

# Karen Thiessen

## Education

- 2006 Digital Imaging courses, Mohawk College, Hamilton, Ontario.  
2005- 2010 Collage courses with Jody Joseph and Marla Panko, Dundas Valley School of Art, Dundas, Ontario.  
1999 **Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree**, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Textiles major, Art History minor.  
1996 **SOCAD Diploma (Textiles)**, Sheridan College School of Crafts and Design, Oakville, Ontario.  
1987 **Bachelor of Arts Degree**, University of Windsor, Ontario. Psychology and Fine Art.

## Selected Exhibitions

### Group & Solo:

- 2010 **Just Food?** Mennonite Committee on Human Rights travelling exhibition, Canada.  
2009 **Unity and Diversity**, Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2009, Cheongju, Korea.  
**Painting and Pottery Show**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
**We, the Mennonites**, Robert Wayner/Black Walnut Gallery, Chicago, USA.  
2008 **Shadow**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario (solo).  
**karen thiessen: small works**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario (small solo show).  
**Designer Crafts 2008**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
2007 **Out of the Past .... Into the Future**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
**Ontario Craft '07**, Ontario Crafts Council Gallery, Toronto, Ontario (catalogue).  
**Naked and Unadorned**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
2006 **Fibreworks 2006**, Cambridge Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario.  
**Designer Crafts 2006**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
2005 **Common Thread**, Oakville Arts Council Fibre Exhibition, Sheridan Gallery, Oakville, Ontario.  
**OCC Award Winners 2005**, Ontario Crafts Council The Craft Gallery, Toronto, Ontario.  
2004 **Designer Crafts 2004**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
**Apron Tales: To Serve and Protect**, Studio Works @ Harbourfront Centre, Toronto, Ontario.  
**Same Time, Same Place**, York Quay Gallery, Toronto, Ontario.  
**Wide Borders**, Cambridge Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario.  
2003 **Wide Borders**, Burlington Art Centre, Burlington, Ontario (3 person show, catalogue).  
**Wide Borders**, Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, Owen Sound, Ontario.  
**The Grand National: Reflections of Canada**, Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery (catalogue).  
**Counter Point: An Exhibition of Contemporary Quilting**, Cambridge Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario.  
2002- Present **Textile Museum of Canada Shadow Box Exhibition and Silent Auction**, Toronto, Ontario.  
2002 **Fibreworks 2002**, Cambridge Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario.  
**Visions & Other Phenomena**, Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
**Designer Crafts 2002**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
**Common Thread**, Oakville Arts Council Fibre Exhibition, Sheridan Gallery, Oakville, Ontario.  
**(dis)comfort level**, Mennonite Heritage Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
2001 **Red**, Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, Ontario (4 person show).  
**Games Needles Play**, Canadian Embroiderers' Guild, Museum London, London, Ontario. (catalogue).  
**The New Spirit of Ontario**, VAO, Offices of the Lieutenant Governor, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario.  
**Rich the Treasure**, YHZ Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia. (3 person show).  
**Watermark**, Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council show, Mary E. Black Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
**Women Artists of the Nova Scotia Art Bank**, Government House, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
2000 **Fibreworks 2000**, Cambridge Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario.  
**Layered Intentions**, Daltech Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
**Now & Then, Then & Now**, Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
1999 **70X7: Quilts from the Journey Series**, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia (solo).  
**By the Skin of Our Teeth**, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
1998 **Canadian Contemporary Quilts**, Rodman Hall Arts Centre, St. Catharines, Ontario. Travelled. (catalogue).  
**Responses**, *Call and Response*, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
**More Than Fourteen**, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
1996 **More Than Work More Than Play**, Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ontario.  
1995 **Screenings**, Wagner Rosenbaum Gallery, Arts on King, Toronto, Ontario.  
1994 **Designer Crafts 1994**, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas, Ontario.  
1992 **Midwest '92 Regional Show**, Wellington County Museum, Fergus, Ontario.

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## Grants & Awards

- 2007 **Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Assistance Grant** (Harbourfront)  
**Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Assistance Grant** (Textile Museum of Canada)
- 2005 **Common Thread Best Contemporary Award**, Oakville, Ontario  
**Mary Diamond Butts Award in Embroidery**, Ontario Crafts Council, Toronto, Ontario
- 2003 **Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Assistance Grant** (Burlington Art Centre)
- 2002 **Ontario Arts Council Exhibition Assistance Grant** (Harbourfront)  
**Ontario Arts Council Craft Artists Grant**  
**Hamilton and Region Arts Council Materials Award**, Hamilton, Ontario  
**Lillian Elliott Award**, Nominee, International Textile Award
- 2001 **Watermark 2001 Jurors' Choice Award**, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 2000 **Fibreworks 2000 Jurors' Award**, Cambridge, Ontario

## Selected Professional Experience

- 2009 **Visiting Artist**, McMaster University School of the Arts 2009 Visiting Artist Series, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 2008 **Guest Speaker**, *Transitions* talk, Oakville Stitchery Guild, Oakville, Ontario.
- 2007- 2008 **Textile Teacher**, *The Art of Wellness*, St. Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 2007 **Teacher**, *Altering the Terrain workshop*, Burlington Fibre Arts Group, Burlington, Ontario.  
**Juror**, *Kaleidoscope 2007*, Burlington Art Centre, Burlington, Ontario.  
**Guest Speaker**, *Mapping the Terrain* talk, Burlington Fibre Arts Group, Burlington, Ontario.
- 2006 **Guest Speaker and Teacher**, *Altering the Terrain workshop*, London Embroiderer's Guild, London, Ontario.  
**Visiting Artist**, McMaster University School of the Arts 2005/2006 Visiting Artist Series, Hamilton, Ontario.  
**Guest Speaker**, Toronto Mennonite Heritage Group, Toronto Ontario.
- 2004 **Teacher**, *Re-imagine/Renew/Reinvent!* workshop, Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, Owen Sound, Ontario.  
**Juror**, Ontario Hooking Craft Guild Rug Hooking 2004 Annual, Oakville, Ontario.
- 2003 **Juror**, *Kaleidoscope 2003*, Burlington Art Centre, Burlington, Ontario.
- 2002- 2004 **Artist-in-Residence**, Harbourfront Centre Textile Studio, Toronto, Ontario.

## Selected Publicity

- 2010 "Exposure." *Surface Design Journal*, Summer 2010, p.65.  
Dirks, Ray. "Just Food." *Rhubarb*, Summer 2010, No. 26, p. 28
- 2009 Rogalsky, Dave. "Hamilton artist featured in Chicago art show." *Canadian Mennonite*, April 13, 2009, p. 24  
Kennel-Shank, Celeste. "Art reveals values." *Mennonite Weekly Review*, March 16, 2009.
- 2008 Hollick, Laura. Radio interview. "*The Artist's Lifestyle*." CFMU 93.9 FM. Tuesday March 11, 2008.
- 2007 *Rhubarb: The Magazine of New Mennonite Art and Writing*, Fall 2007, Number 15, p. 27.  
*Dundas and Area Studio Guide 2007-2008*.
- 2004 Hollick, Laura. Radio interview. "*The Artist's Lifestyle*." CFMU 93.9 FM. Tuesday September 21, 2004.
- 2003 Dault, Julia. "Rebellion Seeps Between the Stitches." *National Post*, Thursday November 27, 2003, p.AL8.  
Beatty, Dawn White. "A Curator's Perspective: Wide Borders." *Ontario Craft*, Summer 2003, p. 17.  
Landry, Wendy. "Looking at Textiles." *Arts Atlantic*, Spring 2003, No. 74, p.21-26.  
Hujer, Elaine. "Borders exhibit explores inclusion and exclusion." *Hamilton Spectator*, Friday March 28, 2003, p. N3.
- 2002 Coakley, Mark. "Designer Crafts 2002." *Arts Beat*, December 2002, Ver. 15.4, p. 1.  
Gustafson, Paula. "Red: An Exhibition of Textile Works by Lyn Carter, Vessna Perunovich, Karen Thiessen, Laura Vickerson." *Artichoke*, Special Edition No. 2, 2002, p. 33.  
Hickey, Trisha. "Visual Sizzle." *National Post*, October 27, 2001.  
Cranston, Marla. "Watermark: Defining a Moment in Time ..." *Visual Arts News*, Autumn 2001, p. 12-13.  
Philip R. "Watermark." *Nova Scotia Craft News*, Summer 2001, Vol. 23, No. 2. p. 12-13.  
Barnard, Elissa. "Sex, Blood & Magic." *The Halifax Herald*, Sunday May 6, 2001.  
Smulders, Marilyn. "Just a Bit Different." *The Daily News*, Thursday, May 3, 2001. Doucette,
- 2000 Jordan, Betty Ann and Thiessen, Karen. "Fibreworks: Jordan & Thiessen." *Surfacing Journal*, Fall 2000, Vol. 21, Issue 3, p. 7.  
St. Germain, Pat. "Now and Then, Then and Now Quilt Exhibit." *Winnipeg Sun*, Friday January 7, 2000, p. 27.  
Pratt, Diane. "Plugged In." *Winnipeg Free Press*, Thursday January 6, 2000, p. D6.

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## Published Writings

- 2003 Thiessen, Karen. "Mennonites, Mulberries & Silkworms." Revised Edition. *Surfacing Journal*, Summer 2003, Vol. 24, Issue 2, p. 6-10.
- 2002 Thiessen, Karen. *Historian*. "Mennonites, Mulberries & Silkworms." March 2002, Vol. 13, No. 1, p. 1-5.
- 1998 Thiessen, Karen. "A Year in Singapore." *Surfacing Journal*, Summer 1998, Vol. 20, No. 2, p. 10-12.

## Professional Affiliations

- 2006-Present Carnegie Gallery
- 2001-Present Arts Hamilton
- 2000-Present Textile Museum of Canada
- 1993-Present Surface Design Association
- 1990-Present Ontario Crafts Council

## Selected Collections

- Clive Taylor, London, England
- Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Art Bank
- Cambridge Library and Gallery, Cambridge, Ontario
- Margo Metcalfe, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Doug and Jane Porter, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Ron Fitzgerald, Toronto, Ontario
- Max Allen, Toronto, Ontario

## Selected Volunteer Positions

- 2009-2010 **President**, Student Open Circles at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 2006-2009 **Board Chair**, Student Open Circles at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 2004-2006 **Reference Group Member**, Student Open Circles at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.
- 2002-present **Volunteer & Shadow Box Contributor**, Textile Museum of Canada Shadow Box Auction, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2000-2001 **Founding Member**, Fibre Arts Collective, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 2000-2001 **Fundraising Event Organizer**, *Anna's Bash for Queen Victoria*, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- (2001) Chair of Art work Committee. With a committee of five volunteers, solicited 200 pieces of fine art and craft from NSCAD faculty, alumni, students, and friends; curated show (raised \$14,000)
  - (2000) with a team of six people, envisioned, planned, and launched the first annual *Anna's Bash*, a silent and live auction of fine art and craft to raise funds for NSCAD programs and equipment (raised \$6,600)
- 1999 **Exhibition Organizer**, *By the Skin of Our Teeth*, Anna Leonowens Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 1996 **Arts Event Organizer and Curator**, *More Than Work, More Than Play: An arts event for all sorts of Anabaptist women*, Waterloo, Ontario. Sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario.
- 1995 **Retreat Organizer & Collage Workshop Facilitator**, *Exploring Our Spiritual Journeys: An MCC Ontario retreat for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women*.

## Workshops Attended

- 2008 **Fabric & Paper Collage Workshop** with Fran Skiles, London Embroiderer's Guild, London, Ontario.
- 2006 **Master Class** with Deirdre Nelson, Harbourfront, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2004 **Master Class** with Suzie Brandt, Harbourfront, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2003 **Material Explorations** with Kai Chan, Harbourfront, Toronto, Ontario.
- Master Class** with Martha Posner, Harbourfront, Toronto, Ontario.
- 1998 **Stitching Women's Lives: Sujini & Kantha Embroidery Workshop** with Dorothy Caldwell, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 1995 **Monoprints** with Jason Pollen, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario.
- Feltmaking** with Jennifer Angus, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario.
- Photo Transfer & Surface Embellishment** with Jennifer Angus, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario.
- Papermaking** with Susan Warner Keene, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario.