

Flo Rosenstock



As a self-proclaimed “color junkie”, Flo Rosenstock can’t resist the deep rich hues and textures of natural fiber and has yet to run out of methods to employ them in her art.

Dyed wool and silk become wild mushrooms in her October show at SAC *From the Ground Up*. Bonded together in a process called Numi felting, the materials concentrate colors and the pictures release a steady saturated glow. Flo’s theme was inspired by oyster mushrooms in a farmers market and by seeing the effect a pleating machine had on some silk. The minute silken folds reminded her immediately of the underside of a mushroom cap.



“I’ve always been really interested in things that sort of grow up in little cracks... though I’ve never actually seen one coming out of a sidewalk. Here is a picture of mushrooms and a dandelion growing out of the cracks” explained Flo in front of one of her wall pieces. She also did a few three-dimensional pieces for the show, including a lamp. “I was fascinated by luminescent mushrooms, and I wanted to figure out a way to make mushrooms illuminated from the bottom. So here I’ve put them around this light... you can see the light coming through the crenelations of the mushrooms. Wool doesn’t burn, so fiber is good for making lamps.”

A collaboration with her son, a multi-media artist, led to a garment covered with mushrooms that are lit up with luminescent neon-like wire. A previous garment they made together was wired for recording ambient sounds which he would re-mix into something else. Flo believes the mushroom jacket will also be wired for sound, and will make an appearance at the opening with her son wearing it.

Flo’s first forays into making art were side excursions into pottery while working on her sociology degree. “I started with pottery because I felt early on that though I loved art, I wasn’t very talented. I

am challenged in the drawing department; I wanted to focus on something I could learn to do and didn't need to be artistic to do it." She remained a potter throughout the years she lived in Keene NH, opening a local craft shop with two other women in the downtown area. After taking a course in painting she explored techniques in painting on silk, and made scarves this way. Eventually, her thumbs were tired out from the potters wheel, and she yearned for richer colors than she could find in a glaze. The store disbanded, and changes in her life brought her to the Amherst area where she discovered the Fiber Arts Center. Closed for several years now, this is where she initially encountered felting and forged ties with the local fiber arts scene.



About once a year Flo gets out the clay and spends time at a wheel in her garage creating her unique miniature vases. She has always been fascinated with the extreme contrast between the tiny neck and large hollow body of these forms and enjoys the challenge involved in creating them. The last time she took to her wheel, she turned out 200 pieces in a huge potting binge, and these she will marble with paints in smaller batches. Marbling is an effect usually seen only on flat surfaces but employed by Flo with great mastery on her little creations.

Now and again Flo decorates an existing garment with felt and silk, creating unique recycled clothing that sells rapidly at the coop. Her prices are always affordable. "I think the reality is my stuff is so labor intensive no matter what I charge I could never make any money, I figure I might as well not charge as much so maybe people will buy it and it won't just pile up in the house!" When she prices something higher, it usually means she is loathe to part with it.



Flo knew several artists in the Shelburne Coop and juried in after the Fiber Arts Center closed. Like most members, she finds that being part of the local artistic community helps her thrive and the coop exposes her work to an appreciative audience.

Photos from top to bottom: Big and Little Mushrooms; Crocus Scarf; Oyster Mushrooms