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## IU graduate, international artist brings color, craft to art museum



Exhibit displays pieces made of wood, papier-mache

Lauren Younis | IDS | 10/8/2007

For decades, art has confronted the profundity of human nature: What is creativity? What is self-fulfillment? What... is that thing?

The opening of Marjorie Schick's exhibit "Sculpture Transformed: The Work of Marjorie Schick" Thursday at the IU Art Museum had viewers asking just that. Schick's work utilizes alternative materials such as papier-mache, wood and string to create colorful, exaggerated and often whimsical pieces of jewelry, from oversized bangle bracelets to wearable wooden shawls.

"This show examines what it means to wear jewelry," said Schick, who graduated from IU in 1966 and has since traveled the world showing her art. "It looks at why we wear what we wear, and what that means as a form of expression."

Her work offered an interesting perspective on where society draws the definitive lines between fashion, sculpture and ornamentation. There were dresses made of brightly painted wood and string, and giant necklaces that twist and turn around the neck and face. The creations invited viewers to re-evaluate what might otherwise be seen as outrageous and flamboyant jewelry and think of it instead as art.

"I once did a show at Tulsa University and a man turned to me, not knowing I was the artist, and said, 'I like it, but where is all the jewelry?'" Schick recalled.

When a woman asked her to identify a large dome-like object painted red, black, purple and green, Schick offered, "It's a, well, you wear it on your head."

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Such was the essence of the show, where Schick's work prompted smiles – and no doubt happy awakenings – in the lenders, donors and visitors there to see her work.

"There is definitely a happy, exuberant feel to this work," said creative organizer and curator Jenny McComas. "You can tell the artist is obviously having fun when she makes her work, which makes it fun to look at. It's encouraging, especially to anyone who might be intimidated by the idea of judging art."

The IU Art Museum is Schick's second stop on her "Sculpture Transformed" national tour. Sharing the gallery space with her work is an exhibit titled "The Second Wave: Modern Japanese Prints from Bloomington Collections," which features 40 modern Japanese woodblock prints from various Bloomington collectors of 20th century Japanese art. The exhibits will run through Dec. 16 and are free and open to the public.