



**Tai Sophia  
Institute**

**For Immediate Release**

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**“Pieces as Prayers: Kolam and Kaleidoscope Quilts”  
Opens June 3 at Tai Sophia Institute’s Himmelfarb Gallery  
Art Quilts by Gaithersburg, Maryland artist Lauren Kingsland**

LAUREL, MD (May 24, 2011) – **“Pieces as Prayers: Kolam and Kaleidoscope Quilts,”** art quilts by Gaithersburg, MD, artist Lauren Kingsland, opens Friday, June 3 in the Himmelfarb Gallery at Tai Sophia Institute. An **Artist Reception** will be held on **Wednesday, June 15 from 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.**

Symmetry and reflection speak to our fundamental yearning for balance and order in ourselves and in the world. Kingsland's quilts explore the beauty of this balance through the Indian Kolam tradition and the magic of peeking into a kaleidoscope.

While traveling in Tamil Nadu, India, in January 2008, Kingsland was inspired by the beautiful Kolam designs drawn in rice flour daily on the ground by the women of the region. The Hindu notion of Kolam is that the act of creating the design is the prayer. The dots represent the challenges in our lives and the line is how we choose to create beauty around those difficulties. This meditative or devotional practice is termed by some as “painted prayers.” These quilts are based on her photographs, authentic design source books purchased in India, and research conducted in books, online, and through interviews.

“Kolam represents for me the universal human impulse to create beauty and order. Please enjoy these pieces that, like us all, are simultaneously both the same and unique,” says Ms. Kingsland. “While the inspiration for the design comes from India, the materials and techniques are those of the American quiltmaker.”

Kingsland's kaleidoscope quilts in the exhibit reflect impressions of memorable moments – a glimpse of a wild whale, raising a voice in song, the news of the space shuttle Challenger explosion – in another expression of creating beauty from the stuff of life. Her collection of kaleidoscopes and friendships with kaleidoscope makers provide ongoing inspiration.

Artworks from the show will be on sale through the Meeting Point bookstore, which is adjacent to the gallery. [Visit the Himmelfarb Gallery online.](#)

**What:** “Pieces as Prayers: Kolam and Kaleidoscope Quilts”  
Art quilts by Gaithersburg, MD artist Lauren Kingsland  
**When:** *June 3 – August 27, 2011*  
**Where:** Himmelfarb Gallery, Tai Sophia Institute  
7750 Montpelier Road, Laurel, MD 20723

**Artist Reception: Wednesday, June 15, 5:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.**

**Gallery hours:** Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.;  
Saturday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**(more)**

Tai Sophia Institute • 7750 Montpelier Road • Laurel, MD 20723  
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**About the Artist**

**Lauren Kingsland** is a quiltmaker, artist, teacher, author, and artist-in-residence at the Gaithersburg Arts Barn. She has been making quilts professionally since 1988. Her work is exhibited in galleries and in public and private collections throughout the country. Kingsland is dedicated to quiltmaking as a medium for storytelling, for building community, and for healing and wellness. She is a visiting artist with the Arts and Humanities program of Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C. Additionally, Kingsland is a graduate student in Tai Sophia’s Transformative Leadership and Social Change program. For more information, visit her website at [www.laurenkingsland.com](http://www.laurenkingsland.com).

**About Tai Sophia Institute**

Tai Sophia Institute, a private, nonprofit educational institution based in Laurel, Maryland, is a leading center for wellness-based education, client care, and public policy discourse. Founded in 1974, the Institute has evolved into a diverse resource providing graduate academic programs, continuing professional education, community wellness programs, and clinical services. The Institute’s 12-acre main campus also houses a bookstore, a library, and herb and meditation gardens, all of which are open to the public.

**About the Himmelfarb Gallery**

The lobby of Tai Sophia’s main campus building serves as the gallery space, which features four art exhibitions each year. Each exhibition focuses on some aspect of healing, wellness, or nature. Launched in April 2003, the Himmelfarb Gallery has been home to paintings, drawings, prints, photography, fabric, and artist-made paper. It is a place where art and healing intersect.

The Himmelfarb Gallery honors the Helen M. and Annetta E. Himmelfarb Foundation for its gift of \$1 million to the Institute, the largest donation in Tai Sophia’s history. The dedication and naming of the space took place on November 17, 2006.

**(Note to Journalists: Digital images are available by request.)**

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