

Quilt show adds fiber to Wasilla arts diet

BY BONNIE CARRINGTON
Daily News correspondent

Kris Abshire, Carolee Pollock and Ruth Simpson add fiber to the diet of August visitors to Mead's Coffeehouse in Wasilla with "Artworks in Fiber," a varied collection of quilted art, mixed media and soft sculpture.

The artists have distinctive styles. Abshire uses hand-dyed silk, canvas, paint and handmade paper to create a juxtaposition of textures in muted earth tones with metallic accents. Pollock's vibrant, whimsical folk-art quilts and prints show a distinctly Alaska homey sense of humor. Simpson's quilted cottons and hand-dyed fabrics range from beautiful and almost traditional bed-sized quilts to modern interpretations in quilted wall hangings.

Pollock's bright appliqued wall quilts lend a blithe air to the show. Her coffee-sipping bear and moose gaze contentedly from their frames at other coffee drinkers while "No Free Lunch" cheerfully reminds customers that though coffee refills are free, you pay for the first sip.

Abshire's golden moons and textured mountains and hearts in "Moon Cloud," "Moon Mountain" and "Hearts" recall calm cold Alaska nights and hot chocolate.

Simpson shows both an appreciation

ARTWORKS IN FIBER may be seen through Thursday, Aug. 31, at Mead's Coffeehouse, 405 E. Herning Ave., Wasilla.

A graphic of "Katywampus Log Cabin" by Ruth Simpson is at www.alaskaartistsgallery.com/ruth1sm.jpg. A larger graphic is at www.alaskaartistsgallery.com/The_Gallery/Ruth_Simpson/rs1/rs1.htm.

for traditional quilt patterns and an ability to explore beyond boundaries. Her work includes hand-dyed fabric and carefully pieced variations derived from traditional themes, with quilted sun-printed cotton and beads. She successfully bridges great-grandma's heart with the youthful aspirations of today.

A close look at Simpson's "Footstool" and quilted "Jacket" proved delightful. "Footstool," complete with running shoes, fairly compels you to lean back, put your feet up and take life less seriously. These creative quilts and fiber pieces brought out the most compelling memories of conversations and cookies, with a current message for today. ∞

Art and artist advocate Bonnie Carrington is, except during a brief period of insanity years ago, a lifelong Valley resident.
