

Van Gogh quilts adorn Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show

By Jodi Schneider McNamee
Correspondent

Artist Vincent Van Gogh once said “Color expresses something in itself. One can’t do without it; one must make use of it. What looks beautiful, really beautiful, is also right.”

Last Thursday, 120 amazingly vibrant quilts, all designed to depict Van Gogh’s paintings, known as the Cherrywood Quilt challenge, found their way to the Community Hall at the Sisters-Camp Sherman fire station.

The Van Gogh quilt exhibit is on display for the 2018 Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show (SOQS) with SOQS board member Jeff Omodt at the helm as host.

Last year the Lion King exhibit presented by Cherrywood Hand-Dyed Fabrics traveled the country with 120 original 20-inch by 20-inch unique quilts using just two basic colors; black and gold.

Because of an overwhelming response to last year’s exhibit, Omodt booked the Van Gogh Challenge quilts for this year’s Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show.

Some 465 participants from all over the world took the Cherrywood Challenge and designed the quilts with three blue tones and one black that would make up 60 to 70 percent of the quilt’s composition.

As host of the exhibit, Omodt played his part to the hilt.

“Last year my plan to put on a Lion mask as host of the show morphed into a full-blown theatrical costume of Mufasa,” Omodt said. “This year I’m wearing the Van Gogh hat, a giant orange beard, and a huge bandage over my left ear (Van Gogh legendarily severed his own ear).

Entries included hand-stitched and machine-sewn quilts, some that were embellished with beads, paint and other materials.

Cherrywood Fabrics was

created about 25 years ago by Dawn Hall, who started dyeing fabric in her basement and selling at quilt shows with her aunt. With the help of dedicated friends and employees the popularity of this unique fabric has grown and changed over the years.

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The Van Gogh quilt exhibit was divided into two collections, the French Gallery and the Dutch Gallery.

Omodt noted, “Ours is the French collection, and because of the overwhelming number of entries they split the exhibit into two groups that are traveling separately.”

As a local quilter and photographer, Omodt enjoys working with color and composition.

“I loved the SOQS since I first saw it,” he said. “And after several years of

increasing involvement, I had to try it myself.”

In 2014 Omodt signed up for Laury Thorns Absolutely Beginning Quilting and was hooked.

“It was when I became interested in how other quilt shows around the world worked that I came across the Cherrywood challenge for the Lion King,” said Omodt. “And as a board member I asked the other members what they thought, and they said to try it.

“We landed the Lion King show and it was awesome. But since the SOQS is always free, we needed a way to cover the cost of bringing the show here. Our quilt show visitors stepped right up with donations that helped make it possible.”

Now in progress for next year’s challenge is a theme based on the musician Prince.



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Jeff Omodt of Sisters portrays troubled but brilliant artist Vincent Van Gogh.

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