

Jury Story

Road to California Jury Process,

Many contestants wonder how we jury quilts and why their quilt was not accepted. Road to California does not give individualized critiques on jury decisions. I hope the following information helps you understand our jury process.

Road to California juries quilts using a computer system specifically designed for the process. Three quilters are on the jury and they vary each year and like the majority of shows we do not release the names of our selected jurying team. We do try to have someone with a traditional background and one with an art background and another experienced quilter.

Since we use a computer program each jurist uses the process independently of the others, sometimes in their “jammies” at home. The program shows the quilt information, statement and both photos. The names of the quilt makers are not shown. The juror may choose Accept, Reject or Undecided, make a comment or suggest a category change. After completing a category each juror can see the other jurors comments and decisions. Each category is worked separately and then, a second round begins with the Undecided entries. We continue until all three jurors accept the number of quilts that we have time to judge and room to display. A quilt must have a unanimous vote to be accepted.

Many factors enter into our decision-making. Workmanship, design and use of color all are considered and are most important. The most common comment from the jurors this year was, “needs more quilting.” Quilters need to remember that quilting is a design element that is just as important as color, balance and scale.

Another important factor is the quality of the photographs. Quilts that are lying on the floor or on a bed have poor perspective and do not represent the quilt well. Many close-ups that are sent to us do not really show detail of workmanship. Out of focus photos display very poorly on the computer. We ask you not to crop the photos, however cropping out background distractions is permitted. There should be a “border of background” left around the quilt so we can see if the quilt hangs properly.

We also feel that we “owe” the attendees a balanced show as far as types of quilts, art, innovative and traditional. One year about 20 – 25 Large Traditional Lone Star Quilts were entered. We knew that the attendees would complain about too many quilts that were alike, so some very beautiful Lone Star Quilts were not accepted. Quilters are very sentimental, so sometimes a story grabs our interest, or, maybe a quilt is one that quilters will get a good laugh from, or a tug on the heart.

The jury process does take time and we do analyze each quilt very carefully. We know that you have poured your heart and soul into your work and it deserves our full attention.

Carolyn & Matt Reese