

Rebekka Seigel

“I make art because I have to. That’s why anyone makes art, because you have to. My quilts were never made traditionally for beds. They were artistic expressions. Artists have a freedom to express themselves and the drive to do it.”

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Rebekka Seigel is a textile artist living in Owen County, Kentucky. She sees herself as “a link in the chain that connects us.” Her grandmother was a quilter, and her daughter is an artist. Rebekka makes art quilts, carrying on the skills she learned from her grandmother and passing on her passion for art to her daughter. Rebekka combines exquisite craftsmanship with her refreshingly unique vision to create quilts that tell stories. She made a series of quilts called *Women’s Work* to honor women she perceived as trailblazers who redefined the role of women in society. The first quilt in that series honored Phyllis George, then First Lady of Kentucky, for the profound impact she had on Kentucky’s craft economy. An unusual aspect of this series is the way that the clothing of the women portrayed could be interchanged in the fashion of changing the clothes on a paper doll. Another series, this one of yo-yo quilts, is called *The Real Cost of War* and memorializes all the young men and women who made sacrifices in the line of duty. Rebekka’s work has been included in exhibitions around the country, including in the American Quilt Society’s annual competition, in which she has won awards on three occasions. Her quilts are part of the permanent collection of the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History. For decades she shared her love of quilting and art with school children across the Commonwealth as an artist-in-residence for the Kentucky Arts Council, even traveling to northern Ireland in 1995 as an artist-in-residence. She received great satisfaction from engaging children in the hands-on process of sewing and creating.