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1,000 Springs Festival of the Arts attracts 70 artists

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Get ready for an influx of handcrafted gifts and art in a setting as beautiful as the paintings on display.

Seventy artists are traveling from all over southern Idaho and the region to show their wares at the 17th Annual Thousand Springs Festival of the Arts - up from last year's 55.

Regional artists include Boise hammock makers Molly O'Shea and Gilbert Gursansky, glass artist Laura Johnson of Homedale, and Sandy, Utah, board game makers Dirk and Daryl Olsen. Various artists from the Magic and Wood River valleys are also showing their work.

Filer artist Carrie Berndt had participated in the show before but took a break for a few years while traveling to other shows around the West. She's back again, ready to reintroduce her apparel and handbags to Idaho buyers.

"I had heard that this show had gotten maybe new promoters or new people doing the show, so I figured, 'Well, I should try it out again,'" Berndt said.

Whether this was their first show or seventh, the artists interviewed all said they are excited to show their work in the Thousand Springs area. Buhl jewelry maker Dick Morris, who travels to several shows around the state, said he especially looks forward to this one because of the music, scenery and food.

"I think it's one of the best," he said.

Meet some of the artists:

Ilse Hylton, Twin Falls

Knit and woven goods

Ilse Hylton doesn't know when she first started knitting, but she remembers having to make her own knee socks for school. Her grandmother taught her how to spin yarn when she was 12.

Now 77, she sells knit and woven goods - some made from yarn she spun herself - at art fairs. Look for her bags, clothing and rugs.

Interested in how she makes her yarn? Hylton will demonstrate how to spin fiber into yarn at next weekend's festival.

Dick Morris, Buhl

Jewelry

Dick Morris used to scour the earth himself for jasper and agate for his silver jewelry. Now, he relies on others to dig most of the stones for him.

"I'm getting kind of old and decrepit and do it a little less now," Morris said.

Morris makes earrings, pendants and belt buckles with the gems, which he gets from Idaho and the Northwest. He also salvages old stones from used jewelry.

Aimee Duncan, Jerome

Jewelry

Aimee Duncan has been making jewelry for only three years, but her designs are far from amateur.

The chunky, earthy pieces mix gemstones - including turquoise, obsidian and sugilite - with wood and metal links. Her designs grace necklaces, earrings and bracelets, and she recently added beaded watch bands to her repertoire.

"It's bold, it's trendy," she said. And it's original. "I make one style and I typically don't repeat it."

Dawn Blair, Twin Falls

Paintings and photographs

Dawn Blair is no stranger to art shows, but most Magic Valley art fans haven't seen her work.

Blair started selling her work at shows in Utah, but except for a few entries in the Twin Falls County Fair, she has avoided showing her paintings and photos in southern Idaho.

"I think for a long time, I didn't want people in the area to know that I was an artist," Blair said. "I was kind of shy about it."

Not anymore. Blair is showing her acrylic landscapes at the Thousand Springs festival next weekend. Since she started painting and taking pictures, her art has matured, she said.

"I think my paintings reflect that I'm on a certain pathway at this moment."

Carrie Berndt, Filer

Apparel and handbags

A lot has changed in the 14 years since Carrie Berndt started her business.

The Filer mom of four renamed the business The Cat's Pajamas and moved it to the Internet. In the past few years, Berndt stopped exhibiting around Twin Falls in favor of shows in California. But after selling her goods across the West, she's coming back to southern Idaho again.

Berndt uses vintage fabrics and trims to embellish denim jackets, skirts, bags and shower curtains. Keep an eye out for her funky designs and colorful prints.