

Refraction #14

- DESIGNED, PIECED, AND QUILTED BY: Caryl Bryer Fallert
- DATE: 1993
- SIZE: 10
- COLORS: Rainbow hues, periwinkle, black
- MATERIALS: Fabric: 100% cotton • Batting: 80% cotton/ 20% polyester
- TECHNIQUES: Machine pieced, and quilted
- IDENTIFYING MARKS: Signature & label
- OWNER: Private collection: Switzerland
- PHOTO: Caryl Bryer Fallert

Design Concept & Process:

Refraction #14 is the first garment in a series of quilts, begun in 1990, on the theme of luminescence, or light emerging from darkness. Refraction refers to the bending of light as it passes through a prism, a crystal, or a group of raindrops. As a result of refraction, we are able to see the various wavelengths of light as a series of individual colors, called a spectrum or simply a rainbow. The spiraling movement of the pieced design was inspired by pictures of galaxies spinning into the dark void of outer space.

This wearable art ensemble begins with a swing coat in brilliant, spectral colors, spiraling into black. To make the coat, four very large spirals were pieced together with various shades of black and navy. Each spiral began with a small hexagon. 1½" wide strips from six different color gradations were used to piece, log cabin style, around each small hexagon. As each row was sewn, the strips were angled slightly so that as the hexagons grew, they began to appear to spin. The sleeves and front facings/collar were pieced, using a different variation on the log cabin technique.

The coat was pieced from 100% cotton print cloth, which was hand dyed in over 100 different colors and shades. First a graduated set of 48 pure rainbow hues was dyed. Then gradations were dyed from both navy and black to each of the primary (yellow, turquoise, and fuchsia) and secondary (orange, green, purple) colors. To set off the rainbow gradations, a single color gradation from light to dark periwinkle (blue violet) was used in each of the spirals.

The lining of the coat is silk satin which was hand painted in vary dark shades of many colors, using Jacquard Silk Dyed.

The coat is heavily machine quilted in a free-form, organic design of leaves, swirls, feathers, and spirals. All of the quilting was done freehand, with no marking. I like to think of this as doodling with thread. Cotton Classic batting was used to give definition to the quilting design, without adding extra bulk. Various colors of cotton and rayon embroidery thread were used on the top. The bobbin thread, which looks almost iridescent against the dark silk lining, is rayon thread in variegated rainbow colors.

The blouse and split skirt were made from a cotton fabric printed in a yellow to fuchsia gradation. The belt was pieced, log cabin style, to match the front facings on the coat.

Exhibitions:

- Refraction #14 was made especially for the Fairfield, 1993-94 Fashion Show. It was completed in August of 1993.

Publications & Media:

- Various Fairfield publications

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