



*Quilted Stories
Community Quilt,
2026*

Various artists
Pieced by Valerie Kane
Quilted by Jennifer Metzgar

JOHNSON
MUSEUM OF ART

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Dakota Jane	Brigid Hubberman	Madison Feely	Ann Swanekamp Williamson	Rachel Conklin	Carol Cedarholm	Irene Wu
2	Gianna Mercier	Annie Sheng	Anonymous	Linda Wright	Noni Korf	Denise O'Leary	Bogna Solecka
3	Zoë Newmarco	Therese O'Connor	Anonymous	Aafke Steenhuis-Swart	Marybeth Ruether-Wu	Magdalen Lindeberg	Melissa Nickerson
4	Alissa Salvati	Anonymous	Tammy Sritecha	TITLE BLOCK	Lisa Cantone	Cady L. Fontana	Karla Hanson
5	Anonymous	Michelle Keyser-Speth	Peggy Flynn Dunlop	Howdy Fontana	Anonymous	Jean M. Gerow	Sally Sumner
6	Leisa Morris White	Munna Rubaii	Beth Dewalt	Casey Carr	Linda Linton VanNederynen	Mary Milne	Beth Goelzer and Bailey Lyons
7	Consuelo Bernard	Sandy Rouleau	Abigail Nardi	Nancy Trautmann	Maya Schlesinger	Christine Snyder	Marlene Sherman

A1 Dakota Jane (American, born 1995)

I began creating this image to cope with wanting to buy a home and watching that dream become more and more unattainable as a working-class person in Ithaca. This piece shines light on the invisible work of women. How they hold a home together even when experiencing extreme hardships or housing insecurity, just as my mother did. It is also a prayer and manifestation for housing as a human right: Everyone deserves safe, secure and affordable housing.

B1 Brigid Hubberman

I was inspired the moment I heard about the community quilt, and I'm so pleased to have a block among so many wonderful quiltmakers. I created a basic paper-pieced tree, the first I "taught" at the Community Quilting Center. The four trees are together inspired by my four children—each cut out of a different beautiful cloth—and our family, like a quilt, stitched together with an abundance of love.

C1 Madison Feely (American, born 2004)

I used traditional piecing methods for this star block, combining a square-in-square block with a sawtooth star design.

D1 Ann Swanekamp Williamson (American, born 1963)

The amazing waterfalls in Tompkins County are part of what makes the area so special to me. What makes Taughannock Falls unique is this view from across the gorge, which allows you to see the main falls in its environment—year-round and in all of its majesty. While it is only one of the many falls, I believe this view makes a tremendous statement for the entire community. This quilt square is dedicated to a friend who lived in Trumansburg and fondly called it "our falls." So thankful it is "all of ours" to enjoy thanks to the New York State Parks and Recreation Department.

E1 Rachel Conklin (American, born 1984)

I have always adored the story of Alice in Wonderland. The roundabout and wonky style of my log cabin-ish block was inspired by Alice falling down the rabbit hole. The phrase within my block has comforted me during uncertain times. Some fabrics used are my favorites from previous projects. I sew because it heals my heart. Quilting has unexpectedly become an expressive and artistic outlet that always pushes me to improve and grow.

F1 Carol Cedarholm (American, born 1955)

The Black-capped chickadee is a quintessential backyard bird, important to me because I am blessed to see and hear them daily in my backyard in downtown Ithaca. Birding in Ithaca is a major element of my contemporary moment in Tompkins County thanks to the Lab of Ornithology. I created this block using a paper pieced pattern designed by Erin Sherman and scraps of batik fabrics that I had left over from other quilting projects.

G1 Irene Wu (American, born 2006)

This block shows a lace bobbin in the process of being made (by lace-made lace bobbins!) over a piecework representation of a lace pillow. It brings together two local groups that I've had the absolute joy of learning from: the Finger Lakes Lace Guild and the Community Quilting Center. These communities have generously welcomed me in and shared their skills, stories, and encouragement, and I couldn't be more grateful.

A2 Gianna Mercier (American, born 1998)

My block attempts to capture the feeling of time spent in Triangle Park on Cayuga Street. This park is nearby my apartment and I've spent many mornings or afternoons there with a coffee and the grackles for company.

B2 Annie Sheng

I'm Annie Sheng, an Ithacan artist, speculative fiction and nonfiction writer, martial artist and Cornell alum (PhD, Anthropology, 2022). My art features local scenery, ecology, food system, creatures and narrative elements. This piece is made from an upcycled plastic bag from a local bubble tea place I frequent. The scene depicts Lóng, a Chinese mythological creature, against the backdrop of Taughannock Falls and raining boba, underscoring the Asian diaspora in the Finger Lakes and the cycle/ecology of how water feeds us all (in boba drinks, too!). Website: <https://annieshengart.wordpress.com>

O2 Anonymous

We are safer here than we are out there.

D2 Linda Wright (American, born 1945)

I love all nature, especially our finger lakes and the water birds. I use the flying geese pattern in my quilt pictures often, as I feel honored to live in this place where they so often fill the sky with their honking. Also, I try to use mostly materials that are recycled scraps and clothing that would otherwise end up in a landfill.

E2 Noni Korf (American, born 1960)

Ithaca is a community that is engaged, vibrant, creative, and multicultural. I wanted to honor that spirit. I'm new to quilting, sewing quilts with the Community Quilting Center, and am learning to drum with a branch of the Rhythms of Resistance, an international network of activist drummers. Contributing a square for the community quilt that used diverse techniques (foundation paper-piecing, embroidery embellishment, appliqué, and tea-staining) to depict a landscape with an enthusiastic drummer felt appropriate.

F2 Denise O’Leary (American, born 1995)

In Tompkins County today, I am a chef and owner of Cafe DeWitt — a restaurant serving Ithaca since 1973. I feel pressure to keep this legacy open. Running a business with rising costs of food, labor, and current stressors of the world feels like a fragile egg slipping through my fingers but if I handle it with care, perhaps I can make something special.

G2 Bogna Solecka (Polish American, born 1965)

The inspiration for my quilt block came from the ferns in Sapsucker Woods in Ithaca. I visited the Ornithology Lab for the first time nine years ago when I moved to this town from Illinois. It was my first nature walk there, and that was where I spotted the ferns. They look interesting in different lights of the day. Depending on the season, they can be a vibrant green or a rusty brown. By using pieces of cotton, I am trying to capture their constant beauty.

A3 Zoë Newmarco (American, born 1995)

What do you feel when you see someone wearing a mask in 2026? Can you sit with those feelings?
As someone who is disabled and wearing one, seeing another person in a respirator evokes feelings of trust and hope.
“Okay,” I think. “This person, too, is taking action for community and self care.”
I moved to Tompkins County, in part, because here I face less harassment for wearing a mask. But less is not none.

B3 Therese O’Connor (American, born 1956)

Tompkins County is defined by the wonder and magic of the Finger Lakes Region. I put the county as a small part of this world of the Finger Lakes.

C3 Anonymous

The theme “Tompkins County Today” led me to the title of my block . . . Tompkins County is nature. The colors and shapes represent the earth, rocks, water, waterfalls, grass, trees, fields, sun, moon, lake, streams, plants, etc. The fabrics were scraps left over from a wedding quilt I made for my niece and were the perfect inspiration for the block as Tompkins County is also a wonderful reduce, reuse, recycle community.

D3 Aafke Steenhuis-Swart (Dutch, born 1946)

The barn is an image of our barn on Bostwick Road in Ithaca. The barn was built in the late 1800s.

E3 Marybeth Ruether-Wu (American, born 1988)

I hand-stitched my block in the spirit of “crazy quilts,” using recycled scraps from worn-out clothes, family members’ projects, Finger Lakes ReUse, and SewGreen. I love hand-sewing because I can bring projects anywhere and work on them among friends and family. I believe scrap fabric donations epitomize not only a community’s spirit of respect for material resources and history, but our shared determination to continue finding beauty and value in small, “worthless” things.

F3 Magdalen Lindeberg (American, born 1966)

I enjoy creating landscape quilts, typically 2-3 feet square. This is my first attempt at representing a waterfall and also my first attempt working at this small a scale.

G3 Melissa Nickerson

A4 Alissa Salvati (American, born 1984)

Ithaca is color: the bright green lawns in the summer, the marbled reds of apples in the fall, and the steely gray of Taughannock Falls when it’s frozen. My quilt block is inspired by the inky magenta stains that dot my arms after an afternoon picking black raspberries in the fields behind my childhood home. After canning I’m left with a deep purple jam that transforms into a brilliant crimson smear on buttered toast. A little Ithaca summer magic in a jar.

B4 Anonymous

Chaos—quiet the noise with nature and quilting! This square was quilted by Diane Bradac, text sewn by Nancy Hall and the original pattern called Swirl-Round was purchased from Heather Valentine of the Sewing Loft.

2025 has been chaotic for many of us, personally and politically. Chaos is defined as a state of confusion, drama, disorder and unpredictability. Although disruptive, chaos can be a necessary catalyst for growth, creativity, and change. When we choose to view the 2025 chaos as not always bad, it helps us define needed improvements and refocuses our energy on future possibilities. Stay strong. Enjoy nature. Find joy in quilting!

C4 Tammy Sritecha (American, born 1979)

I love the Johnson Museum for how it has become part of my life and my family’s story. Woven into everyday moments, it’s a place I’m grateful to share with those closest to me and with others who come to experience it. It’s a place that continues to inspire me, one I know I’ll carry with me always.

D4 TITLE BLOCK

E4 Lisa Cantone (American, born 1959)

Summer is my favorite season in Ithaca. My husband and I love to take a picnic dinner to Stewart Park to watch the sunset. We sit in a swing near the water's edge to watch the beautiful colors appear as the sun sets on the horizon. The lapping water, chirping birds, and sailboats on the lake are soothing. I titled my block "Sunset at Stewart Park," and I used a modified log cabin pattern.

F4 Cady L Fontana (American, born 1990)

This block is made with fabrics made by myself and two girlfriends. Lately with the state of the world, strong friendship has been a buoy for me.

G4 Karla Hanson (American, born 1963)

In winter 2026, we are awash in 24/7 unsettling news about our nation and the world. The natural beauty of Ithaca, which might comfort us, is hidden by a blanket of gray and a biting cold that keeps us indoors. I await spring . . . both literally for the trees to bud and also for our nation to take a turn toward honesty and justice.

A5 Anonymous

I live on Cayuga Lake and kayak frequently during the summer. Iconic Cornell and Ithaca College buildings are visible from the lake and the Farmers Market overlooks the inlet. The crew teams often come out on the lake for practice.

B5 Michelle Keyser-Speth (American, born 1985)

"Meadowlark Manor": The home I share with my sister Elizabeth, husband Steve, our seven chickens, cat Nandor, dog Sadie. This square represents outdoor space where we garden, explore the woods, enjoy family, the silly chickens—it contains feathers from our beloved Xena. It's become a refuge that provides somewhere to pause, find joy, work hard, create, refresh—to remember we can find goodness in a world that presently often feels chaotic, cruel and unjust.

O5 Peggy Flynn Dunlop, BS 1959, MS 1963 (American, born 1937)

I planned for my quilt block to be a tribute to my late husband, David R. Dunlop, Class of 1959, who was a Cornell fundraiser for his entire career of 38 years. He was instrumental in getting George and Mary Rockwell to donate their entire Asian art collection to the Johnson Museum when it was still in the planning stage before it had been built. One of his proudest achievements was in persuading H. R. Newman to provide the funds to turn a cow pasture into what is now the beautiful Cornell Arboretum. Dave had a sailboat that he enjoyed taking out on Cayuga Lake. It was the smallest of all the sailboats moored at Treman Marina but it brought him a lot of joy.

D5 Howdy Fontana (American, born 2021)

I put a picture of [my stuffed dog] Sera on there and Sera likes flowers (and me!) so I wanted to put my name, and some plants on there since she loves flowers and plants, and she also loves her collar! I'm four years old!

E5 Anonymous

I created this block with the guidance of my special mentor, Lynn Blair, who became my mutual friend. I met her through the quilting sewing group in Ithaca, where I am so grateful to be a part of this community. The subdued colors and the interlocking pattern of this block symbolize my gradual transformation from a non-Ithacan to becoming one. I have blended into the unique culture and the Ithaca community.

F5 Jean M. Gerow (American, born 1963)

Growing up in Dryden, my favorite memories are of playing outdoors in the state forest that bordered my parents' home. I now live surrounded by 300+ acres of woodland close to Ithaca. Ithaca means being in the woods to me and my block represents that.

G5 Sally Sumner (American, born 1953)

This block is a scrappy improvisational block. Like this block, Ithaca is comprised of all sorts of people, coming together to make the whole. That variety is what makes it unique and interesting.

A6 Leisa Morris White (British, born 1974)

I've called this block "home is where the heart is". I am a transplant to Ithaca from the UK and have moved around a few states in the US for the last 19 years. Wherever you are when you're with the people you love soon feels like home.

I used Liberty Fabrics from England and the center was handpieced using the English paper piecing technique. I added a machine pieced border to make it easier to incorporate into a community quilt.

B6 Munna Rubaii (American, born 1960)

The block represents the South Hill Recreation Way in the spring. I walk there almost every day of the year with my dog.

C6 Beth Dewalt (American, born 1972)

When I think of Tompkins County, I'm drawn to its natural beauty—especially its waterfalls and parks. As a longtime Girl Scout volunteer, Camp Comstock holds a special place in my heart. Its lakefront setting, waterfall, and quiet natural details—butterflies, wildflowers, mushrooms—feel like hidden treasures. This place and piece honor Anna Comstock, whose work celebrating nature and its beauties continues to inspire wonder and appreciation in all who explore it.

D6 Casey Carr (American, born 1952)

This block is a Pineapple Design, the symbol of Welcome and Hospitality! I chose rainbow colors to signify that Ithaca is a welcoming place for people of all races, genders, religions and nationalities. The amazing variety of Ithacans make us creative, strong and vibrant!

E6 Linda Linton VanNederynen (American, born 1959)

The Greening of Ithaca.

Having lived my entire life in the Ithaca area, I have the privilege of watching the seasonal changes each year. My favorite is spring. As I drive nearly every day from home, down a hill into Ithaca, I watch what winter has left for spring to nourish. From leafless limbs of browns & grays, come to life in EVERY shade of green Mother Nature has to offer, is the canopy of leaves that sings life for all to enjoy for the season.

F6 Mary Milne (American, born 1955)

I chose to depict the building of the Johnson Museum itself, with the phrase “Art is long, Life is short” in the grass below. Every living person is a brief moment in time yet can contribute to the ongoing process of collective human creativity—our culture. The institutional purpose of the museum is to protect and share such beautiful and meaningful artifacts for future generations, a treasure house of who we are as a species.

G6 Beth Goelzer (American, born 1968) and Bailey Lyons (American, born 2000)

Ithaca offers a home for any bird lucky enough to flutter in. Design inspired by Alice Gant’s art quilts.

A7 Consuelo Bernard (American, born 1953)

I have lived in Ithaca for nearly fifty years, I have stayed because it contains a diverse population. It has also been a sanctuary city for many. In the winter season of my life, I discovered, "Community Quilting Center" at the ReUse whose motto is: We are a welcoming community. Indeed, every age, every culture and every gender is welcome towards an endeavor to learn and then give back to the community. This was my inspiration for signing up to be a part of the Johnson Museum quilt project. My block contains a variety of cultures that are gathered together in Love — “Our Community.”

B7 Sandy Rouleau (American, born 1962)

This block was inspired by the iconic Newfield Covered Bridge, an 1853 Tompkins County Landmark, as essential today as it was back then, to connect community members across the creek. I see the bridge as I go in and out of town on our often overcast days. It was satisfying to find perfect remnants in my fabric stash to represent the bridge, sky and creek and to build textured details with fusible web and machine appliqué.

C7 Abigail Nardi (American, born 2016)

My square is about happiness. It has lots of colors, patterns, and shapes, some straight and some wiggly, with both hand stitching and machine stitching. It reminds me of where I live, where lots of different people and ideas come together. I like that it's colorful and a little messy, because that feels real and full of life.

D7 Nancy Trautmann (American, born 1953)

From local to global—this square represents Ithacans making a difference a world away. In 2024, I traveled to Nepal with Educate the Children, a nonprofit founded in Ithaca that helps Nepalese women build better lives for themselves and their families. The quilt fabrics are from scarfs draped around our necks by villagers who welcomed us warmly and demonstrated how they collaborate to exchange micro-grants that fund their own education, farming, and small business initiatives.

E7 Maya Schlesinger (American, born 1997)

My mom and I designed and executed this quilt together. We set out to highlight icons of Tompkins County and Ithaca that draw many people, including myself, here: the natural beauty, robust local agriculture, and cutting-edge science cultivated by local universities. Integrating these features inspired us to use multiple media, from metal gears and painted accents to textural fibers, mirroring the breadth of textures in the subject itself.

F7 Christine Snyder (American, born 1969)

My quilt design blends color, geometry, and memory into my practical artwork. Repeated blocks create rhythm, while contrasting fabrics add movement and depth. Borders frame the composition, guiding the eye across carefully balanced patterns. Each stitched seam connects small choices into one unified surface, allowing tradition to meet personal expression. Texture changes with fabric and thread, giving warmth, dimension, and softness throughout the finished square for everyday comfort and quiet visual storytelling.

G7 Marlene Sherman (American, born 1941)

I spent many Sundays traveling thru Tompkins Co. to my aunt's, uncle's, and grandparent's homes to visit. Each time we traveled thru Ithaca and North on Rt. 34 I loved seeing the lake with the boats bobbing on the water. The large farms were a memory of cornfields, hay, and vegetable stands along the road. We also commented on the beautiful big homes in Ithaca so stately and spoke of pride and joy of living in this area of New York State. It's always an event to come to the area now and see the city and surrounding towns still thriving.