

Pacific Northwest

Quilt & Fiber Arts Museum



Pacific Northwest Quilt & Fiber Arts Museum Statement on Copyright Releases

If you use the designs, photography, art, pattern or quilt created by another person as the source of your quilt's design, you must obtain that individual's written permission before displaying your piece publicly and entering it for competition. This applies whether you have copied, altered, or used only a portion of the design.

This is considered derivative work, which by definition is "something that is based on another source" and "imitative of the work of another person." Designs are considered intellectual property and are covered under the copyright laws of the United States.

Please note that when you see the word "permission" referenced in this document, it refers to written permission. Written permission is any written document (email included) that must be specific about what permission the copyright holder has granted you. It is important to keep the release for your records, and to be able to produce it when asked. This not only protects you, but releases any liability you may have with any show or venue where you display your work.

I Used Someone's Design as Inspiration for My Quilt.

Most quilters and many fiber artists fall under this situation. If someone else's work is identifiable in yours, you should still ask for their permission. If it is not identifiable, it is still common courtesy to credit the artist and the work that provided the inspiration on your entry form.

I Purchased my Pattern, Book or Magazine. They sold the Patterns to be used. Doesn't that Give me all the Permission I Require?

Purchasing the pattern, book or magazine simply gives you permission to make the quilt or fiber art piece for your own use. To show it publicly, enter it into competition, or use it for commercial purposes, you must have the pattern designers written permission.

How do I obtain the Permission I Need?

Check the inside cover pages of the book or magazine and the back of the pattern. You may find the contact information or the artist's website information there. If the information is not printed there, contact the publisher and/or search for the artist's website on the Internet.

Begin with a short letter or email. Tell the artist that you have made a piece from their pattern or artwork and attach a photo. Ask their permission to enter it for competition and to publish photographs with proper credit given. Depending on the situation, you may need the publisher's permission as well.

What if the Designer Denies Permission?

Unfortunately, there is not much you can do. You can ask why. Always remember, you get farther with Honey than with Vinegar. If you still cannot get written permission from the copyright holder, you cannot enter your piece to competition without putting yourself at risk of legal action from both the copyright holder, and potentially the shows and venues you enter your piece into.

What Else do I Need to do?

Once you have received written permission, you must give proper credit to the artist or designer everywhere the piece is displayed. Please use the Design Inspiration entry field to give proper credit to the copyright holder in our entry form. Provide the artist or designer's name, the title and publisher of the book, magazine or pattern, the website where you found the artwork or any other important information.

What if the Artwork is in the Public Domain?

Credit the artist and state that the work is in the public domain.

What if I Cannot Locate the Artist or the Artist is Deceased?

If you cannot locate the artist, or if the artist is deceased, contact the publisher, or in the case of a photograph or other artwork, contact the place or website where you found it. This could include art galleries, colleges, or museums. They may own the copyright or be able to put you in touch with the copyright owner. Please note: Even if the original artist is passed away, there is a good chance the copyright is still in effect.

Copyrights in the United States last at least 70 years after the death of the original artist.

****This copyright information is made available by Pacific Northwest Quilt & Fiber Arts Museum strictly for educational purposes. The information is to provide you general information and a general understanding of the requirements to fulfill the copyright requirements to enter your quilt or fiber art piece into the Pacific Northwest Quilt & Fiber Arts Museum's Quilt & Fiber Arts Festival. This informative statement was originally drafted by Roads to California, Inc for use in their competition. By using this information, you understand that this should not be used as a substitute for competent legal counsel from a licensed professional attorney in your state.****