

Fiber artist Sandra J. Hopkins captures Colorado in fabric

By Kenneth Jessen For the Reporter-Herald

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Wellington fiber artist Sandra J. Hopkins grew up in New York state and in Pennsylvania.

In preschool, her instructor commented on her use of detail, but Hopkins cannot remember the specifics of just what this art looked like.

In college, she took art classes and after moving to Vancouver, Canada, started sewing using reclaimed fabric. Through trial and error, she developed a technique where she could create a work of art in fabric.

Her first piece was the Nativity Star, and this is when her technique really clicked. It was the type of art she had been looking for all along.

The process starts with a backing, then Hopkins searches among pieces of fabric for the right color and texture to create an image.

The fabric is cut into tiny pieces, and the work of art is built up in layers. Tulle (fine fabric netting) is used to hold the pieces in place followed by quilting the all of the fabric and tulle together.

The stitches in the quilting are as much a part of the art as the fabric. The stitches emphasize shapes and create textures. The tulle is also part of the process and can be purchased in a variety of colors thus giving the piece a subtitle hue.

Hopkins gets her inspiration from Colorado — its mountains, sunsets, wildlife and the relationship people have with the land.

She climbs 14,000 foot peaks, returning home inspired by what she saw.

"Our surroundings teach us ways to work with the land, a didactic relationship," Hopkins comments. She continues, "The geography of the area frames us in ways that we look at each other. I see myself in this context."

Hopkins' website is sandrajhopkins.com.