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Craft exhibit 'a bit unusual'

by Alison Hamm

October 24, 2007

At the IU Art Museum's special exhibitions gallery, two unique exhibits share an emphasis on the artists' techniques and experimentation with their crafts.

"Sculpture Transformed: The Work of Marjorie Schick" features 67 works of art from the internationally renowned contemporary craft artist Schick, who received her MFA with distinction in jewelry and metalsmithing in 1966 from IU.

"The Second Wave: Modern Japanese Prints from Bloomington Collections" features 40 modern Japanese woodblock prints, including prints from the museum's collection and some borrowed from local collectors.

The exhibits premiered on Oct. 6 as part of the museum's fall special exhibition program.

Jenny McComas, the museum's curator of western art after 1800, is excited that the museum is presenting a contemporary craft exhibition.

"It's a little unusual for us," she said. "I think it will have a great appeal to a wide variety of visitors."



Photograph by Gary Pollmiller

"Golden Web" is one of 67 works by craft artist Marjorie Schick on display at the IU Art Museum.

The artwork in "Sculpture Transformed" traces Schick's experimentation with the body's relation to form, texture and color through her "brilliantly colored, mixed-media works that are simultaneously ornamental, performative, visual and tactile," according to the exhibit's news release.

Schick, a professor at Pittsburg State University in Kansas, has pieces in many of the world's major museums, from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London to the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul.



This 1967 woodblock print, ink and color on paper, by Japanese artist Saitō Kiyoshi, is part of a second IUAM exhibit of modern Japanese prints.

She came to Bloomington for the opening of "Sculpture Transformed."

"She gave a great lecture on the development of her work," said McComas. Schick was not in Bloomington during the installation of the exhibition, but McComas said she enjoyed meeting her at the opening.

And it's a nice coincidence that the museum is featuring a retrospective by an IU graduate at the same time it celebrates the 25th anniversary of its building designed by I.M. Pei, she said.

To complement the exhibit, a selection of contemporary jewelry on loan from a private collection, including metal pieces by Schick's mentor, Alma Eikerman, a pioneer in the field of metalsmithing, is on view in the museum's first-floor Gallery of Western Art.