

Artist Statement

I have been lucky enough to have been exposed to Folk Art from a young age and to have made connections with fellow artists from other countries. In other countries Folk Art does not have a negative connotation as it sometimes does in the American artist culture.

Jogge Sundqvist, a Swedish Sloyd Folk Artist shared a deeply personal presentation in which he defined what Folk Art is, and to which I use to focus and drive my work.

He described Folk Art as the four walls of an artist's studio.

1. We have the wall of tools--utilizing our tools in the best way possible,
2. We have the wall of materials--using the materials in ways to achieve our creative goal,
3. The wall of tradition---this wall is the tradition of technique,
4. The wall of Folk Art--gifts that were given with love and made with love in your heart.

This fourth wall was the wall that was missing from my practice, and once its concept was shown to me really opened my eyes into why I have the drive to create. This idea that your making a gift for someone allowed me to tap into a deeper connection with my work and allowed me to tap into the traditions of my family.

My grandmother was a folk artist and she learned from my great grandmother who traveled from the Ukraine to the USA in 1899. She would quilt, bake beautiful braided paska (bread), and we would do Pysanky (Psyanka) (decorated eggs using beeswax and dye). As we worked we talked and shared stories. That storytelling and handing down of traditions is the fuel that keeps my art practice alive.

It is the shared language, patterns, colors, and art of our family. It is the thread that ties our family together and it's the driving force for why I want to create items.