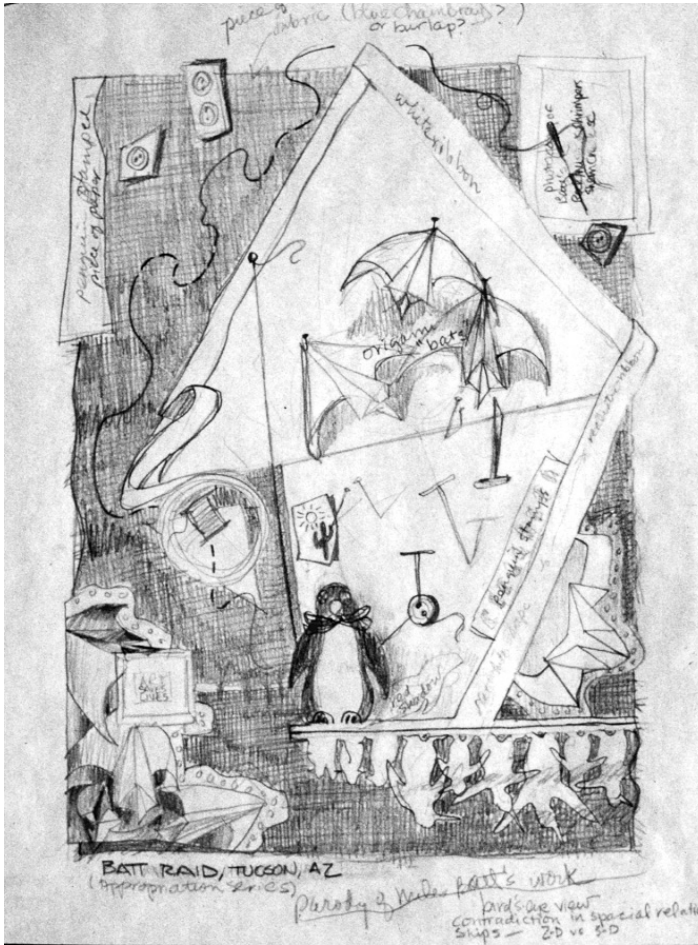


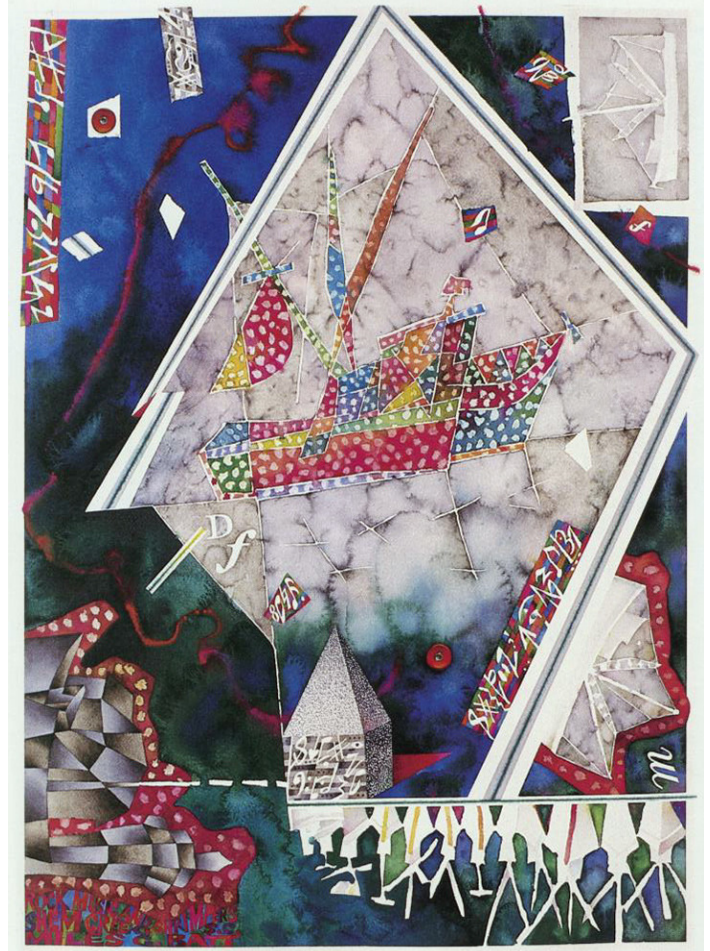
Batt Raid - A tribute to and Parody of a Painting by Miles G. Batt, Sr.

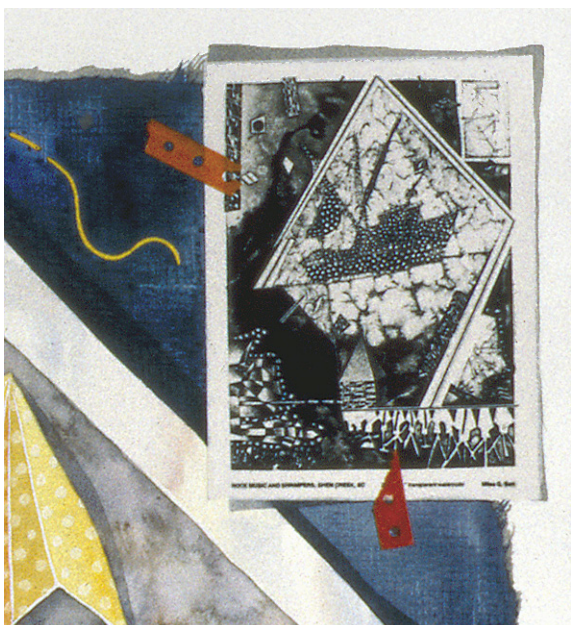
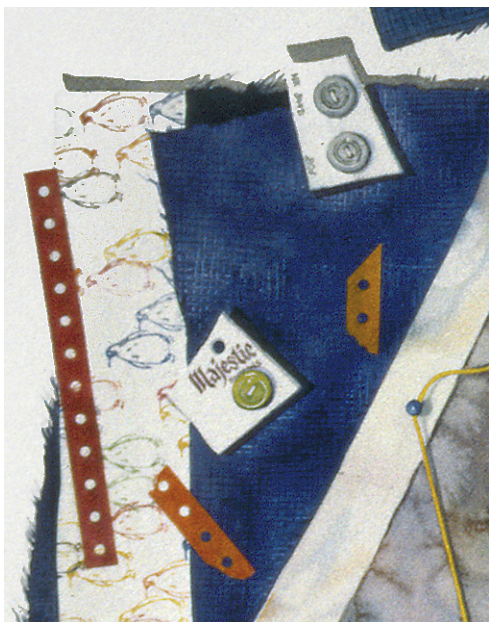


Miles G Batt, Sr. lives in Florida. He is a very well-known and respected artist, teacher and juror, working in watercolor and other mediums. In 1988, he wrote a book, *The Complete Guide to Creative Watercolor*, and it inspired me to take a whole different path in my own work. In that book, in the chapter titled *A Handle on Ideas*, he talks about a number of strategies one can use to generate creative solutions for painting common subject matter. One of those strategies is parody. He showed some examples of his own work where he parodied work by artists he particularly admires, and then said, "Parody is the humorous or satirical theft - imitation - of a serious work of art, employed to discover an alternative truth...and is pure fun...If I didn't like these watercolorists...I wouldn't bother to be humored by them. I sincerely hope someone bothers to parody my efforts!" I took him up on that request, starting with his painting *Rock Music and Shrimpers*, Shem Creek, SC, a full sheet watercolor that won several national watercolor awards. (see below)

Because I sew, I swapped out much of his imagery, replacing it with sewing notions - buttons, ribbon, thread, T-pins and needles. I also have an extensive penguin collection, and often use pieces from my collection in my still life paintings. Then, since this was to be a parody, I decided I'd do a little word play with his name - thus the origami "bats". Because some people fear these winged creatures, I used an art pin made by a friend as a "shield" for my penguin to protect him from anything bad that might come his way. You can see my sketch above, with my notes to myself about what I was planning for the painting.

I wanted to pay homage to Miles since I am such a fan of his work. In my appropriation series of paintings, I always like to make very clear what my reference and inspiration is, so I had a black and white photocopy of his painting made (about 4x5 inches) which I would later collage to my painting in the upper right corner (to replace his monochromatic image of a shrimpboat) in the same location.





Above right: This was the setup for my still life. I laid my piece of blue fabric on the floor, placed some of the main elements in place, and then used that to develop my working drawing, adding additional elements, and rearranging others. I ended up moving the Art Saves Lives pin in front of the penguin, for example. I made the origami bats in the center from scrap paper so that I could paint their folds and cast shadows accurately.

At left are details from my painting.

Top: I used a purchased commercial penguin stamp to print colored penguins on a strip of lightweight watercolor paper. I also used watercolor to paint pieces of dot-matrix printer paper. These elements were collaged onto my painting over dried washes.

Middle: This is the photocopy of Miles' painting, collaged in place on mine. The texture in the blue fabric was scratched/scraped into the damp wash.

Bottom: Just as Miles often does, I painted the title of my painting in the lower left corner: *Batt Raid, Tucson, Arizona - You Asked for It Miles*



Some of the items and techniques I used in this painting are a direct nod to items and techniques that Miles uses in his own work:

- He deliberately creates back runs, or what he calls water blooms, to give his washes a unique character. I used this technique on the central area beneath the origami bats.
- He often lifts out color in a prescribed shape (often round). I used this technique in my origami bats, and in a few other places in the painting.
- His “trademark” item is the red button and string fastener found on manila envelopes, appearing over and over in many of his watercolors. I used a sew-on blue button instead, and anchored it with a T-pin. Yellow thread is anchored around colored round-head pins.

Batt Raid, Tucson, Arizona. You Asked For It Miles
watercolor with collage, 21” x 29”
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Artist Collection

My parody of Miles Batt Sr.’s painting won three national awards before I retired it to my personal collection.

