

National embroidery exhibit comes to Gilbert

By LEISAH WOLDOFF

A national touring exhibit showcasing the best in artistic and technical needlework will visit Gilbert this month.

"Through the Needle's Eye," a juried show presented by the Embroiderers' Guild of America, is making its Arizona debut through a partnership with HD South (formerly, the Gilbert Historical Museum) and Starlight Stitchers, one of four chapters of the guild in Arizona.

"This is not your grandmother's needle-point," said Kayla Kolar, president and CEO of HD South. "This is a fine art exhibit."

The exhibit, which will be on display April 3 to May 12 at HD South, features nearly 50 pieces of artwork and covers all the techniques of embroidery, according to Helene Ossipov, chair of the exhibit committee for Starlight Stitchers. These techniques include beading, blackwork, metal thread, goldwork and cross-stitch. The pieces range from the size of a small compact to a large quilt.

Embroidery is defined as "the decoration of cloth, using a needle with an eye."

"A lot of people think of embroidery as just cross-stitch, but it's so much more than that," Ossipov said. "Some of the things that you'll see at the exhibit are really beautiful works of art."

She said her favorite piece in the exhibit is "Silence is Filled with Conversation," a piece by Marie Renee Otis, one of her former embroidery instructors. Anyone in the world is eligible to submit their work and this year's show includes submissions from artists in Canada and New Zealand.

The guild, based in Louisville, Kentucky, is dedicated to the study, preservation and promotion of needle art. The current exhibit, its 21st national show, opened in Brevard, North Carolina in August 2017. Each show tours nationally for three years, with seven to 10 stops per tour.

As of this month, the Gilbert exhibit is the only one scheduled in the Pacific Southwest Region and Ossipov believes it may be the first time the national show has come to the region.

The exhibit will also include stitching demonstrations, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 7, and Saturday, May 5.

Entrance to the exhibit is included in general admission, as are the museum's permanent exhibits that chronicle the history of Gilbert and the 13th annual "Art of Quilting Show," which is on display through May 28. The quilting exhibit features more than 100 quilts from members of the local community.

HD South is the home of the Gilbert Historical Museum and its name refers to its location at the southern end of the Gilbert Heritage District. The organization rebranded in fall 2017 to add arts and culture exhibits and intergenerational programming. Programs include art work-



"Inspiring Strings" by Kim Beamish



"Silence is Filled with Conversation," by Marie Renee Otis

(Photo courtesy of Embroiderers' Guild of America)



"Chardonnay Stags" by Claudia Claar

shops, STEM workshops, music programs, gardening classes, storytelling and yoga.

"There's all kinds of things happening all the time," Kolar said. "We have a lot more to offer now than we ever did before."



"All That Jazz" by Catherine McEnerney

HD South is located at 10 S. Gilbert Road. Entrance to the exhibit is included in general admission, which is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$3 for children ages 5-12. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Visit hdsouth.org, starlightstitchers.org and egausa.org.