

## VERA JOHNSON



My involvement with fabric basketry has evolved over an eight year period, and has consumed my every waking hour. I am self-taught through trial and error, learning by studying early basket and pottery forms. My artistic goal is to master the technique and push the limits of traditional styles. I'd like to bring aesthetics and functionality together in such a way as to excite and inspire others with my works' beauty and artistic forms.

I chose the coil and stitch technique as my means of expression because of the great flexibility fabric designs lend to the overall feel and design of the finished vessel. I am intrigued by the transformation and translation of fabric designs, after they are cut into strips and coiled into a basket creation. The stitching oftentimes enhances (or in some cases even dominates) the fabric design, adding more excitement and visual interest.

The first basket I created is not for sale. I think it is rare. It's base is made of thin threads and yarn, wrapped around thin paper twists. It is intricately woven, and sewn with inlaid details, like a braided rug. I used recycled fabrics to wrap the coils. The stitching is wild and the basket was coiled into a very irregular shape. It is my first creation, like my firstborn child. I 'labored' many hours on it's creation. I guess that is the way I envision each piece that I create- like children...creations whose beauty is enhanced by their functionality. Each piece is a precious example of determination, skill and design.