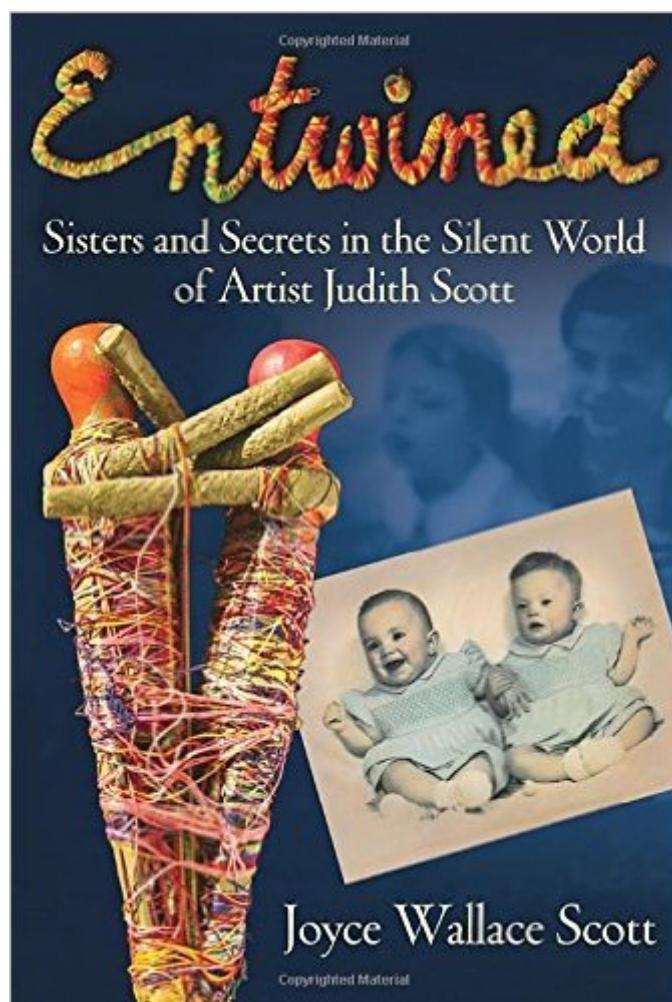


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# Entwined: Sisters And Secrets In The Silent World Of Artist Judith Scott



## Synopsis

The remarkable story of a *outsider* • artist Judith Scott, who was institutionalized for more than thirty years before being reunited with her sister. From birth, fraternal twins Judith and Joyce Scott lived as if they were one person in two bodies, understanding instinctively what the other wanted and felt, despite the fact that Judy had Down syndrome, profound deafness, and never learned to speak or sign. But this idyllic childhood of color, texture, and feeling ended abruptly when, at age seven, Judy was taken from their shared bed while Joyce slept, not knowing that the wholeness they had known was being shattered. For the next three decades, Joyce is left without her other half and must grieve unexpected loss while navigating her relationship with an emotionally distant mother. Even so, her life parallels her twin's in surprising ways. While in college, Joyce too is sent away, pressured to relinquish the secret daughter she bore in hiding to adoption. Decades later, Joyce resolves to reunite with her sister and fill their remaining years with joy. After overcoming legal hurdles to become Judy's legal guardian, she enrolls her in an art center for adults with disabilities in Oakland, California. Judy is hesitant at first, but after two years of uninterested painting and drawing, her untapped creativity suddenly ignites when she is introduced to fiber art, and she begins carefully and intentionally winding yarn and other materials around combinations of found objects. With unflagging intensity, Judy works five days a week for the next eighteen years, producing more than two-hundred astoundingly diverse fiber sculptures. Unconcerned with her growing fame, she remains fully immersed in her artistic vision until her death in 2005. Today, Judith Scott's work is displayed in museums and galleries around the world, in some of the most prestigious collections of contemporary art. *Entwined* is a penetrating personal narrative that explores a complex world of disability, loss, reunion, and the resiliency of the human spirit. Part memoir, part biography, *Entwined* is a poignant and astonishing story about sisters finding their voices in each other's love and through art.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The title of this book is a bit off the mark; Most of this book is autobiographical in nature following the author through her childhood, unstructured early adult life, unplanned pregnancy/adoption, failed marriages and motherhood. It is written in an inelegant but heartfelt first person, present tense. The author's passion for all things flows out of the chapters; intensity about her sister, her children, her education. She seems a caring soul but a bit exhausting to be around. It is over halfway through the book that the author arranges for her twin, the artist Judith Scott, to move to California from her state residential facility in Ohio. The actual chapters regarding Judith's transformation into an artist are more brief than I had anticipated. There is incredible warmth in describing these final years of Judith's life which are spent with love and an astonishing creativity. I believe books like this are important to remind us that we need to continually seek better ways to care for those with intellectual and physical challenges. Like the author I am an RN. I have worked since the 1970's in a wide array of residential facilities for those with intellectual and physical disabilities. All of them (state, private, religious) sought to offer supportive and nourishing care for those in their charge. Not one of them still exists in their original form. We now know that no matter how high the ideals, people do better in a home setting rather than a large institution. I don't begrudge Joyce the feelings she has about Judith's care but I do think her path was the result of the times and the best professional advice at the time. We know better now.

Twin sisters Joyce and Judith Scott loved and relied on each other. Bonded in their secret twin worldâ "each the others comfort and best friend, until at the age of 7 Judith is taken away and put into a state mental institution. Joyce was devastated, not knowing where she went and not understanding why her parents took her away. Judith was born with Down syndrome and had trouble communicating. In bits and pieces, Joyce weaves their childhood story together and unravels the truth of what happened to Judith during the 30 years she was institutionalized. At 6 years old Joyce had a tiny understanding that her sister was different, because many of their family, friends and neighbors treated her differently, but her parents wouldn't discuss anything with her,

and all they do tell her, after sheâ™s gone, is that Judith was going to a special school to help her learn to talk. It isnâ™t until Joyce was able to visit Judith that she realizes there is something terribly wrong. She keeps waiting for the day her parents will bring Judith back home, but her parents and everyone else refuse to talk about Judith and that leaves Joyce alone with her fears and grieving the loss of her sister. Over the years, whenever Joyce can, she gets someone to take her to visit Judith who is being moved around to different institutions. As Judith suffers in the institutions, Joyce is facing many hardships on her own and she feels helpless to change things for her twin. Finally 30 years later, she is able to get Judith out of the system and bring her to her new home in California. After they get settled, she takes Judith to the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, California, and in time Judith becomes an extraordinary artist whose woven sculptures garner world wide attention.

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