community centers. She has been featured on cable television, and her work has been displayed in national magazines. Laura received her degree in Fine Arts and Education from Hunter College, CUNY and continued her studies at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, leading her to a career in Textile Design.

Adrienne Segal-Kuperberg – Workshop #203 – Jerusalem Vignette with Buttons, etc.
Workshop #301 – “Inchie” (Quilting) **North Jersey Chapter**

Adrienne has been involved in art since childhood. She learned how to embroider at the age of 10 and studied textile design at F.I.T. From 1986 until 2007, she owned and operated a company, Torah Art Factory, where she designed, manufactured and distributed Jewish educational material for the classroom. Currently she is co-president of the North Jersey Chapter of the Pomegranate Guild and serves as Guild historian. She is also a member of the Embroiderers' Guild of America. Her current art work combines multimedia techniques.

Leslie Sudock – Workshop #306 – Knitted Kiddush Cup

Leslie enjoys sculptural knitting and mixed media work. She employs a wide variety of fiber materials and techniques to explore issues of Jewish identity, spirituality and ethics, and political action. Her knitted seder, “Why Are These Knits Different From All Other Knits?” was featured in *Astounding Knits: 101 Spectacular Knitted Creations and Daring Feats* and served as the cover art for the Spring (Pesach) issue of the English Conservative movement's *Or Hadash--The Magazine of Edgware Masorti Synagogue, Edgware, Middlesex, England* (Spring/Summer 2009/5769). Her knitted and mixed media Judaica have also been featured in the Jewish Exponent and JudaicaJournal.com. Her work has been exhibited by the Philadelphia Jewish Museum of Art, the DaVinci Gallery in Philadelphia, and Some Things Looming in Reading, Pa. She has led numerous workshops in quilting, knitting, crochet and bookbinding for children and adults in the greater Philadelphia area, including “tikkunknitting” at Philadelphia Limmud (2009) and “Double Knitting”, Philadelphia Knit (and Crochet) Out (2007), and frequently leads community quilt, weaving and indigo dyeing projects. Leslie's art quilts have been carried by The Works Gallery, Philadelphia, and are in collections of private law firms and the Chestnut Hill Hospital. A resident of Philadelphia, she also works as a musician, child advocate attorney, and coordinator of Arts Street Textile Studio: handmade with the homeless.

Mae Rockland Tupa – Workshop #305 – “I Never Met a Challah Cover I Didn't Love” **Greater Boston Chapter**

Mae is an artist and author. Her books include *The Work of Our Hands* (1973), *The Jewish Yellow Pages, A Directory of Goods & Services* (1976), *The Hanukkah Book* (1976), *The Jewish Party Book* (1987), *The New Work of Our Hands* (1994), and *Contemporary Jewish Needlework and Quilts* (1994). She is a long-time member of the Greater Boston Chapter of the Pomegranate Guild and can be found in her studios in Brookline, Massachusetts, or Castellon, Spain. Mae has exhibited all over the world. Her work is part of collections in museums in Spain and Germany. The Jewish Museum in New York City also has included her artwork in their permanent collections. Mae has collaborated with her husband and fellow artist, Myron Tupa, on some of her pieces.

Barbara Walkes – Workshop #304 – Purim Grogger **Delaware Valley Chapter**

Barbara started knitting as a young bride. She continued her love of needlepoint, cross-stitch and blackwork when she joined the local Pomegranate Guild. Many of her favorite projects are seen around her home. She entered her Obican “Chuppah Wedding” in the Woodlawn Plantation Needlework Exhibit and won a first place ribbon. Barbara was a past president of the Delaware Valley chapter and has taught knitting and needlepoint classes. She is also a Past Guild President of the Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework.

***If the instructor is a member of the Pomegranate Guild, her/his chapter is listed on the first line.**