

# Shadow Dance

## Q+A with Judith Content



[www.judithcontent.com](http://www.judithcontent.com)

### Artwork on Display

*Veil*  
*Descent*  
*Isolation*  
*Squall Line*  
*Resonance*  
*Soundings*  
*Under Current*  
*Meltwater*  
*Passage*  
*Magnolia*  
*Aftermath*  
*Bittersweet*  
*Rios Amarillos*  
*Evanescence*  
*Oscuro*  
*Verdigris*  
*Chimenea*  
*Whisper*  
*Cielo Caliente*  
*Echo Canyon*  
*Serpentine Series VI*  
*Ragamuffin Series "Ebb and Flow"*  
*Ragamuffin Series "Night Sky"*  
*Ragamuffin Series "Spun Sugar"*  
*Ragamuffin Series "El Dulce"*  
*Ragamuffin Series "Gingham"*  
*Amber Moon*  
*New Moon*  
*Dragonfly*  
*Quercus Lobata*

### What is your creative space like?

My studio is located in an addition just steps away from the rest of the house. It's a quiet, peaceful space with whitewashed walls, large windows, nice light, and access to both the front and back gardens. I try to keep my workspace organized; I don't work well in chaos.

I covered one entire wall with white denim and use this expanse as my composing design wall. I also sew and quilt in the studio right next to a wall of thread, arranged by color, in vintage typeset drawers. From here I look out at a colorful garden of succulents planted in vividly-painted terracotta pots.

Because I live in a mild climate here in Northern California, I'm able to do all my arashi shibori dyeing and discharging in the backyard. I heat water in the kitchen and carry it outside in stainless steel pots to simmer on electric hot plates. I work under large market umbrellas year-round. I love the light as well as the excellent ventilation of working outside.

### What inspires your work at this time?

I am inspired by the natural landscape and how it translates to cloth. I am inspired by the play of light on water and fascinated by the way imagery is abstracted when it is obscured by fog. I am interested in mirrored images, reflections, mirages, and things that are not quite what they seem at first.

I'm always on the lookout for unusual color combinations and interesting patterns and textures on natural surfaces such as rocks, tree bark, sand and sky. I'm drawn to horizontal lines such as the ocean meeting the horizon and geologic layers of rock and stone. I am also fascinated by vertical lines such as those found in reeds, grasses and the trunks of trees. In my work, I love to weave these linear elements together to create visual excitement.

I am also profoundly worried about climate change. I address such issues as drought, sea level change and increasingly destructive storms directly in my work. *Aftermath*, *Squall Line* and *Meltwater* are examples of this.

### What advice would you offer to an aspiring textile artist?

Find your voice and listen to what it has to say.

### Have you ever made any 3D textiles?

Although the focus of my work has been on 2-dimensional art quilts, I have explored many different mediums and formats throughout my career. I have created one-of-a-kind ethnic-inspired jewelry and hand-painted paper fans. I have crocheted colorful nests with fibers and filaments. I have explored collage and artist's books.

To view full exhibit, <https://visionsartmuseum.org/current-exhibitions/>

## Q+A with Judith Content - continued

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Currently I am working on relatively small compositions inspired by colorful stones, sweet confections and abstract forms. I love to figure out the engineering required in creating 3D pieces.

### **What piece of equipment or tool could you not live without?**

My sewing machine was inherited from my grandmother and is a sturdy vintage Singer. It does everything I ask of it and more.

### **Do you use a sketchbook? If not, what preparatory work do you do?**

I don't keep a sketchbook. Every aspect of my work, from the dyeing, to the piecing, to the quilting, relies on intuition and experience. As I prepare a palette of silks I don't take notes or record the results. I allow each dye session to inform the next. Only when I feel that the palette is rich and varied enough do I stop dyeing and begin piecing. The silks are strewn on the studio floor, torn up, arranged and rearranged until they resonate. The composition of fragments is secured to the design wall with pins, studied, refined and finally sewn together. Quilting defines portions of the design and adds depth, dimension and surface texture.