

## **Claire Passmore, textile artist: Artist Statement**

I make art quilts for sheer pleasure, from the moment I have the first idea for a quilt to putting the last stitch in place; I enjoy every step of the unfolding journey. The process of constructing a whole quilt from many smaller pieces is deeply satisfying – like a puzzle with no limits.

When I begin a quilt my aim is to create something which draws the viewer in and then keeps them there, thinking for a while and provoking them to consider new ideas or see things from a different perspective. By using many layers of cloth, paint, marks and stitch I want to make a surface that intrigues those who stop to take a closer look. Most of my work is based on people and social commentary and I like to create quilts with a story to tell, with messages or symbols that challenge the viewer to ponder their meaning and think about the people whose stories are portrayed. As I travel a lot, I am lucky to have continually changing scenery to inspire me and many different people to learn from.

I like to research and explore the themes for my work in sketchbooks. My books are full of quilts that I have not yet, and may never make, but I enjoy letting my ideas flow out onto the pages. I choose the ideas that captivate me most then begin the process of developing a design, gradually refining them until I have a design I am happy to start.

The foundation of my quilts is almost always made from my own hand dyed fabrics, but I enjoy experimenting with other materials and surface design techniques too, seeking to achieve different effects and textures appropriate to the subject. I am mostly self-taught, and do not worry about breaking conventions or rules, just cutting, stitching, layering, fusing, printing, painting, quilting and embellishing with abandon and allow the work to evolve.

My current work weaves together stories from the past and the present. In the past the ancient alchemists explored materials and events that were familiar to them as they worked to make sense of their physical world. They were often cast as evil magicians and ostracised to the fringes of society. Theirs are the bold marks which feature on many of my quilts. For the present I have taken those same materials and relate stories from more modern times which tell of the impact they have had on people's lives.