

**COLOR IMPROVISATIONS 2, AN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
OF CONTEMPORARY QUILTS CURATED BY RENOWNED
TEXTILE ARTIST NANCY CROW IS COMING TO NORTH AMERICA**

Color Improvisations 2, a powerful, groundbreaking exhibition that presents contemporary quilts as works of art, will begin a tour of North America in May 2018. Curated by Nancy Crow, one of the most celebrated and influential quiltmakers, artists, and teachers in the world, *Color Improvisations 2* includes 50 spectacular quilts by 44 artists from Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland, Japan, and the United States.

Color Improvisations 2 grew out of what Crow calls her “ongoing mission to bring back the majesty, strength, and energy of large textile works, specifically large quilts.” In her introduction to the exhibition’s hardcover color catalogue, she asks, “Why not work large? Why not take advantage of this wonderful attribute of the quilt? I believe that those of us who love working with fabric were originally drawn to this medium by its large forceful presence and the freedom to use color joyously.”

All of the quilts that make up *Color Improvisations 2* were made specifically for the exhibition, including a new work by Crow. All are abstract compositions that were machine-pieced, primarily from colorful hand-dyed cotton, and also quilted by machine. And, all are indeed large and dramatic—between 80 and 90 inches in height and width. The vibrant pieced quilts included in *Color Improvisations 2* represent a compelling, coherent, and distinctive body of work: while each of the artists maintains a strong individual artistic identity, the group’s collective use of rich solid colors, improvisational piecing, and intricate machine quilting are all at the service of gloriously pure abstract design.

The exhibition premiered at the Museum Tuch+Technik in Germany in March 2016, and traveled to several other venues in Europe in 2016 and 2017. In North America, portions of the exhibition will be presented at The Textile Museum of Canada in Toronto; The Susquehanna Art Museum in Harrisburg, PA; and The Huntington Museum of Art in Huntington, WV; while the entire exhibition will be shown at The Springfield Museum of Art in Springfield, OH. Additional venues may be announced at a later date.

Exhibition dates are:

• **The Textile Museum of Canada**

<http://www.textilemuseum.ca>

May 30–September 23, 2018

• **The Susquehanna Art Museum**

<http://www.susquehannaartmuseum.org>

October 13, 2018–January 20, 2019

• **The Huntington Museum of Art**

<http://www.hmoa.org>

July 13–October 13, 2019

• **The Springfield Museum of Art**

<http://www.springfieldart.net>

January 4–March 29, 2020

For more information about Color Improvisations 2, visit www.colorimprovisations2.org or contact Bob Shaw at bobshaw51@gmail.com or (802) 734-2632.

Color Improvisations 2's travel in North America is being produced by Color Improvisations 2. NA LLC and coordinated by quilt historian and curator Robert Shaw, author of *The Art Quilt* and *American Quilts: The Democratic Art*.

About Nancy Crow:

Ohio-based artist Nancy Crow has taught quilting in countries around the world, and her work is represented in the collections of the Renwick Gallery at the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian; the Museum of Art and Design and the American Folk Art Museum in New York City; the Indianapolis Museum of Art; and the International Quilt Study Center & Museum at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. She is the subject of the book *Nancy Crow* (Breckling Press, 2006), and the author of *Nancy Crow: Quilts and Influences* (American Quilters' Society, 1989), *Improvisational Quilts* (C & T Publishing, 1995), and other books.

Crow, who has been making pieced quilts for nearly forty years, has been a pioneer in moving quilts from a traditional handcraft to an art medium, from the bed to the wall. As Jean Robertson, Professor of Art History, the Herron School of Art and Design and adjunct professor in Women's Studies at Indiana University-Perdue University in Indianapolis, Indiana, has written: "As an activist, teacher, and curator, Nancy Crow was a catalyst and prime mover of the [contemporary] quilt movement. Today, she stands at the forefront of innovative quilting, and she is one of the premier colorists in contemporary American art, no matter what medium one surveys."

Crow says she has always compared pieced quilting to painting. "Both require a strong classical sense of figure/ground composition," she explains in the exhibition catalogue, "and experienced knowledge of how to mix and create colors (for quilters, through dyeing cotton or silk fabrics), a strong sense of proportions, and drawing ability. In addition, the quilter must have a practiced expertise in cutting all the parts, one at a time, out of fabric and then pinning/working vertically on a huge wall. This requires strong engineering abilities coupled with common sense to put sometimes hundreds, if not thousands, of parts together by sewing each to the next. Unlike painting, fabric colors, shapes, and lines are not brushed on or glued together, but sewn together. And to be able to cut parts, shapes, and lines by eye and then to manage color and value demands hours and hours of practice. The quilter-maker's eye must be able to coordinate infinite calibrations with the muscle control of hand, wrist, and arm. The entire operation is physical and requires strength. It takes obsessiveness, intensity, practice, practice, practice, and a great eye."