

Fiber Art in the Mailbox

MAILABLE FIBER POSTCARDS have become popular among art quilters and other fiber artists, who mail them to each other as a way of sharing their creativity. These 4" × 6" artworks must be crisp and thin enough to meet the requirements of the U.S. Postal Service, but otherwise they are quite varied. In style, subject matter, and tone, they re-

flect whatever message their makers want to convey.

Fiber postcards are typically made of cotton, silk, linen, or other fabric. They sometimes include a layer of thin batting and may be embellished with embroidery, machine quilting, or textile paints. When finished, they resemble miniature modern artworks on one side and traditional postcards on the other. The message and address may be written with fabric ink on a light-colored fabric or with a traditional pen on a piece of paper stitched to the postcard. A self-adhesive postage stamp adheres neatly to ensure delivery.

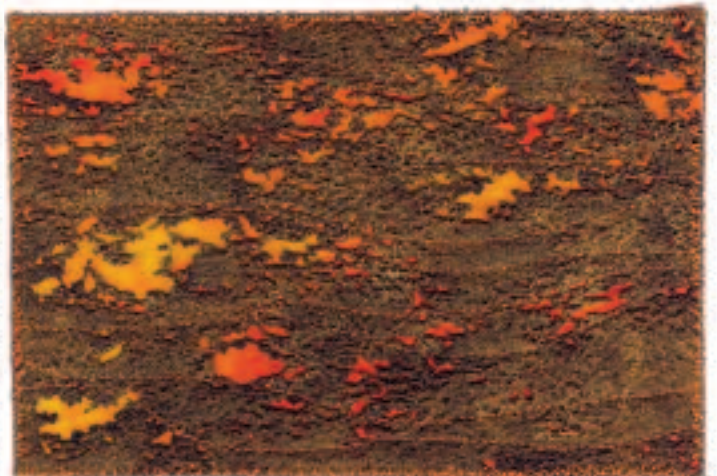
Interest in this miniature medium was created by Judi Warren's 1994 book *Fabric Postcards* [Collector Books, out of print]. More recently, publicity generated by fiber-postcard fund-raising projects, magazine articles, and a postcard-making lesson by Patricia Bolton on the HGTV program *Simply Quilts* have inspired a new group of postcard designers. Many quilters and other fiber artists have joined groups founded specifically for the purpose of exchanging postcards. Enthusiasts amass col-

ABOVE LEFT: Natalya Sumner, Vortex #1, 2005; fabric, variegated rayon thread; hand dyed, quilted. This postcard will be sold for Fiberart For A Cause at the International Quilt Festival in Chicago in April. ABOVE RIGHT: Leslie Collins, Purple Bud, 2005; cotton batik fabrics, rayon thread, machine appliqué. This postcard will also be sold for Fiberart For A Cause at the International Quilt Festival. LEFT: Franki Kohler, Tallinn Door 9, 2005; digital photo (by David Kohler) printed on cotton fabric, fusible web, Bubble Jet Set 2000 ink-bonding agent, polyester monofilament thread; free-motion stitching, stitch-and-fuse binding technique. Kohler is a member of the postcard-exchange group art2mail; she also started the group Postmark'd Art (www.postmarkdart.com).

lections that they sew or frame together to form a large art piece for the wall, or store in specially designed file boxes for table exhibit.

Some fiber postcards serve a dual purpose. Fiberart For A Cause supports the American Cancer Society and has raised tens of thousands of dollars by the sale and auction of postcards. The next sale will be April 7–9 at the International Quilt Festival in Chicago. Art2mail, a pioneering fabric-postcard group, is selling postcards donated by its members to raise funds for hurricane relief in the Gulf Coast region. Interested purchasers may make a selection from the organization's





LEFT: Sue Reno, Hackberry, 2004; heliographic print on cotton, vintage fabric, rayon thread; stitching. Reno is a member of the postcard-exchange group art2mail (www.art2mail.com). RIGHT: Virginia Spiegel, Sunrise, 2005; cotton fabric, acrylic felt, thread; dyed, burned, stitched. This postcard will be sold for Fiberart For A Cause at the International Quilt Festival in Chicago in April. Spiegel has made more than ninety postcards for the project, which she started to raise money for the American Cancer Society.

ever-changing online inventory of postcards. The Museum of the American Quilter's Society in Paducah, Kentucky, has invited quilters to create "Artcards for Acquisitions" for a museum fundraiser at the AQS Quilt Show and Contest April 26–29.

To find out more about these causes, visit www.VirginiaSpiegel.com/NewFiles/ACSHowToDonate.html, www.relief.art2mail.com, and www.americanquilter.com. Two postcard-exchange groups that welcome new members are International Friendship Quilters, at [\[quilters.com/FAB/fabIndex.php\]\(http://quilters.com/FAB/fabIndex.php\), and Fiber Art Traders, at \[www.groups.yahoo.com/group/fiberarttraders\]\(http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/fiberarttraders\). A new book, *Fast, Fun and Easy Fabric Postcards: Keepsakes You Can Make and Mail* by Franki Kohler, will be published by C&T Publishing in May. 📖](http://www.friendship</p></div><div data-bbox=)

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