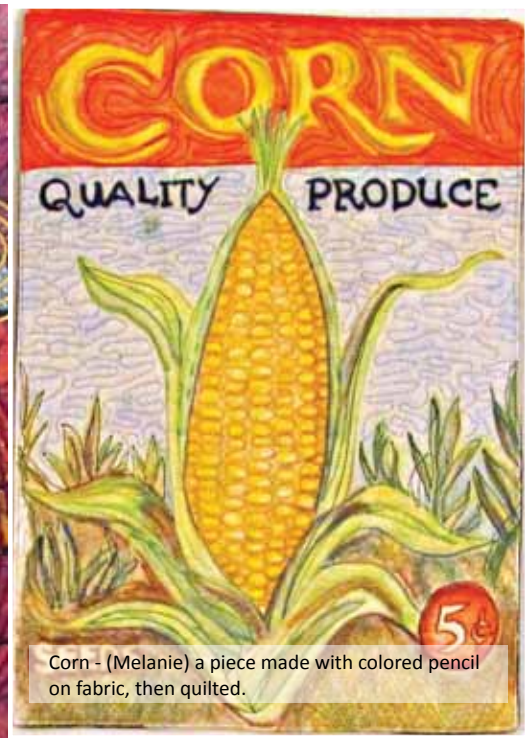




Rusty Implements - (Joan) a "rust-ed" piece. made by placing rusted old item with interesting shapes on white fabric with vinegar and water. Leave outside for a day or so and you get some very cool surface design.



Dark Circles - (Melanie) a piece made using a soy wax batik method and quilting in circles with couched yarn.

Corn - (Melanie) a piece made with colored pencil on fabric, then quilted.

Clematis - (Joan) an original photo by Joan, printed on to fabric, then extended with silk fab other fabric applique.

# The art of working with Fiber

Melanie Johnston and Joan Blade Johnson are Hampton-based fiber artists who work, teach and exhibit fiber art together. They teach a variety of fiber art and surface design classes in the New England area and have exhibited their work in the United States and Europe.

Melanie Johnston uses commercial and hand dyed cotton and silk as well as any other interesting fabric that catches her attention. She is a bit of a surface design technique "junkie" and enjoys experimenting with all possible ways to transform textile to art. In addition to several dyeing methods, she enjoys printing, stamping, and applying glitter, foil, oil paint sticks, colored pencil, beading, Angelina© fiber, painted/distressed Tyvek©, and paper to add depth and rich texture to her artwork.

Johnson has long been inter- things fiber related begin- ning with traditional quilting. In the last several years she has become fascinated by the entire creative process involved in composing fiber art pieces using non-traditional methods and materials to achieve her artistic esthetic inspired by nature and original nature photography.

This year, the pair of artists collaborated on a fiber art piece that was juried into an international exhibit that opened in Geneva, Switzerland at the United Nations headquarters building, the Palais de Nation and ran the month of July before returning to the United States to tour other venues. The fiber art piece depicts a large yellow-gold sun with fabric-collaged rays of sunlight in shades of yellow and blue quilted onto an iridescent "aura."

We belong to Studio Art Quilt Associates, an international art quilt organization, and started a 8 member Art Quilt Group in

our area but we have also joined several art guilds- to get some art cross training and inspiration. We find people respond well to our work as art but there are still some who think anything 3 layers and stitched belongs on a bed. We are out to prove them wrong!

We enjoy making our own fabric and every Tuesday morning Melanie hosts "wet studio" hours in her basement. During that time 1-5 or 6 artists can be found dyeing, painting, screening and much more to created interesting design on fabric

To see where they are exhibiting and teaching next, check this website: [www.melaniejohnstonfiberart.com](http://www.melaniejohnstonfiberart.com)

Photos: Left Corner : Trio NMB • Curvaceous • Rusty Implements Background: Hand dyeing technique