

Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest exhibit showcases the talents of local artists

For a number of local artists, it is their time to shine through design.

Hidden talents became realized recently in the Heidi Gallery of the Jewish Service for the Developmentally Disabled (JSDD) center in Livingston. Hailing mostly from Morris and Essex counties, 74 artists submitted 100 entries for exhibition consid-

eration to the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ art committee as part of a celebratory centennial year honoring the history and leadership of the community.

Mara Kimowitz entered her work titled "Jerusalem" and was chosen to be part of the "community connections" themed exhibit. Her media of choice was oven-bake polymer clay which she manipulated to create her special art piece.

With a background in dance, fitness and rehabilitation, Kimowitz looks to art as her meditation, her therapy. She actually began creating her unique sculpture while on tour in Europe with the Mark Morris Dance Group years ago.

Describing herself as a disruptive entrepreneur, Kimowitz is the creator, founder and CEO of StretchSource located in Boonton — a program designed to improve an individual's pliability; and is a member of the Morris County Chamber of Commerce.

"I like to be in motion or create motion either through the performing arts or visual arts," she said. "I am not a yogi. I can't sit quietly and focus on my breath. I love movement

'I love the beauty of what already exists in the world whether it's Mother Nature or people. I love to replicate those images in my own way.'

Mara Kimowitz, artist

and motion literally and figuratively."

She shares her enthusiasm for creativity with her three children and remembers fond times sitting in the park with her own mother as they painted together.

She defines her art style as realist.

"I love the beauty of what already exists in the world whether it's Mother Nature or people," she said. "I love to replicate those images in my own way."

Her artwork has been featured in galleries and restaurants throughout New York City.

Besides the local talent, Israeli artists are also featured here, alongside those with and without disabilities — from middle school age to adult. The 54 artists showcase their thought-provoking creations in various media such as sculptures, paintings, water color and photography. It is this blend of varying medium materials that enhances the gallery's extensive display.

The relatively new Heidi Gallery at JSDD seeks to foster a fully inclusive community in the arts as well as arts education year-round in order "to encourage, challenge, educate and expand perspectives" according to the organization's website.

Each artist showcased in the gallery tells their story in graphic elements with unique pieces that will delight both the casual observer and those with a keen eye for artistic talent. You might even be amazed at the maturity of some of the pieces which belie the creator's age.

"I was really pleasantly surprised at the high quality of the work," said exhibit co-chair Ann Schaffer, who juried the entries. "I just never expected it to be quite like this. It's a wide range."

Treat yourself to a gallery visit any weekday and explore the many wonderful entries. Plus, if you like what you see and think it will add a little something to your home or office space, all of the art is available for sale. You can stop in and take a leisurely stroll through the gallery enjoying the creative endeavors of these exceptional artisans any Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.* and at the closing reception on April 14 from noon to 3 p.m.

For a list of exhibiting artists, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/HeidiArtExhibit>



The Heidi Gallery at JSDD seeks to foster a fully inclusive community in the arts as well as arts education year-round.



The 54 artists on display at the Heidi gallery showcase their thought-provoking creations in various media through April 14.



Mara Kimowitz

The gallery is located at: 310 Eisenhower Parkway in Livingston.

* The gallery will stay open until 9 p.m. on March 28, April 8, and April 10.

— Debra Stevko Miller