

Apr. 11--TINTON FALLS -- Dorothy Clifton of Jackson was admiring a \$2,000 photograph of the former Palace Amusements when she thought back to her childhood.

"I actually went there as a kid," she recalled.

The panoramic photo of the Asbury Park landmark is one of more than 2,000 pieces of art, ranging from paintings to ceramics to jewelry, on display through Wednesday at the Monmouth Reform Temple for the 35th Monmouth Festival of the Arts. About 275 artists -- roughly half from Monmouth and Ocean counties -- are participating in the event, a fund-raiser for the temple.

"Everything is original work of a very high quality," said Barbara Goldstein, the exhibition's publicity chairwoman.

Besides the gallery, the festival on Sunday also featured several demonstrations, including lessons on wire looping, landscape oil painting and wood turning. Today, there will be demonstrations on clay sculpting and ink drawing.

And the children got involved in two workshops Sunday. One, for children ages 4 to 7, allowed participants to paint and decorate wooden maracas and tambourines. The instruments later would be used during a children's musical performance in the sanctuary.

"I like doing crafts," said Lauren Vicenzi, 7, as she used "cotton balls and sticky stuff" to make a maraca look like a person. "When I grow up, I want to be an artist."

In the other workshop, children ages 7 to 11 created their own pastel paintings. First, they wrote their name on one half of a piece of paper, then folded it over to imprint the name on the other half of the paper.

Next, the youths turned the paper vertically and started painting their own designs as if their name were never written on the paper.

Pinky Aduvato, 57, an art instructor, encouraged the children to exchange ideas by sharing their works with others.

"It makes you feel like an artist," she said. "Life's too short. You gotta have fun."

Alice Berman, the show's artist manager, said getting the children involved is an important facet of the event.

"If you can get children to see fine art not as being something up there they can't touch . . . then you've won the battle for maintaining cultural growth from generation to generation," she said.

Of course, there are plenty of pieces meant solely for looking at, not touching.

That included two acrylic paintings created by Linda Gayoso, 38, of Ocean Township. The pieces, depicting floral scenes, were selling for \$2,999 and \$2,500.

Gayoso, in the festival for the first time, said she likes the show because it attracts a variety of artists.

"It doesn't just feature one style," she said.

Jill Mercadante, 41, purchased a nautical scene painted with watercolors.

"I like the color, and it's an original painting," Mercadante said, adding that she will hang the piece on her living room wall.

Scott Kutcher, 37, and his fiancée, Danielle Kelton, 32, both of Tinton Falls, came looking for "something to hang over the fireplace." The couple said the gallery features many fine paintings, just not what they were looking for.

"It wasn't for us," Kutcher said. "We're more into abstracts."

For those not looking for paintings or photographs, the festival also has dozens of ceramics, crafts, fiber and glass pieces and jewelry.

Dale Pilling, 58, of Marlboro is selling her original silver earrings, bracelets and necklaces, made with hand-blown glass beads and semi-precious stones. The pieces are selling between \$30 and \$150.

Pilling said she likes that the gallery doesn't just have paintings.

"I think if you're going to call it a fine arts venue, you have to have it all," she said.

To see more of the Asbury Park Press, or to subscribe to the newspaper, go to <http://www.app.com>

Copyright (c) 2005, Asbury Park Press, N.J.

Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News.

For information on republishing this content, contact us at (800) 661-2511 (U.S.), (213) 237-4914 (worldwide), fax (213) 237-6515, or e-mail reprints@krtinfo.com.