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NEW HANDS-ON EXHIBIT OPENS AT BEDFORD SAMA

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art in Bedford is presenting a delightful and intriguing mix of hand-crafted art by three regional artists in their new exhibit that's aptly named "Hands-On." This variety of mixed media pieces includes both two- and three-dimensional works that take fine craft to another level. The intricate carving work of Allen Graybill, the fiber work of Nancy Hershberger, and the detailed papercutting, or scherenschnitte, of Kathy Trexel Reed will be housed in three galleries in the SAMA's Anderson House home. The exhibit will open with an artists' reception on Friday, March 22nd, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Fiber Arts by Nancy Hershberger

Nancy Hershberger is a fiber artist from South-central Pennsylvania who works with old shirts, sheets, wool blankets, blue jeans, and other materials. Along with differing sizes and shapes, her art is also filled with color. She covers her canvases and cloths with a variety of texture and creative patterns.

According to Nancy, her art has been "influenced by a series of life changing events. Each of my quilts has its own meaning, representing different people, places, and things. As an artist I have learned to look and listen a little more closely, keep my mouth shut and appreciate every opportunity. For me it's all about passion; interpreting my experiences into art."

Carved Gourds by Allen Graybill

Allen Graybill began working with stained glass and architectural design. He was given a few gourds as a gift, and his interest and passion began. He designs his patterns and shapes according to what appears naturally.

Allen says, "I use my architectural background along with my connection to the natural world, tapping into its cycles and rhythms to guide my gourd work. The unlimited patterns, movements and visual wonders, large and small provide an unending source of inspiration. My work also reflects an appreciation of indigenous people's culture in all of the Americas and throughout the world and their relationship with their environment as expressed in what they made, the manner that they performed their ceremonial activities and how they expressed their general beliefs and values."

Papercutting—or Scherenschnitte by Kathy Trexel Reed

Kathy Trexel Reed harkens from Somerset county where she is the coordinator of the Guild of American Papercutters National Museum, located in Somerset's Laurel Arts on the second floor of the Dressler Center. She lived and taught in the Philippines and Germany for 25 years, bringing the art and skill of paper cutting back to the U.S. with her.

Kathy explains the theory behind her work as learning to permit herself “to proceed intuitively, letting the art tell me what step to take next. It’s a lot like experimentally cooking without a recipe, questioning, tasting, partly a sensual adventure. Unexpected combinations can be fun, or not. I’m sensitive to figure-ground relationships and love how the negative spaces can assert themselves, like the ‘pauses between the notes’ that jazz musicians value. Looking at visual art, I feel a piece’s energy and a sense of the artist, in almost a conversational way.”

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Bedford is located in the historic Anderson House at 137 E. Pitt St. The Museum is open daily 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fridays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Museum is closed Tuesdays. Cost of admission is \$10 per person or free admission for SAMA members, ages 21 & under and 65 & older. The Museum offers free admission for Bedford residents on the first and third Wednesdays of every month. Parking is available on the street or in the lot at the rear of the building. For more information, please visit www.sama-art.org.