

The

Abecedary

Designed and created  
by Caroline Garrett Hardy  
with the help of twenty-three friends

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# Project

*Kimonos as objects of art*

*based on the alphabet*

# THANK YOU!

Contributors to the Abecedary Project:

**A, B, C** Caroline Garrett Hardy;

**D** Lilly Hoskins; **E** Carolyn Baker; **F** Shirley Freriks;

**G** Robert and Karin Petit; **H** Quinne Fokes; **I** Brana Mijatovic;

**J** Susan Mullally; **K** Elizabeth Morán Clayton; **L** Michelle Erhardt;

**M** Madeleine Garrett; **N** Marlene Cummins; **O** George and Elizabeth Parker;

**P** Bruce and Anne Stewart; **Q** Benjamin and Sally Garrett;

**R** Linda Carey and Bill Barnes; **S** Anonymous; **T** Meredith Swift;

**U** Lisa Neun; **V** Nancy Dunaway;

**W** Anne Garrett, Aaron Lammer and Lucy;

**X** Terry and Susan Chapman; **Y** Connie Miller;

**Z** Liz Gray and Neal Devins.

My sincerest gratitude to you all for the ideas you shared and challenges you provided.

Thank you for your enthusiastic participation.

# Origin of the Abecedary Project

I wanted to create a series of kimonos based on the alphabet, called an “*Abecedary*.” I started, as might be expected, with the letter “A.” Once I worked my way through to “C,” I realized two things: (1) I wanted to involve others, and (2) this would not be a quick project.

In May 2019 I attended a reception for my British artist friend Eileen Hogan at the Yale Center for British Art. At the exhibit I became fascinated by her “Poetry Box.” Eileen had created a contemporary version of a nineteenth-century Japanese game that required collecting 100 different poems, so she selected the first poem herself, then invited ninety-nine other people to choose a poem. I returned home inspired to invite others to make choices for my *Abecedary* project. With a group of 23 friends in hand, I randomly assigned a single letter of the alphabet to each, and then invited them to send me three or more words beginning with that letter. One word was to be something botanical; another was to be an adjective, adverb, or active verb; and the last was to be an object. No further guidance was given. Their responses surprised me with their variety, unexpectedness, and wit.

To take a set of seemingly disconnected words and weave them into a single, cohesive work of art is no small task. By researching each word, I unearthed obscure and sometimes cryptic facts, which encouraged further investigation into myths, legends, and fairy tales. I felt that I was experiencing a sentiment similar to that of a Babylonian scholar, who, in referring to the making of the Gates of Ishtar, said “The artisan combines things and something radically different comes out of it.” That’s certainly what I’ve found!

The *Abecedary* project has been my focus for over two plus years. My deepest thanks to each of you who contributed words and for your patience in seeing the results. An exhibition of all kimonos will be scheduled some time in 2022.

*Caroline Garrett Hardy*  
*August 15, 2021*



# The "A" Kimono

## Aspidistra, Armory, Abolition

*Chosen by Caroline Hardy*



*Theme: Pain and progress. **Aspidistra**, **armory**, and **abolition** (self selected). **Aspidistra** is called the "cast-iron plant" because it is tolerant of neglect. The reference to a "cast-iron plant" triggered an association with rubbings I'd done at the Tredegar Ironworks on Brown's Island in Richmond. During the Civil War the Brown's Island Arsenal was an **armory** where cartridges were loaded for the rifles of the Confederate army.*

*In 1863 the arsenal burned to the ground from an explosion. Those injured or killed were primarily women and slaves who worked there. The **abolition** of slavery was confirmed when the Union prevailed over the Confederacy. The word "abolition" refers to that important fact, but it also points to the evolving process of abolishing other prejudices like race, religion, and gender. A theme of pain becomes a theme of progress.*

*Size (H x W) 5" x 36". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings are mainly from a commemorative plaque for the 1863 explosion of the armory building at the Tredegar Ironworks in Richmond, Virginia.*



*Rubbing from Tredegar Ironworks, Brown's Island, Richmond, Virginia.*

# The “B” Kimono

## Bamboo, Berlin Wall, Butterfly

*Chosen by Caroline Hardy*



*Rubbing from the Berlin Wall.*



*Theme: Freedom.* I chose **bamboo**, **Berlin Wall**, and **butterfly**, without thinking too much of any connection between them. As I worked on the “B” kimono, though, a theme of human perseverance in the face of oppression emerged. **Bamboo** is both strong and flexible, bending without breaking under adversity. The rubbing shown in the detail on the right comes from where the **Berlin Wall** once stood; it represents the Russian Communist party’s isolation of East Germany after World War II. Many East Germans sacrificed their lives trying to escape over (or under) the wall.

Finally, the **butterfly** represents freedom because of its transformation from caterpillar to butterfly. Butterflies offer hope of better things to come. Democratic ideology, like bamboo in its strong and flexible nature, ultimately prevailed when the Berlin Wall crumbled, setting the East German people free. They hoped and they persevered, and this understanding became both my theme and message.

*Size (H x W) 22.5" x 42". Mixed media, collaged paper, linoleum prints. Rubbings are from the Berlin Wall. Digital images are based on photographs taken in Japan by Trotter Hardy.*



# The "C" Kimono

## Cathedral, Cotton, Crane

*Chosen by Caroline Hardy*



*Theme: Authority.* My word choices led to “authority” as a theme; e.g. the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. A tombstone engraved with the image of a **cathedral** sparked off the whole idea. The Catholic Church spread its message through art. Beautiful illuminated books like the *Books of Hours* were popular with wealthy, pious nobility. Thus this kimono loosely resembles an illuminated manuscript.

Despite the beauty, there is another message, that Church authorities were often complicit in activities like the slave trade of the 15th-19th centuries. The **cotton** trade was made profitable through slave labor. I used cotton balls to substitute for the ermine tails that often adorn the robes of a ruler, monarch, or pope. Strips of Japanese paper embellish the margins of the kimono like a richly decorated manuscript. The flying **cranes** on the paper symbolize liberation from oppressive authoritarian rule.

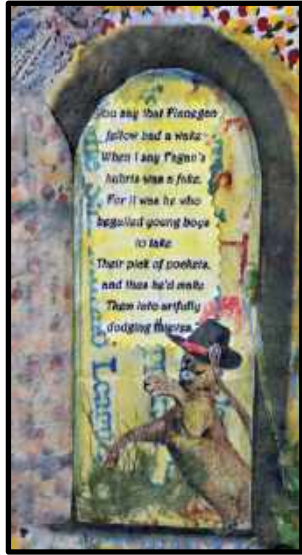
*Size (H x W) 36" x 50". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings are from (1) the Brass Rubbing Center in Ashland, Oregon; (2) 14th c. crypts in Sainte-Cecile Cathedral in Albi, France; and (3) a cemetery in Nevada City, California.*

*Top: Flying crane on Chiyogami paper.  
Bottom: Rubbing of a cathedral from a tombstone in Grass Valley, California.*

# The “D” Kimono

## Dandelion, Door, Dreamily

*Chosen by Lilly Hoskins*



*Behind the doors—a limerick and a dandy lion.*



*Theme: Dreamland.* Lilly Hoskins was an imaginative 11 year-old when she suggested her words. I expected her to offer words like “dragon” or “dancing unicorn,” but she offered **dandelion**, **door**, and **dreamily**. I started with the humble **dandelion**, well-known for changing from a flower of yellowy soft spikes to a ball of white tufts.

Thinking about **doors**, I recalled a set of handsome doors that I’d seen in Prague, some of which had doors inside of a door. What could be behind a multiplicity of doors? Limericks began to dance in my mind. Then I dreamed that a “dandy lion” could be introducing riddles behind each door. That thought led quickly to thoughts of **dreamily** as Lilly’s kimono took on the idea of a dreamy place inhabited by flights of fancy which floated airily like the white tufts of a fluffy dandelion.

*Size (H x W) 36" x 51". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings are of a thread ball on a utility cover from Masumoto, Japan. The small brown doors in the kimono’s lower front side open to reveal a dandy lion with a riddle. Each riddle alludes to a different literary character whose name begins with “D.”*

# The “E” Kimono

## Elderberry, England, Elegant, Enchanted

*Chosen by Carolyn Baker*



*Theme: Evolution.* Carolyn Baker is a mathematician with a scientific background. Because of that, I thought about **elegant** scientific theories like  $e = mc^2$ . When I added the word “**England**” to “elegant theory,” Darwin’s theory of evolution popped into mind. That idea set the course for this kimono’s design, including the addition of hinged flaps on the kimono that open to reveal clues to Darwin’s theory.

Darwin’s sketches of finches with evolving beak shapes inspired an **enchanted** forest that would be populated by finches and European robins. These birds fly and nest in **elderberry** bushes. In Victorian symbolism an elderberry branch signifies remorse, while an elderberry flower signifies sorrow or zeal. The Christian cross reputedly was made of elderwood, and Judas is said to have hanged himself from an elder tree. The birds—elegant flying machines themselves—flee from this sorrow.



*English robin, finches and a darkened moth from Darwin’s notebooks, digitally reproduced.*

*Size (H x W) 36" x 51". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from a cemetery in Booth Harbor, Maine.*

# The “F” Kimono

## Foxglove, Fence, Fling

*Chosen by Shirley Freriks*



*Top: Foxgloves made of coffee filters, baking cups, kozo paper.  
Bottom: Rabbit drawings from Kyoto, Japan.*



*Theme: Foxes 'r' fun.* When I received Shirley Freriks's words, I knew that to reflect her spirit, whatever imagery grew out of these words had to be both beautiful and fun. It didn't take long for "**foxgloves**" to become foxes wearing gloves engaged in a **fencing** match, leading to a theme of "foxes 'r' fun!"

The fencing match reminded me of the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues in *Romeo and Juliet*. Thoughts of a romantic Romeo and Juliet gave rise to the scene on the kimono's front where a love-sick fox is **flinging** a foxglove (the flower) over the fence to her lover (a handsome fox). And what else would be growing along the fence but beautiful foxgloves?

*Size (H x W) 36" x 51". Mixed media, collaged paper.*

# The "G" Kimono

## Gladiola, Gazebo, Grandiose

*Chosen by Karin and Robert Petit*



*Theme: Wishful thinking.* The words **Gladiola**, **gazebo**, and **grandiose**, were chosen by Karin and Robert Petit. Gladiola is a Latin word that refers to the shape of the flower as being like that of a sword, or gladius. That notion reminded me of today's Roman language: Italian. On this kimono, cats, or *i gatti* in Italian, wait in a field of **gladiolas**. They dream of themselves as Samurai, a **grandiose** dream for a cat; nevertheless, the depiction has historical precedent in the art of the ukiyo-e artist Kuniyoshi, well-known for his fondness for cats.

On the backside, a Samurai cat gazes from a **gazebo**, which is a structure where people gather to gaze at nature. The Samurai searches for a concubine cat who is hiding among the gladiolas. The words *i gatti guardano*, appearing on both the front and back of the kimono, mean "the cats are watching."

*Size (H x W) 48" x 58". Mixed media, collaged paper. Text printed from linoleum blocks.*



*Top: Cat dreaming of being a Samurai.  
Bottom: A cat gazing from a gazebo.*

# The "H" Kimono

Heliotrope, Hubcap, Humorous  
*Chosen by Quinne Fokes*



*Top: Hound waiting to chase a hubcap.  
Center: Hound barking at a hubcap. Bottom:  
Hubcap (quilled paper) acting like Pac-Man.*



*Theme: Pursuit. Heliotrope, hubcap, and humorous* were chosen by Quinne Fokes. Here I decided to portray **hubcaps** rolling across hills under the **heliotrope** and taking a **humorous** turn by morphing into Pac-Man-like objects eating up each other. A hound or two chases after the hubcaps.

Dogs characteristically become obsessed, even hypnotized, by rolling wheels. The grand pursuit of hound and the hubcap, and hubcap and its transmutation into Pac-Man continues on the back side of the kimono. Humor is contagious.

*Size (H x W) 50" x 59". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings of water meters, Ashland, Oregon.*

# The "I" Kimono

## Iris, Ishtar, Illuminated

*Chosen by Brana Mijatovic*



*Theme: Feminine power.* **Iris** is both a flower and a Greek goddess of the sea and sky who is also known as the rainbow goddess. She was a messenger of the Olympians. **Ishtar** is a Babylonian goddess. Babylonians believed that walking backwards through the Gate of Ishtar would bring fortune and protection. As goddess of fertility, war, beauty, destruction, and birth, Ishtar was a desirable deity for a whole host of reasons! When you open her gates, as in the middle image above, an **illumination** appears of a medieval noble lady contemplating the sea and the sky. Stars illumine the sky where irises, as symbols of royalty, bloom. Feminine power pervades the kimono.

On the back, a facsimile of an illuminated page from a book of hours lists the attributes of Ishtar. Also on that side, a gold disk, held in an outstretched hand, contains an eight-pointed star that symbolizes Ishtar's power.

*Size (H x W) 42" x 23". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from Palma, Mallorca, Spain; brass rubbing from the London Brass Rubbing Center.*



*Brass rubbing by Pat Atkins of Lady Margaret Peyton, "The Lace Lady," whose tomb dates to 1484.*

# The “J” Kimono

## Jasmine, Juggernaut, Juggle

*Chosen by Susan Mullally*



*Top: Face of Lord Jaganath on the kimono. Bottom: Jasmine and more icons of Jaganath.*



*Theme: Joy.* Being around Susie Mullally makes a person feel joyful. But her word **Juggernaut** presented a challenge. **Jasmine** and **juggle** were easier: the delicate white jasmine flowers grow on vines. I juggled colorful ball-shapes along the vines that climbed up the kimono. As a symbol for purity, jasmine is a tea drunk at Hindu religious ceremonies.

“Juggernaut” was a problem until I discovered that the origin of the word is a British appropriation of the word “Jaganath.” Lord Jaganath is a Hindu god whose icon of a round head with big circles for eyes is paraded at religious festivals. The great chariot of Jaganath is an unstoppable force, which the word “juggernaut” has come to mean. The festival of Lord Jaganath is still in practice today in places like Bangladesh.

*Size (H x W) 45" x 58". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from the Rosa Luxemburg Plaza, Berlin, Germany.*



# The “K” Kimono

## Kiwi, Kayak, Kind

*Chosen by Elizabeth Morán Clayton*



*Theme: Adventure.* Words: **Kiwi**, **kind**, and, **kayak** were chosen by Elizabeth Morán Clayton. Since the word “**kind**” is also the German word for child, a children’s story evolved in which **kiwi** birds, named after the kiwi fruit because they have a similar fuzzy brown appearance, have an adventure. The birds paddle **kayaks** around the Pacific ocean in the year 1769. They bump into Captain Cook, an Englishman, who claims he has just discovered New Zealand, so they all go there.

Together they meet tattooed Maoris, who decide not to eat the Kiwi birds, although they regularly eat kiwi fruit, which they wear on their clothing. An effigy of a tattooed Maori displays the “K” kimono with its fruitful imagery. The Maori’s tattoos are made from rubbings of Japanese utility covers. The kimono is made in part from kiwi fruit paper. And, of course, the word “Kiwi” is also a slang term meaning a person from New Zealand.

*Size (H x W) 42" x 27". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings of utility covers from Kyoto and Matsumoto, Japan.*



*Top: Paper made from thin slices of dried kiwi fruit. Bottom: A “kiwi” paddling a kayak looking for land.*

# The "L" Kimono

## Lotus, Lakshmi, Laughs

*Chosen by Michele Erhardt*



*Top: Firefighter utility cover from Tomonoura, Japan. Bottom: A woodblock print of Lakshmi with a lotus made of baking-cups and Unryu paper.*



*Theme: Abundance.* **Lakshmi** is a Hindu goddess who brings good fortune, wealth, and abundance; the **lotus** is associated with her. The lotus flower represents elegance, beauty, purity, and grace which are ideal feminine attributes. Lotus flowers float on the muddy waters where they grow, rising above from material attachment and physical desire according to both Hindu and Buddhist texts.

As if detaching themselves even further from the material realm, lotus petals on the kimono float up into the air, becoming tongues of fire that rise to the top of the kimono, lapping at the air as if to **laugh** at its insubstantial nature. Thus, fire is another element associated with Lakshmi's passionate nature. An elevated feeling of beauty and goodness creates the theme of abundance.

*Size (H x W) 45" x 64". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings of bathroom wall in hotel and of utility covers from Osaka and Tomonoura, Japan.*

# The “M” Kimono

## Mango, Mammoth, Magical

*Chosen by Madeleine Garrett*



*Theme: Magic.* Madeleine Garrett chose the words for the “M” kimono. Her words **mangoes**, **mammoth**, and **magical** conjured up the color orange. **Mangoes** are associated in Hindu culture with marriage, fertility, and prosperity. The woolly **mammoth**, of prehistoric cave-painting fame, was once thought to be legendary, hence the idea of a “**magical** mammoth,” like a magical unicorn.

Moreover, a “magical mammoth” should be able to eat something—like a magical mango—and become either larger or smaller depending on how much mango it swallowed. The mango itself soon becomes “mammoth” in size with a woolly mammoth living inside the fruit. Thinking of “m” words, I also added to the kimono a particular type of magpie, the Rufous Treepie, which is a native of India that loves fruit.



*Top: Magpie sitting atop a magical baby mammoth. Bottom: A mammoth mango with a woolly mammoth inside.*

*Size (H x W) 49.5 x 44". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from Buddhist cemetery, Tomonoura, Japan.*

# The “N” Kimono

Nepet cataria (catnip), Nagoya Castle, Nibble  
*Chosen by Marlene Cummins*



*Top: Rubbing from Kanazawa, Japan. with digital transfers of Geisha. Bottom: Digital transfer of Nagoya Castle, with ninja cat shapes and tree blossoms, cut-paper.*



*Theme: Feudal societies.* Feudalism persisted in Japan until 1868. **Nagoya** Castle is an icon of the glory of the Edo period, a feudal society. Nagoya Castle was built by the Edo period's founder, Tokugawa Iyasa in 1615. Nagoya Castle was Japan's first castle to be designated a National Treasure. Cats as ninja warriors—ninjas were mercenary warriors whose nimbleness and stealth were lethal. Ninjas moved like silent black cats, unseen in the shadows. Tokugawa used ninjas as spies and bodyguards, hence the ninja cats along the rooftop of Nagoya Castle.

Ninja cats **nibble** at catnip, ***Nepet cataria***, crazed by its scent. The cats appear in clusters of eight, eight being a favored number in Japan associated with prosperity. A brass rubbing of Lady Margaret Peyton from Isleham, England represents hereditary nobility, an aspect of feudal society. Both medieval Japan and Europe had societies built on the feudal system. The great warrior samurai class shared similar traits to the knights of feudal Western Europe.

*Size (H x W) 53" x 51" Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from Osaka, Nara, and Kanazawa, Japan.*

# The “O” Kimono

## Oleander, Obelisk, Ornate

*Chosen by Elizabeth and George Parker*



*Theme: Calling into creation.* Egyptians created the first obelisk topped by a pyramidion or a *Benben* stone. *Benben* was the mound where the god Atum stood at the creation of the world. The Benu bird was the first mortal creature on the mound. Its cry awoke creation as Atum watched. The Benu bird is also associated with the morning star which symbolizes renewal of each day. The front and back of this kimono each reveal a pair of **ornately** inscribed **obelisks** with the branches of **oleander** blossoms encompassing them.

Egyptian culture stressed duality. The front of the kimono depicts daylight with white blossomed oleander bushes. Oleanders have a poisonous effect when eaten, and thus represent their own duality—beauty and death. On the back of the kimono night-time is depicted. The star-filled goddess of night, Nut, hovers over a pair of obelisks. Benu birds fly and cry out, this time to signify the completion of the creation cycle. Atum witnesses both events: the beginning and the end of creation.

*Size (H x W) 51" x 56". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings from Cedar Grove Cemetery, Williamsburg, Virginia.*



*Digital transfer of Atum surrounded by rubbings of the letter “O” from Cedar Grove Cemetery, Williamsburg, Virginia.*

# The "P" Kimono

## Pomegranate, Peony, Procrastinate

*Chosen by Anne and Bruce Stewart*



*Kimono back side showing coffee filter peonies and papier maché pomegranates.*



Hat

*Theme: Solution to pollution.* I seriously procrastinated on this kimono and worried I might never do it. Then I recalled that Anne Stewart is a master gardener, which gave me the idea to approach this kimono like a garden. I could see that **peonies** and **pomegranates** attract insects, and insects attract birds, and those birds might include pigeons. Pigeons are **procrastinators**. If given a task too easy, a pigeon procrastinates until it gets a more difficult task (true).

The garden full of peonies and pomegranate trees can provide solutions to **pollution**. The pomegranate tree, symbol of life and fertility, spreads its branches, providing fruit and seeds for pigeons. On the ground, peonies attract ants, which are both friend and foe to the gardener, but, on balance, usually more friend. The kimono's sleeves feature small gardens with greenery that transforms water and carbon dioxide into oxygen and glucose, thus counter-acting air pollution.

*Size (H x W) 51" x 48". Mixed media, collaged paper. "P" Hat; 12" x 15" x 8", paper mixed media.*

# The “Q” Kimono

## Quince, Quixotic, Quill

*Chosen by Sally and Benjamin Garrett*



*Theme: A quest for love.* Quince is a fruit called the “golden apple.” It was what the Greek god Paris gave to Aphrodite, goddess of love. As a symbol of love it befits a kimono inspired by the actions of Don Quixote. The quixotic knight fought with windmills and ignored distressing circumstances on his quest to prove his love for Dulcinea. The word quill is both a writing tool and a technique of rolling paper to make decorative objects. I managed to quill a quill, a few quince, and Don Quixote’s windmill for the kimono. Written on the kimono are a few wonderful quotes from the book, including these:

*All those storms falling upon us are signs that the weather will soon clear and that things will go well for us, for neither good nor bad can last forever.*

*Maybe the greatest madness is to see life as it is rather than what it could be.*



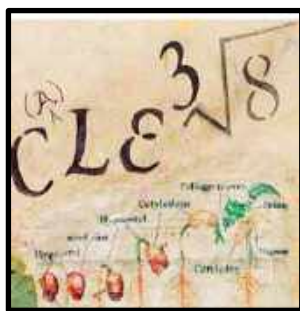
*A quilled feather quill and a quilled quince; rubbing of letter “Q” from Quarterpath Road, Williamsburg, Virginia; lino-cut and digital transfers.*

*Size (H x W) 47” x 64” “. Mixed media, collaged paper with quilled shapes of windmill, quince, and feathers.*

# The “R” Kimono

## Rhubarb Runcible, Radical (radicle)

*Chosen by Linda Carey and Bill Barnes*



*Top: Cow made of rubbing on Washi, with a portion of a quilled moon and dish running with a runcible spoon.  
Bottom: Radicles (rootlets) and a mathematical radical.*



*Theme: Root causes. **Radical** has a homonym: **radicle**. Both words come from the same word, “root.” *Radicle* is a botanical term for “rootlet.” *Radical* can be either adjective or noun. Used for political, mathematical, and linguistical functions, it identifies a behavior. In math and linguistics the radical is represented by a sign, and identifies a root cause. Both “radical” and “radicle” appear on the kimono’s sleeves.*

*The word “runcible” spoon first appeared in *The Owl and the Pussycat*, by Edward Lear. Lear’s poem needed a polysyllabic utensil for his characters to use while eating mince and quince—which is the “root” or beginnings of the word which describes a fork-spoon combo. The **runcible** spoons are in a **rhubarb** forest, spying (a radical breach of etiquette) on Owl as he proposes to Pussycat in their pea-green boat. On the kimono’s back, runcible spoons are joined by Owl and Pussycat as they watch, amazed, as Cow jumps over the moon and Dishes run away with (runcible) spoons. All radical acts of passion for a an owl, a pussycat, a dish and a spoon, whether runcible or not!*

*Size (H x W) 51.7.5" x 59.5". Mixed media, collaged and quilled paper.*



# The "S" Kimono

## Strawberry, Shamrock, Sail, Shoe

*Chosen by a friend*



*Theme: Adventure at sea, a children's story.* The **shoes** are ships, navigated by the **Shamrocks**. The Shamrocks competed (in a friendly way) with the **Strawberry** community for control over the seas. The Shamrocks "won" control of the shoe-ships, mastering the rocky seas. But the beautiful Strawberries were not concerned because in the end, or more precisely, at the top, they dominated their own shoe-ship-hat. In truth, the Strawberries appreciated the Shamrocks for spilling water over onto their land and helping them grow. Plus, the seas were rocky and Strawberries are not fond of being tossed around. All ended well: the Strawberries controlled their shoe-ship at the top (and who would argue with ending up at the top?) while the Shamrocks **sailed** away in their own stylish shoe-ships as the kimono's sleeves became graceful sails.

*Shoes as ships with shamrocks aboard; Strawberries in a field of marbled and Chiyogami papers.*

*Size (H x W) 57.5" x 55". Mixed media, collaged paper; rubbings from Hollywood Cemetery. Hat; 27" x 15.5" x 5"; paper collage.*

# The “T” Kimono

## Tulip, Tassel, Tidy

*Chosen by Meredith Swift*



*Merchant with turban and a tulip; rubbing on robe from a park in Copenhagen, Denmark; rubbings on sleeves and pantaloons from The Freedom Trail, Boston, Massachusetts.*



*Theme: Etymology.* **Tulips** first bloomed on the steppes of ancient Turkey. Since Westerners met Turkish merchants with tulips in their turbans, they saw how tulip bulbs resembled turbans. Thus, the Persian word for turban became “tulip.” Today the beloved tulip flourishes, symbolizing wealth, love, cheerful thoughts.

“**Tassel**” comes from the word for a Roman clasp worn at the neck called a “tassau.” As silk became more available, tassels were made of silk threads. King Louis XIV of France commissioned tassels for costumes his royalties wore, making tassels symbols of rank and power. In Victorian England tassel-mania erupted. Tassels adorned everything from furniture to clothing. The tassels on the “T” kimono hang from the sleeves as symbols of the power of tulips, whose petals form the collar at the neck. “**Tidy**” comes from “tide,” referring to season or time. Today our use of “tidy” connoting “neat and orderly” came about in 1706. Orderliness is evident every season when fields of tulips bloom in The Netherlands. Plus I tried to make this kimono’s design a bit more orderly and tidy than usual for me!

*Size (H x W) 44" x 56". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings of utility covers from Copenhagen, Denmark, and Boston, Massachusetts.*

# The "U" Kimono

## Unicorn Root, Uterus, Ubiquitous

*Chosen by Lisa Neun*



*Theme: Womanhood.* The Greek word for uterus is "hysterika," from which the word hysteria comes. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, hysteria was associated deprecatorily with womanhood. Two unicorns guard against this excess emotion, while the flowers of the **unicorn root** plant reach for a uterus, as if to fertilize it. The unicorn root's soothing qualities reputedly relieve hysteria. A **uterus** nestles between the front two flaps of the kimono. Traditional pink and blue colors reflect male and female energies working in tandem.

The cobalt blue collar resembles the petals of the Clitoria Ternatea or Butterfly pea plant, which spreads **ubiquitously** over the kimono. The plant attracts insects inside its petals for pollination, much as the female body attracts the male so that fertilization will take place. The wide opening of the kimono indicates that for mammals, not only must the female body open to receive the male, but it must dilate to give birth. The kimono is therefore an homage to the magic and beauty of womanhood.

*Size (H x W) 42 x 56". Mixed media, collaged paper; rubbings from utility covers, Santa Fe, New Mexico.*



*Unicorn root image made from recycled packaging paper; Clitoria Ternatea flowers; rubbings of the letter "u" from Cedar Grove Cemetery, Williamsburg, Virginia.*

# The “V” Kimono

## Violets, Vestibule, Vicarious

*Chosen by Nancy Dunaway*



*Top: Flowers from baking cups; rubbings from Oregon rubbing center. Bottom: Eye of Horus made from digital transfer, with added gold acrylic.*



*Theme: Vestibule of spirit.* “The **Vestibule** of Spirit” is a tribute to a human need to “enter into Thy closet and pray in secret.” By retiring to the vestibule of spirit, one can hear the word of wisdom. This kimono has a vestibule of spirit down the center. The vestibule ends at the Eye of Horus, which protects, brings health, and rejuvenates the spirit. The upper right and left sides of the kimono display mosaics of the Virgin Mary, surrounded by **violets** and violas (aka: “our lady of modesty” and symbols of royalty). Gabriel announces that Mary will bear God’s son.

Another rubbing of Mary as a heavenly queen is on the upper back, labelled “**vicarious** insemination.” Mary’s communion with God allowed her to vicariously conceive the Christ. God’s spirit is represented by the trailing golden filigree, flowing through the vestibule of Mary’s heart and mind. She is the “Queen of Heaven.” The overall purple color signifies her royalty. The vestibule of spirit becomes a bridge between the spiritual and physical realms.

*Size (H x W) 51.5" x 64". Mixed media, collaged paper. Rubbings of casts of medieval crypts from The Brass Rubbing Center, Ashland, Oregon.*

# The “W” Kimono

## Watermelon, Whistle, Wild

*Chosen by Anne Garrett, Aaron Lammer, and Lucy Lammer*



*Theme: Egypt.* The kimono’s shape is derived from the Egyptian “New Kingdom” style of dress: a circular collar with shawl-like sleeves. Having settled on this overall form, I decided to continue with the Egyptian theme. I discovered, to my surprise, that the ancient Egyptians not only grew **watermelons**, but were quite fond of them and assumed that their gods enjoyed eating them also!

The word “whistle” reminded me of the nickname for groundhogs: **whistle** pigs. The name arose from the fact that when startled, groundhogs make an unusual whistling sound—hence, at the bottom of his kimono is an openable door, behind which lurks ... a startled groundhog. And, since, groundhogs are **wild** animals, and Egyptian hieroglyphics have often been thought to have magical power, it should be obvious that the kimono’s hieroglyphic inscriptions—which spell out “Whistle pigs eat watermelons”—will confer magical powers on the beloved wild whistle pig.

*Size (H x W) 47" x 41". Mixed media, collaged paper.*



*Hieroglyphics from both Old and New Egyptian kingdoms.*

# The “X” Kimono

Xylobium, Xenophobic, Xerox  
*Chosen by Susan and Terry Chapman*



*Top: Stand-off between Flowerhead and Toadstool made from Chiyogami paper; chess board of “X’s.”  
Middle: Xenophobia becomes xenomania as Toadstool and Flowerhead dance.  
Bottom: Two cacti copy the dancers.*



*Theme: Conflict resolution.* On the front, an orchid called **Xylobium** covers the bodice of the kimono, while a scene of mutual distrust takes place below. The distrust is fear of the “other:” a **xenophobic** reaction. Two figures have a confrontation on a chess board where the “X”s signal “no trespassing.” One figure, “Flowerhead,” is a fictional Xylobium orchid sporting a flowery head and leafy growth. The other figure is “Toadstool,” who grows at the bottom of trees. Neither Flowerhead nor Toadstool is willing to allow the other into its territory. A circular door opens to reveal a stand-off between these two residents of the forest.

On the back, “xenophobia” changes into “xenomania”—not “fearing,” but rather embracing things that are strange or foreign. After a resolution of their conflict, Flowerhead dances with Toadstool while friends watch. The attending cacti are “copy-cacti” in that their arms mimic the dancers’ movements. The copy-cacti are dry-copiers, and in that way remind us of **Xerox** copiers, because “xerography” means “dry-writing.”

*Size (H x W) 40” x 51”. Mixed media, collaged paper. Head-adornment (above kimono’s front view): Hat, 11” x 21” x 4”, shaped like an “X”, based on headgear from the Tang dynasty, China, 600-900 CE.*

# The “Y” Kimono

## Yucca, Yogi, Yearning

*Chosen by Connie Miller*



*Theme: Enlightenment.* The chosen words have special resonance for me. **Yearning** characterizes my personal search to understand life, from religion to yoga to particle physics. I yearn for the “why” (“Y” being a homonym of “why”) of existence. I believe that the wisdom of great **yogis**, who’ve plumbed the depths of existence, can help one in moving towards enlightenment. They’ve achieved an understanding of the essential randomness of the universe that Western particle physics now corroborates—hence, some images on this kimono derive from images taken at the Large Hadron Collider outside of Geneva, Switzerland.

Yogis perceived that without consciousness nothing vibrates or comes into existence. The **yucca** plant’s sword-like leaves look like energy shooting outward, a golden stream of light from a meditating yogi. Yucca plants are symbolic of transformation, purification, protection from evil and removal of curses, an appropriate symbol for yearning to understand the One Great Cause.



*Digital transfers of images from the Hadron Collider on kozo paper with cut-and-folded paper yucca plant.*

*Size (H x W) 60" x 58". Mixed media, collaged paper. Digital transfer prints of photographs © by Trotter Hardy.*

# The “Z” Kimono

## Zinnia, Zion National Park, Zest

*Chosen by Liz Gray and Neal Devins*



*Zebrafish and zinnias made of stenciled papers and baking cups; bubble wrap as the water element; lemon yellow paper scraps as “zest.”*



Hat

*Theme: Natural Wonder.* **Zion National Park** is a geological wonder. Its rugged, reddish mountains appear on the bodice of the kimono. Most vegetation grows at the bottom of the park’s canyons, where the rivers flow. **Zinnias** are a native of Mexico and will grow in hot weather, yet they need water. Therefore, zinnias are mostly at the bottom of the kimono where the water will flow. The blue-green bubble wrap represents rivers carving crevices into the sides of the canyon, forming the letter “Z.” Some stray zinnias travel upwards along the edge of the Z and follow the path of **zest**, marked by sparkly, lemony-colored bits of paper. “Zest” describes a feeling of being super-alive and alert, like being on top of a mountain.

Although the word “zebrafish” was not suggested by Liz and Neal, several zebrafish appear suspended throughout the kimono, illustrating a zest for exploration within a habitat unnatural to them. As a result, they are suspended in wonder—the same feeling one gets when reaching great heights, as can happen in Zion National Park!

*Size (H x W) 36" x 39". Mixed media, collaged paper, baking cups, recycled bubble wrap. Hat; 15.5" x 12" x 14"; mixed media.*