

# **Tales From a Ghost Town**

**Joanne Alberda**

**Second Floor Gallery**

**March 2 - April 20, 2024**



## **Artist Statement:**

Virginia City is a ghost town, the skeleton of a booming Montana gold mining camp in the late 19th century. The silence of this “dead” place gives the viewer time to examine the drama of decay. Empty rooms and broken doorways invite speculation about the lives of people long gone, but the decaying wood invites viewers to search out another story, the life of a living material that grew and developed, was cut and used by hands both skilled and unskilled, and finally left to dry and rot.

Documenting the evidence of time through photography I was moved to capture some of these “tales” with hand dyed fabric, created by the ungoverned mixing of colors, often resembles the growth patterns observed in cut and decaying wood.

I have been creating these works over the past several years with various shades of the gray and rusty reds of decaying wood. Recently I visited an exhibition of works by Clyfford Still, whose content and style reminded me very much of the decayed wood, but his use of bright colors encouraged me to expand on my color choices.

## **BIO:**

Born and educated in the mountains of Montana, I moved to Iowa in my early 20’s. I have learned to love the mid-western landscape. The rich history of the prairies, the vastness of space, the dark loamy soil, and the changing seasons provide an unending source of inspiration for my vision as a fiber artist.

My introduction to the quilt world was through the doors of a traditional quilt guild. Although I have moved into the world of art quilts, my experience there opened my eyes to the lasting power and beauty of rhythm and repetition, or as I like to think of it...visual music. It remains an essential element in my work.

**I taught art for 30 year in a small college art department, a career that was characterized by engaging in multiple mediums, as well as a good deal of art history.**

**I loved it all, and still find it difficult to stick to a single medium. Looking back, however my focus remains quite steady. I gradually developed a body of work that expresses a personal vision and style, but still explores multiple subjects and techniques.**

**The five pages of my portfolio introduce the major themes of my work over the years. Each page opens with a short statement describing my vision for the body of work displayed there.**