

Lillian Elliott Award Recipient: Sharon Kallis

THE 2010 LILLIAN ELLIOTT Award was presented at the TSA Biennial Symposium held this past October in Lincoln. The recipient, Sharon Kallis of Vancouver, BC, has collaborated for the past few years with environmentalists, ecologists, and community members to forge a human/landscape relationship of stewardship and attention.

Her creative process is driven by the twin desires to bring community involvement into the local management of invasive species, and to use ancient textile processes to turn the harvested plant materials back into a form that will support the re-establishment of native flora and fauna. To this end she has worked most recently on the "Ivy Project" at Stanley Park. The park was being overrun by English ivy, so volunteers from the Stanley Park

Ecology Society removed almost five hectares of invasive material.

Under Kallis' direction, the vines were dried and then netted, crocheted, or spool knitted into "nurse logs" and "bio netting" to hold the eroding soil in place long enough for new native growth to return. As these crafted elements gradually decay and allow for a succession of growth, the environment becomes a collaborator as well, bringing the cycle full circle.

Kallis describes her role as that of "a traveling catalyst," a new element in the environment, spring-boarding the community into seeing the local landscape from a fresh perspective. Traditions of handwork, often springing directly out of the locale into which they are re-deployed by Kallis, underline a way of being present that is often divorced from our actual experience of being in a place.

Sharon Kallis has held residencies in Canada, the US, and most recently Catalonia, Spain, working with communities and woodlands. By learning traditional making processes from elders and then re-inserting them into the environment in this collaborative way, she encourages dialogue, fosters communication across different together the landscape and the people who inhabit it.

<http://sharonkallis.com>

The Lillian Elliott Award for Excellence in Fiber Art is presented at the Textile Society of America's Biennial Symposium Banquet by the Lillian Elliott Award Board. It is a unique award, in that it supports the work of contemporary fiber artists.

Recently the name of the award was officially changed to **The Brandford/Elliott Award for Excellence in Fiber Art**, honoring the late and beloved fiber artists Joanne Segal Brandford and Lillian Elliott. Donations in support of this award may be sent to:

Barbara Goldberg
74 Sargent Beechwood
Brookline, MA 02445-7542
bgoldberg@umassd.edu

—Fran Dorsey

Originally published in the Textile Society of America Newsletter, January, 2011.



Sharon Kallis: collaborative project in a Vancouver park, 2009. "The Ivy Boat" and detail. English ivy, assorted park maintenance branch waste. A total of 200 volunteers over four days participated in pulling ivy, building a structure, and weaving the ivy boat.