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Bronx's Lehman gallery show illustrates rebirth of a popular 1960s style

BY TANYANIKA SAMUELS DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Friday, March 18th 2011, 4:00 AM

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Fiber arts - like knitting, weaving and embroidery - are making a comeback, say local art experts. And a new exhibition at the Lehman College Art Gallery is celebrating the resurgence.

"It's a wonderful counterpoint to cool, digital art where everything is machine-made," said curator Sandra Sider. "That can be exciting, but really your hands didn't form it."

The free exhibit, "New York Fiber in the 21st Century," features 47 works by 30 New York area artists. An artists' reception will be held Monday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Visitors can expect to see everything from an elaborate quilt depicting cotton pickers to delicate panels of embroidery to a 10-foot tree fashioned from fabric, metal and lights.

"I hope people enjoy the visual excitement of the pieces and are intrigued," Sider said. "It's a maverick artform that's coming into its own."

She recalled how fiber arts peaked in popularity during the 1960s and 1970s during the women's rights movement and hippie revolution.

"There was a lot of tie-dying and beading, but that died down with the push to return to painting," said Sider, who is a quilter. "Art is cyclical. And I think the cycle is coming around again. We're coming back into the fiber world and I find it very exciting."

Artist Ruth Marshall's piece is called "Ocelot." She used yarn, strings and sticks as part of this knitted work that resembles the pelt of the exotic wildcat.

She says she was inspired to create a series of "pelts" while researching ocelots at the



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[American Museum of Natural History](#).

"I was just really fascinated by their history," said Marshall, of [Morris Park](#). "I hope that people, when they see [my piece], will be inspired to learn something about ocelots and the current status of the species today."

"New York Fiber in the 21st Century" will run through May 12 at the Lehman College Art Gallery, 250 Bedford Park Blvd. West. For more information, visit www.lehman.edu/gallery or call (718) 960-8731.

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