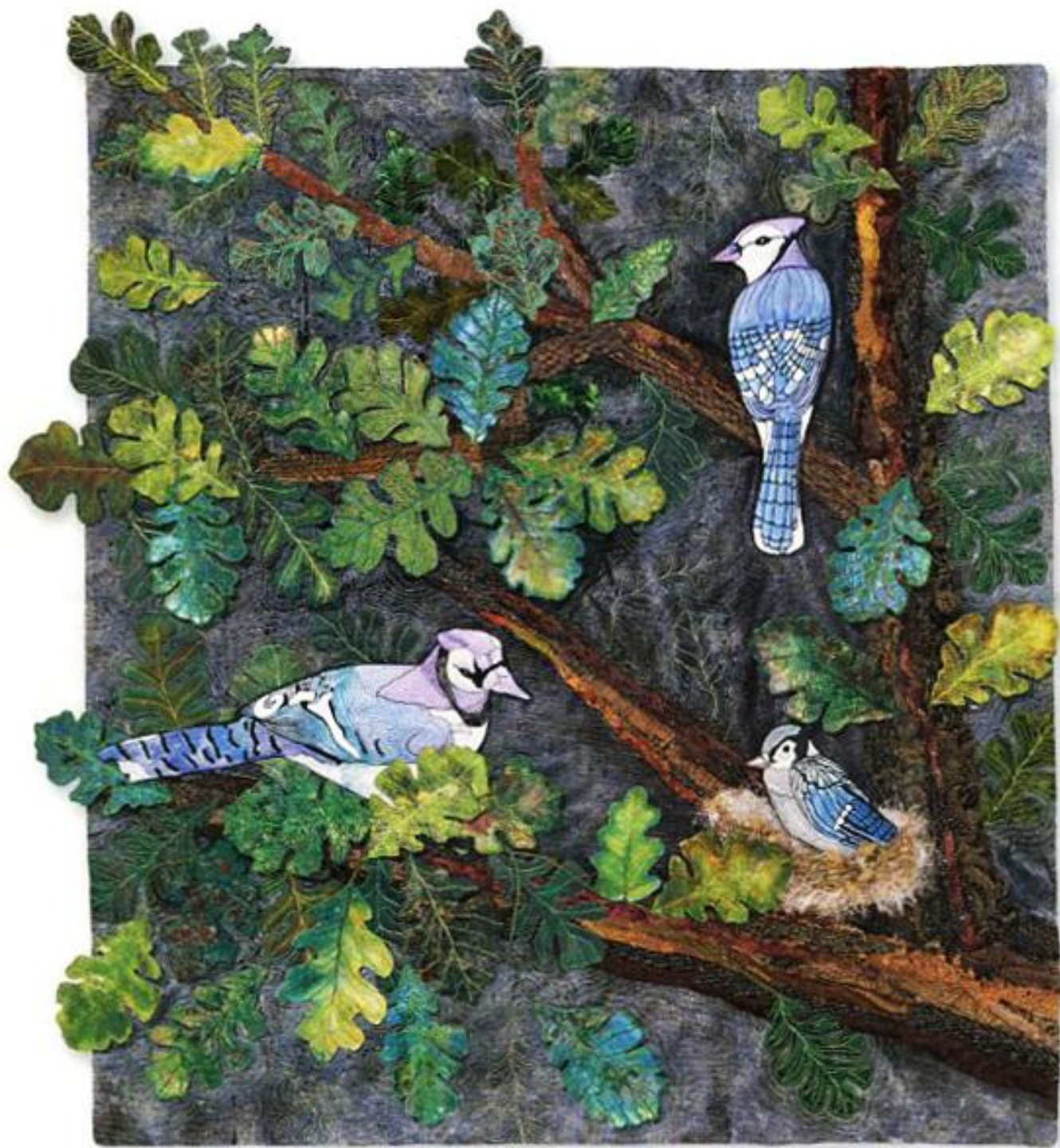


in the spotlight Barb Forrister
AUSTIN, TX



"Generation Y: Song of Hope" • 47" x 41"

“When I think back to my introduction to the quilting world, I was enamored with textiles and their tactile qualities. I enrolled in my first quilting class and before long began creating my own patterns. Later, my work shifted from piecing to appliqué. This was a very pivotal moment for me as I realized that pictorial designs could be created in a somewhat three-dimensional, tactile collage. By widening my array of materials, I was no longer limited by convention and was free to delve into texture.

I began painting and dyeing fabric and fibers, converting these common household items into reusable materials suitable for my work. I have always been very environmentally conscious and love the idea of creating aesthetically pleasing nature-scapes from repurposed resources that would otherwise contribute to our landfills. Through this experimental process I have developed into a surface design mixed-media artist. Though much of my work is predominantly nature scenes, I am flexible and work in an abstract style as well.

Here, my story begins with a focus on nature and the intent to re-create texture. This is the signature style for most of my artwork. Much of my time is spent preparing various surfaces to convey texture and dimension. Beginning with a dyed, painted, or inked surface, several layers of assorted materials are added to impart pattern and depth to my work. I use heat-distressed materials in my work and find that they can simulate quite a potpourri of surface characteristics. I enjoy painting them and watching them bubble and contour under the iron or heat gun.

It is my goal that my artwork make a statement. At the time that I made “Generation Y: Song of Hope,” I had a daughter who was graduating from high school. This was both an exciting and scary time given the nature of the economy. Generation Y pertains to individuals born in the ‘80s and ‘90s who are entering the workforce. They often come strapped with debt from their education into a world where times are difficult and even the most immediate outlook may seem uncertain. They represent



Above: Detail from “Generation Y: Song of Hope.”

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hope for the future. In this piece, the leaves are made of layered surfaces to provide a canopy and the birds are allowed to float freely on the surface in order to convey dimensionality. The nest was knitted and the young jay is strategically tucked in place to create further depth.

As my work continues to evolve, I have started creating three-dimensional buildings, flowers, and fiber art trees. I see this as a continuation of developing more soft-sculpted surfaces

in nature. Currently, I have a series of three-dimensional soft-sculpted waterscape quilts.

I continue to share my passion for tactile art and have returned to teaching. I also contribute to the Alzheimer's Art Quilt Initiative, American Cancer Society, and the National Wildlife Federation. ”

To learn more about Barb and her work, visit barbforrister.com. □



"Little Rascals"
27" x 21" • Cotton
and upholstery fibers,
sheers, dyed tating,
cheesecloth, and heat-
distressed Lutradu®.