



“Work Clothes”

By Loretta Pettway Bennett (b. 1960)

“Work Clothes” • 46” X 60” • Style Number: 32071

Loretta Pettway Bennett was born in her grandparents’ home in 1960 and is the youngest living quilt artist and member of the acclaimed Quilters of Gee’s Bend. She is the 5th generation to be born in Gee’s Bend and traces her family back to Dinah Miller, who according to legend was the first slave to arrive in Gee’s Bend from Africa before the American Civil War.

An often mentioned design triumph of the Gee’s Bend aesthetic has been its quiltmakers magnification of small pattern blocks to monumental scales, so that the single element becomes the entire composition. Loretta’s Blocks and Strips pattern is an example of the style of her “one block quilt.” Loretta’s quilts, while they remain geometric patchworks, seem more narrative than anything in the Gee’s Bend tradition because they excerpt a “story” from other quilts. This storyteller’s urge can only happen when a younger artist realizes she has inherited a burden to represent and enshrine the past in her work, while also having the confidence to explore her own personality and individuality.²

²Gee’s Bend the Architecture of the Quilt



Loretta P. Bennett



This was the quilt made by Loretta P. Bennett that inspired the quilt designed for this kit.

Original “Work-clothes Strips”

