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## November in the gallery at Wilder Art & Garden Center

By Sora O'Doherty



Slavka Ruzicka

The artist featured in the November gallery display at the Art and Garden Center at Wilder is familiar to many in Orinda for her activism in the Tabor/Orinda Sister City Foundation. But the talented cross-stitch artist will now be showing works from her collection of miniature oriental rugs. The opening reception will be held at the gallery on Saturday, Nov. 2 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Guests will have the opportunity to see a selection of the works and meet the artist, Slavka Ruzicka, who will be giving a demonstration of her technique. Light refreshments will be served. Beginning Nov. 5, the gallery will be open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 8:15 p.m.

Born in Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic, Bohuslava Ruzicka (also known as Slavka) was introduced to the art of cross-stitching when she was living in Singapore in 1987. She was asked to help with charity work to aid a local orphanage. She cross-stitched 100 small Christmas ornaments for their tree. After finishing the project, she began working on more challenging pieces. Since she accompanied her husband who traveled a great deal for work, Ruzicka was able to devote a significant amount of time to her artwork. She started the Miniature Oriental Carpets Project in 1996, completing it in 2005.

Her collection is inspired by Frank M. Cooper, who designed miniature needlepoint patterns of authentic Persian, Caucasian, and Turkish carpets. He published a book of his patterns, which were derived from actual rugs that he has studied in his travels, and Ruzicka used his charts for the art in this collection. She will be showing 24 pieces. The largest is about 16 by 20 inches, while the smallest would be about 14 by 16 inches. Each piece has a two-inch border. The patterns are worked on Aida cotton 14-count cross stitch cloth with cotton embroidery floss. About half the pieces are professionally framed, the other half Ruzicka framed herself.

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