

# Arts And Crafts Displays Varied, Plentiful

BY DORI COSGROVE  
GURGANUS

Artists and crafters are coming, as they have for 10 years now, to the N.C. Oyster Festival at Seaside to display and sell their works.

Three weeks before the event, 90 artisans had reserved booths with the number expected to increase to 120 to 130 before the cut-off.

"We've had a lot more this year than we've had before," said Festival Chairman Allan Dameron. "We're expanding our exhibit space."

These talented people will offer a wide variety of paintings, jewelry, clothing, Christmas ornaments and other items both decorative and useful.

Betty Bayle of Fayetteville and Richard Jones of Stanardsville, Va., are among the artists and crafters booked to display their works at this year's festival at Seaside.

Ms. Bayle works out of her home, supporting herself and making fashion apparel which she offers at occasional festivals, or sells to local shops in Fayetteville.

For the past three years, she has been designing what she refers to as one-of-a-kind, original outfits.

"I'll duplicate a design if I have to," she said, "but really I'd rather just make it a different color. What people get is absolutely one-of-a-kind, and usually has earrings and a hairpiece to match."

Bayle says she tries to offer a layered look, creating matching accessories to give each ensemble a unified, yet unique appearance. Her customers won't encounter mirror



BEACON FILE PHOTO

HOVA LEE'S collection of scarves, bags and other accessories won "Best of Show" at the 1990 N.C. Oyster Festival.

images of their outfits.

She buys plain garments, "whatever is up-to-date, or high fashion at the time," she says, from a manufacturer and then creates decorations or patterns on the fabric to dress it up.

Bayle will use anything that adheres to fabric—metal studs, pearls, appliques, fabric paints—to make each garment special.

Richard Jones also offers his customers one-of-a-kind wares.

Practicing the ancient craft of glass blowing, Jones makes each piece he sells by hand and one at a time.

The process begins with the artist taking a tube or rod of glass, heating it with a gas blow torch, and then placing the cool end in his mouth, blowing air into the softened tube to expand it and bring the desired image to life.

Occasionally, he will attach a porcelain flower or decoration to a piece, or perhaps even paint highlights in gold for an accent. For this process, the glass object must be baked in an 800 degree oven to set the gold on the glass.

Jones makes a wide variety of animals, ships and other images, but he says that hummingbirds have be-

come very popular recently.

"Of course, the unicorn is always a favorite," he adds.

He also likes to relate to customers a little of the history of the craft he devotes so much time to. Glass-blowing is one of the oldest industries in the United States, he said, dating back to a glass-works shop built in 1603 in the Jamestown Colony of his home state of Virginia.

All glass was made and shaped by hand back then, but now only the individual craftsman takes the time to shape each piece with care and creativity.

If the customer browsing Jones' booth looks at each work, they will notice that each piece does not have a duplicate sitting next to it.

Jones began blowing glass in 1970, and has been making a living at it for the past 19 years, he said.

He spends days at home in his workshop, but sells his wares at a store he owns in a local mini-mall in Stanardsville.

Jones isn't always in his workshop. During the warm-weather months of the year, he spends a great deal of time on the road, "constantly at festivals."

"I've been travelling to shows in seven different states just this year alone," he said.

And he is a busy man, if his recent schedule is any evidence. Jones will have just returned from Kentucky when he comes down for the Oyster Festival and again the following weekend for N.C. Festival By The Sea at Holden Beach.

Blown glass and customized ladies' wear are just a few of the handmade items browsers can find at the N.C. Oyster Festival this year.

Other exhibitors will offer wooden furniture, toys and home accessories; jewelry and metalcraft; clothing accessories; paintings; stained glass; photographs; wreaths; quilts, ceramics and pottery.

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