The National Quilt Museum Launches Preservation Society

New national initiative supports the care of more than 700 quilts and the critical systems that protect them



Escape From Circle City by Sylvia Pickell, National Quilt Museum Collection Artist

PADUCAH, KY, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Quilt Museum has launched the Preservation Society, a new initiative dedicated to protecting its collection of more than 700 quilts and the Museum facilities and essential systems that safeguard them.

Preserving a quilt requires more than caring for the fabric and stitches that can be seen. Behind every work are carefully controlled temperature and humidity, specialized lighting, proper storage, archival materials, and building systems working every day to safeguard the art.

Created by Laura Grimes, Director of Development & Special Projects, the Preservation Society gives individuals an opportunity to directly support the long-term care of works created by today's quilt artists and entrusted to the Museum for future generations.

When Preservation Became Urgent

The need for that support became unexpectedly clear just as the new program was preparing to launch. During the sweltering July heat, one of the Museum's HVAC units failed and could not be repaired. Complete replacement was necessary - a critical situation for a textile collection that depends on carefully managed temperature and humidity.

Within weeks of launching the Preservation Society, more than 90 donors stepped forward to

help protect the Museum, its facilities and its collection. They could not have known when they gave just how timely their support would be.

“The Preservation Society recognizes that caring for this collection means caring for everything that protects it,” said Laura Grimes, Director of Development & Special Projects. “That includes the quilts themselves, but also the environment around them - the climate systems, lighting, storage, moisture protection and preservation materials that allow us to responsibly care for these works year after year.”



Conservation of The National Quilt Museum's Miniature Quilt Collection

Preserving More Than Quilts

Preservation Society gifts help support needs ranging from archival-quality materials used in the care of individual quilts to year-round preservation efforts and major infrastructure improvements. The program reflects a reality often invisible to museum visitors: preserving an important collection requires continuous investment.

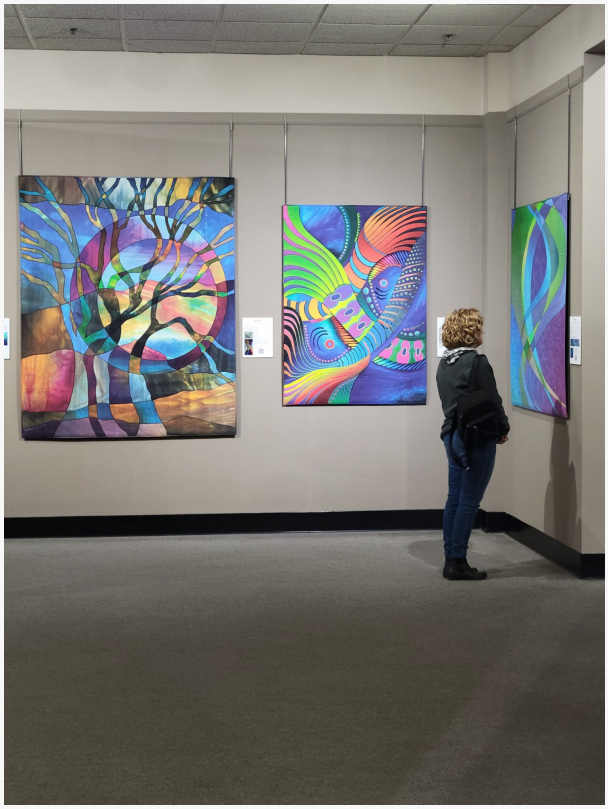
> As an avid conservationist and lover of old textiles, I believe we have an obligation to help protect our present fibers for the future. I encourage you to support this endeavor”
>
> *Sylvia Pickell, National Quilt Museum Collection Artist*

Climate control must remain reliable. Gallery lighting must balance the visitor experience with the protection of sensitive textiles. Storage environments and materials must be appropriate for works not currently on exhibition. Buildings must be protected against moisture and other environmental threats. Each is part of preserving the artwork.

For the artists whose work has been entrusted to The National Quilt Museum, that responsibility carries particular meaning.

Artist Sylvia Pickell began sewing 75 years ago on her grandmother's treadle machine and has seen firsthand the damage improper storage can cause to textiles. Her quilt Escape From Circle City was an early Museum acquisition and remains part of the Museum's collection.
“As an avid conservationist and lover of old textiles, I believe we have an obligation to help

protect our present fibers for the future. I encourage you all to help support this Museum endeavor in whatever manner you are able," Pickell said.



A visitor admires quilts on display at The National Quilt Museum of the United States in Paducah, Kentucky

Protecting the Art of Today for Tomorrow

The National Quilt Museum's collection documents the extraordinary artistic development of contemporary quiltmaking. Its more than 700 works represent artists, techniques and creative approaches that have helped expand the understanding of quilts as an important form of contemporary art.
The Preservation Society is designed to help ensure those works remain available to be studied, exhibited and experienced by generations still to come. Supporters may participate at a range of giving levels. Gifts can help provide preservation materials for individual works, support ongoing collection care or contribute toward larger facility and infrastructure needs.

"Preservation is ultimately a promise to the future," said Bonnie Schrock, Executive Director of The National Quilt Museum. "Artists have entrusted their work to this Museum, and our responsibility is to care for it so that people decades from now can experience the creativity, craftsmanship and stories these quilts hold. The Preservation Society gives everyone who values this art an opportunity to become part of that responsibility."

Every stitch counts. And so does every gift. To learn more about the Preservation Society or become a supporter, visit quiltmuseum.org/preservation-society/.

About The National Quilt Museum
The National Quilt Museum is America's premier quilt museum, having received National Designation by congressional declaration in 2008. The Museum collects and presents the finest work made by today's quilters in America and worldwide. It provides national-class cultural services to diverse communities, both near and far, through exhibitions, educational programs, support of artists and tourism development. The Museum includes multiple galleries and an onsite gift shop.

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