



Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework

Convention 2019 - "Rocky Mountain Chai"

May 26 - May 28, 2019

The Carriage House Inn / Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Convention 2019 Keynote Speaker

Growing up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan with a family who loved art, books, music, poetry, plays, movies, and dance, where there was freedom to roam and seek adventure as long as everyone showed up at mealtime, Sandra Sawatzky felt she was destined to pursue a creative life.

She came to Calgary at nineteen to attend the Alberta College of Art and Design, and graduated as a designer and illustrator with a degree in visual communications. Sandra added a new direction for her artistic pursuits by attending film school, graduating with honours from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. A self-taught sewing enthusiast, she also taught courses on the history of costume and textiles, clothing and apparel design, and fashion illustration. Imagine then taking on new challenges, such as co-hosting a campus radio show about movies, and becoming a full-time award winning film maker.



Sandra Sawatzky

Sandra's recent artistic triumph is The Black Gold Tapestry. Measuring 220 feet in length, it is a contemporary, twenty-first century work of art dramatizing the saga of oil from the beginning of time to the present, totally illustrated by her in hand embroidery. It is one of Canada's most extraordinary works of fiber art. It speaks to the work of a single artist working over 17,000 hours, over nine dedicated years.

The genesis of the work was a visit Sandra made with her daughter to the Calgary Glenbow Museum in 2007. There they saw an exhibit of needlework and embroidery made by pioneer women. Inspired by the work, she tried her hand at embroidery. Sandra would go on to create a narrative on cloth on the same scale as the 1000 year old Bayeux Tapestry. She planned, fundraised, wrote, and illustrated the work before turning her attention to the embroidery.

By 2014, Sandra was spending sixty-five hours a week with needle and thread to complete her project in time for its inaugural exhibition in 2017. It showed at the Glenbow Museum for eight months, from October 7, 2017 to May 21, 2018, to much acclaim. Young and old were awed, inspired, and charmed by the beauty, research, and humour of her work.

In Sandra's words, "That is what epic art does. It moves the spirit."

<https://www.theblackgoldtapestry.com/notes>

<https://calgaryherald.com/entertainment/local-arts/oil-becomes-the-thread-in-sandra-sawatzkys-black-gold-tapestry-at-the-glenbow>

As our keynote speaker, Sandra's topic will be "Embroidering History".

We look forward to Sandra Sawatzky bringing her many stories and reflections to the opening plenary.