

# Sierra Nevada quilts at museum

ELKO - The Northeastern Nevada Museum is currently presenting an extraordinary exhibition by Ann Johnston.

"Dye, Cloth, Thread: The Sierra Nevada" is a collection of 17 art quilts that are hand-dyed and sewn to such an expert degree that they look like paintings.

Each quilt mirrors the geology and landscape of the Sierra Nevada Mountains where Johnston has lived for a number of years. Her work is on display in the Halleck Bar Gallery until Nov. 27.

An artist reception and presentation by Johnston, in conjunction with the Lamoille Women's Club, is scheduled from 6-8 p.m. Sept. 14 at the museum. Admission is free and refreshments will be provided.

About 40 years ago, Johnston said she began experimenting with dyeing cloth that she used for quilting, fine-tuning her craft over the years.

"In the 1970s, I was making traditional-style quilts and started dyeing fabric to get the



An exhibit featuring the quilts of Ann Johnston in "Dye, Cloth, Thread: The Sierra Nevada" is at the Northeastern

colors I wanted," Johnston said. "By the early '80s I was using only my own hand-dyed fabrics, perfecting dye painting with precision for whole cloth silk quilts."

Her skill and experience reached new heights, and no longer was just a pastime, Johnston said.

"By the late '90s, I had learned

many more dyeing, construction and stitching techniques," she said. "I started with a hobby that became a habit, which became a passion - and a career."

Today, the techniques Johnston has honed for decades are reflected in her quilts: artwork that depicts a scene in nature resembling a painting.

"Images and ideas embedded in my experience come forward in my hand-dyed fabric, and the dyeing process I use now often offers me unexpected design opportunities," Johnston said. "The stitching is very important to me and is inspired by my marks on the fabric."

It's not only the fabric that Johnston uses to design her large-scale images; the color of thread is very important to her work.

"I am very conscious of what the threads hide and what they emphasize, trying to use them in a way that will enhance the content," Johnston said.

The Northeastern Nevada Museum, 1515 Idaho St., is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

For more information on the exhibit and reception, call 738-3418.

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