

IMPRESSIONS

Artisans News continued

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Illinois Artisans Program Presents Annual Teapot Window

In May, the Illinois Artisans Program showcased collectible teapot works in the Third Annual Teapot Window in the Illinois Artisans Shop at the James R. Thompson Center, Chicago. The Artisans Shop window was filled with teapots created by 20 Illinois artisans working in ceramics, fiber, paper, painting, and printmaking. Using these diverse media, the artisans created a wonderful variety of interpretations on the teapot theme.

This exhibit has become a favorite among teapot collectors, as well as regular visitors to the shop. The Artisans Shop hosted a Tea Party for the May 1 opening.

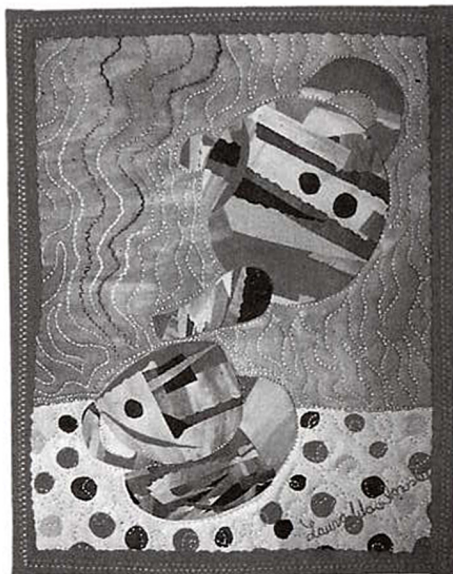
Laura Wasilowski's brilliantly colored quilts feature animated teapots that seem to dance across the fabric. Her teapots and tea cups, pieced and sewn from fabric shapes, look as if they are having their own tea party. Wasilowski uses hand-dyed fabric that she has painted, silk-screened, and stamped. The richly textured fabric, and stories from her family and home life, are her inspirations for creating narrative art quilts.

Doris Sikorsky created colorful paper-cutout teapots, using the tradition of *wycinanki*, or Polish paper cutting. Sikorsky's paper-cut teapots feature strong geometric shapes and vivid colors in a lively, balanced composition.

A female figure of fabric and twigs graced the top of the teapot **Marsha Carleson** fashioned for the exhibit. This large paper teapot with a supporting structure of twigs and twine seemed ready for a woodland tea party.

The original teapots featured in the exhibit brought a very positive response by visitors to the exhibit and the shop.

Laura Wasilowski
Tea Party #2, quilt, 8 × 10 in.



Illinois Artisans Program Holds Painting Exhibit

The Illinois Artisans Shop, Chicago, hosted a painting exhibit by 49 Illinois Artisans June 16 through 27 in the atrium of the James R. Thompson Center. The artisans' work showcased diverse approaches to the painting process and featured oil and egg tempera paintings, watercolors, acrylics, and mixed media works in a variety of styles, from realistic and abstract to expressionistic and surrealistic. Artists' use of color and line resulted in exciting and unique results.

Clarence H. Lindsey used vibrant color and strong line in his oil painting *Miss Ann's Kitchen*, which portrays a no-nonsense cook in a sunny kitchen. With loose brushwork Lindsey has the cook, in a bright yellow blouse, standing indignantly in the center of the kitchen, as if to say, "I'm taking care of business here, so don't mess with me." The painting is a portrait of his Aunt Ann, who was very proud of her cooking. Lindsey painted strong black lines to delineate the cook, her rustic table, counter and stove. His strong brushwork and color create a sense of dramatic energy throughout the painting.

In **Zsofia Otvos's** acrylic work *Ready for the Words*, an elongated female figure is depicted in a poignant moment of contemplation. Heavy expressionist brush strokes contrast with pastel colors to establish a somber mood. Otvos's work is influenced by her experience as a Hungarian immigrant; she sees herself as an outside observer.

Several artists used abstraction to convey spontaneous expression. **Gabriele Stich**, an abstract expressionist, mixed acrylics with sand and pebbles on canvas to create a mix of textures and juxtapositions of color in her abstract painting *Untitled*. In *Untitled*, the strong painterly line and rich textures contrasted with areas of bright yellow convey a sense of intense energy and lively movement.

The exhibit and the individual works were well received by the public. Please see upcoming events for the Illinois Artisans Program exhibit of photography in the atrium in January 2004, part of this continuing series of two-dimensional work.