

Donna Lark

Lark Studios

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Donna is a fourth generation tailor. Her love of fiber began with sewing projects with her grandmother and she remembers the care which was taken with the finish. The Port Townsend Wearable Art Show got her interested in costume/ fashion suitable for a runway. She is able to express individuality through style, color combinations and pattern. She takes inspiration from some of her favorite paintings from sources such as the Blue Rider Group, The Group of 7, or from the living landscapes out her window in the PNW. As a Landscape Architect, her work is always driven by light, movement, and textures that accompany the change of seasons in the built and natural world. She received both her Bachelors of Environmental Education and Masters of Landscape Architecture degrees from the University of Michigan.

Felting and shrinkage are natural properties of wool. The ability to control these properties in order to produce a non-woven fabric with the desired character is a kind of alchemy. An ancient process, felted fabric is considered, by most, to predate woven textiles. Depending on the processing techniques employed, the range of felted wool possibilities fascinates her. She can finely sculpt dense fabrics that are light-weight and suitable for the movement required in elaborate coats & vests or produce a thick, dense, ‘hardened’ material suitable for headdresses and vessels. In her creative work, traditional “tailoring” is replaced by hand-processed felting. Each piece is a 3 dimensional composition with no seams and no cutting to shape. Achieving the desired form entails a great deal of highly controlled agitation, with the wool fiber lubricated with soap and water. It is simple in theory, but there is a complexity of weight, color, angle, texture and flare which are considered in the creation of each hand shaped piece.

This splendidly fitted and flared coat styled vest, was constructed and nunofelted by Donna Lark and beaded by Pat Herkal. Inspired by Van Gogh’s painting, Starry Night Over the Rhône, which he described as “glittering stars and wavy reflections of the water beneath the sparkling tranquility of the natural lights of heaven”.

Donna’s work has been exhibited at the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Pacific Northwest Quilt and Fiber Arts Museum, Northwind Art of Port Townsend, & Chihuly Garden and Glass Bookstore. She has participated in the Port Townsend Wearable Art in addition to numerous Fine Art Shows across the country including the Baltimore American Craft Council Show. She was recently a featured artist in a series of articles about Fiber Art for the PNW magazine, Art Chowder.



