

## Spotlight

# Hanging it up: local artist creates colorful crafts

By MARA LEE

Staff Writer  
Crafts — they're not just for camp anymore.

The image of sticky glue and a rickety arts shack is a familiar one to many children, but crafts have become a recognized art form in the last 10 years, according to Nili Aharoni, a local artist who makes wall hangings.

Crafts used to be second-class citizens in the art world, but they aren't so much anymore, said Aharoni, a native of Tel Aviv, Israel. "The borders between those two (art and crafts) are becoming more and more close."

Israel is central to Aharoni's art, she said. "It (Israel) is very active. It's a pretty new state; there are always new things happening. It's very modern, advanced."

Life in the United States is relaxed compared to Israel's political turbulence, she said. "There is a lot of tension there (in Israel) because of the political situation. In my lifetime, I have been through six wars. And you don't see the end of those wars."

*"The whole creative process is something that comes from inside you."*

— Nili Aharoni

Her perception of Israel has influenced her sense of color in particular. "On one hand, you have the desert, and in a very short distance you have the mountains. Strong and bold colors — the sun is very strong."

Aharoni began her art career 10 years ago, while living in California. "I was in Berkeley spending a sabbatical with my husband, and I didn't have much to do. People told me I have an eye for beauty, and I should do something about it. I took interior design."

Those courses led into painting, and when she returned to Israel at the end of the year, she studied weaving.

Her wall hangings are more than just rugs on the wall. The works are in relief, almost like sculptures. "This is what fiber is all about. What I am inter-

ested in is not just creating a surface. If I was just interested in a surface, I would paint. Fiber makes more statement when it's three-dimensional, when it's textural."

The creative process is one of the greatest challenges to artists, Aharoni said. It takes her an average of seven months to complete a work. "I have to look at it (a work) a great many times before I can give it a title."

Her ideas come from a variety of places, she said: "the theater, the scenery, shows, artists, well-designed elements everywhere."

But when she gets artist's block, she doesn't push herself. "I try to do other things — technical things."

According to Aharoni, her favorite piece is always the most recent one.

Her advice to aspiring artists? "It's very, very difficult to make a living out of it (art). Just keep doing whatever you love, whatever you want to do. It's not a matter of making a profit. You need to keep doing it."

"The whole creative process is something that comes from inside you. It's like giving birth. The harder it is, the more satisfaction."

The wall hangings of Nili Aharoni will be shown through Jan. 30 at the N.C. Crafts Gallery, 212 Main Street, Carrboro.



DTH/Tony Carbone

Local artist Nili Aharoni shows her three-dimensional works

## Tuning up for credit

By LAURA WILLIAMS

Staff Writer

Student musicians are keeping in tune at UNC.

The applied music program at UNC offers several advantages to students who are interested in lessons in voice, piano, guitar, trombone, trumpet or a variety of other instruments.

Taking lessons through this music program is more convenient than taking them from a private instructor, said Jonathan Guy, a freshman math education major from Statesville.

Students can walk to their lessons from their dormitory room and they can receive academic credit, said Guy, who is taking trumpet lessons.

Guy, who has been playing the trumpet for seven years, is a first part trumpet player for the Marching Tar Heel band. Guy is taking lessons for one-half hour of credit to help improve his playing skills, he said.

"If I don't take lessons then I probably won't improve while I'm here (at UNC)," he said.

According to Dixie Flannery, the applied music secretary, any student is eligible to take lessons, not just majors. The lessons are offered every semester and students can take lessons for one-half hour or one hour credit, or for no credit at all.

The fee for one-half hour credit is \$75 and the fee for one hour credit is \$140. There is an extra fee for the use of a practice room. Instruction is also available to other Chapel Hill residents on a limited basis but at a higher price.

Students interested in taking lessons must enroll during the regular University registration period at the beginning of each term. Music majors are given priority for lessons but non-majors are also eligible.

Debbie Tan, a freshman psychology major from Raleigh, has found that taking piano lessons gives her a chance to continue in an art that she has distinguished herself in during the last few years.

Tan said she felt that piano was still a part of her education, and the lessons offered by the department gave her a chance to keep her skills in tune. Although Tan is not a music major, she said piano is still a necessary part of her life.

"I've been in competitive piano for a while. I began piano when I was five years old," Tan said. "In high school I was really involved in piano. I went to Enloe Magnet school in Raleigh for the concentrated piano instruction. I can't let go of it yet."

During high school, Tan competed in some very important competitions. In 1988, Tan won first place in the North Carolina Music Federation competition at the highest level of skill.

That same year Tan competed in an international festival in Michigan. "I'd never played against people who played so well. I didn't place there, but I had a lot of fun," she said.

"If I didn't have piano I wouldn't have developed into the kind of person I am. You can put all of your emotions into playing, and it doesn't matter what kind (of emotion). You can play when you are sad or when you are mad to relieve stress," Tan said.

"Piano gives you another dimension because we can speak through music without using our voice. Whatever feeling you have you are putting it into the keyboard and it comes out as a sound. It's an outlet for stress or when you're mad. It's another way to express yourself."

Guy also said that music served an important purpose in his life.

"I like music in general. I wouldn't mind playing any instrument if I knew how."

Tan said that being good at piano also has practical advantages. "People always need musicians, and if you enjoy it, why not?"

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