

Quilt Exhibit Draws New Faces to National Gallery

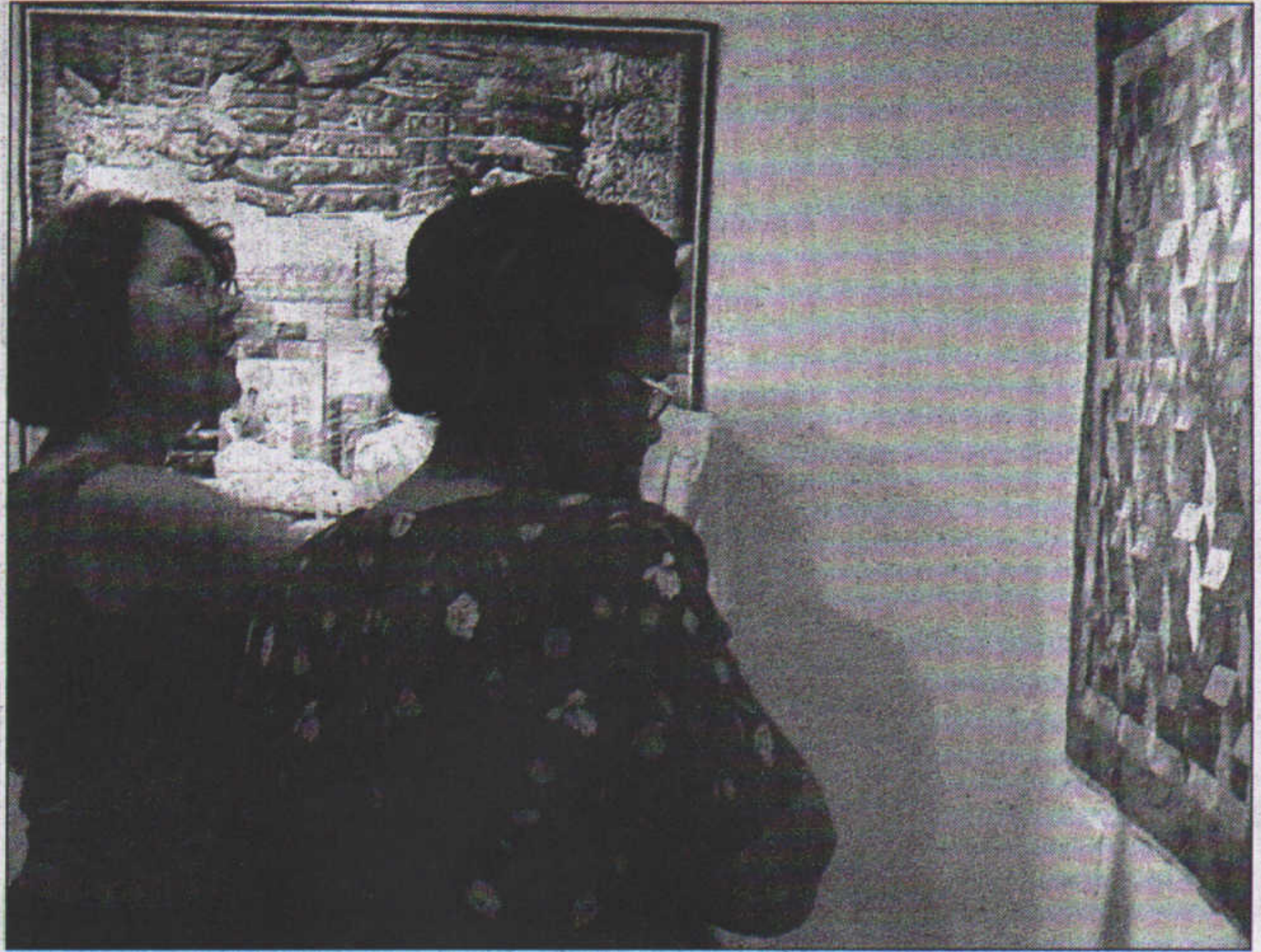
A new exhibition is drawing unprecedented crowds to the National Gallery in Industrial Park.

More than 300 people attended the opening of an exhibition of art quilts, entitled *From the Heart*, on Wednesday, February 14. In the time since, more people have visited the gallery than for any previous show, Director Leslie Bigelman says.

Ms. Bigelman adds that, "the most common reaction from visitors to date has been disbelief at the quilters painterly" approach to this traditional craft. "People are amazed by what they see. The quilters who come take home new techniques they can use in their own work. We've had a lot of repeat visits from that group. Even the men who come are surprised," she comments.

The exhibition is comprised of two travelling exhibits; a special work-in-progress by a local quilting group; and three other local pieces. Made up of smaller quilts, the first travelling exhibit focuses on variations of the theme, *Kiss*. Meanwhile the second, which consists of larger 36" x 36" pieces, is punningly called *Yardworks*, and depicts mainly outdoor scenes.

Meeting with the local quilting group, almost a year before the Valentine's Day opening, Ms. Bigelman had explained the show's overall theme. In keeping with the mood of the exhibition, participants chose to call their submission *Love of Our Island*, and use it to illustrate local life. The groups'



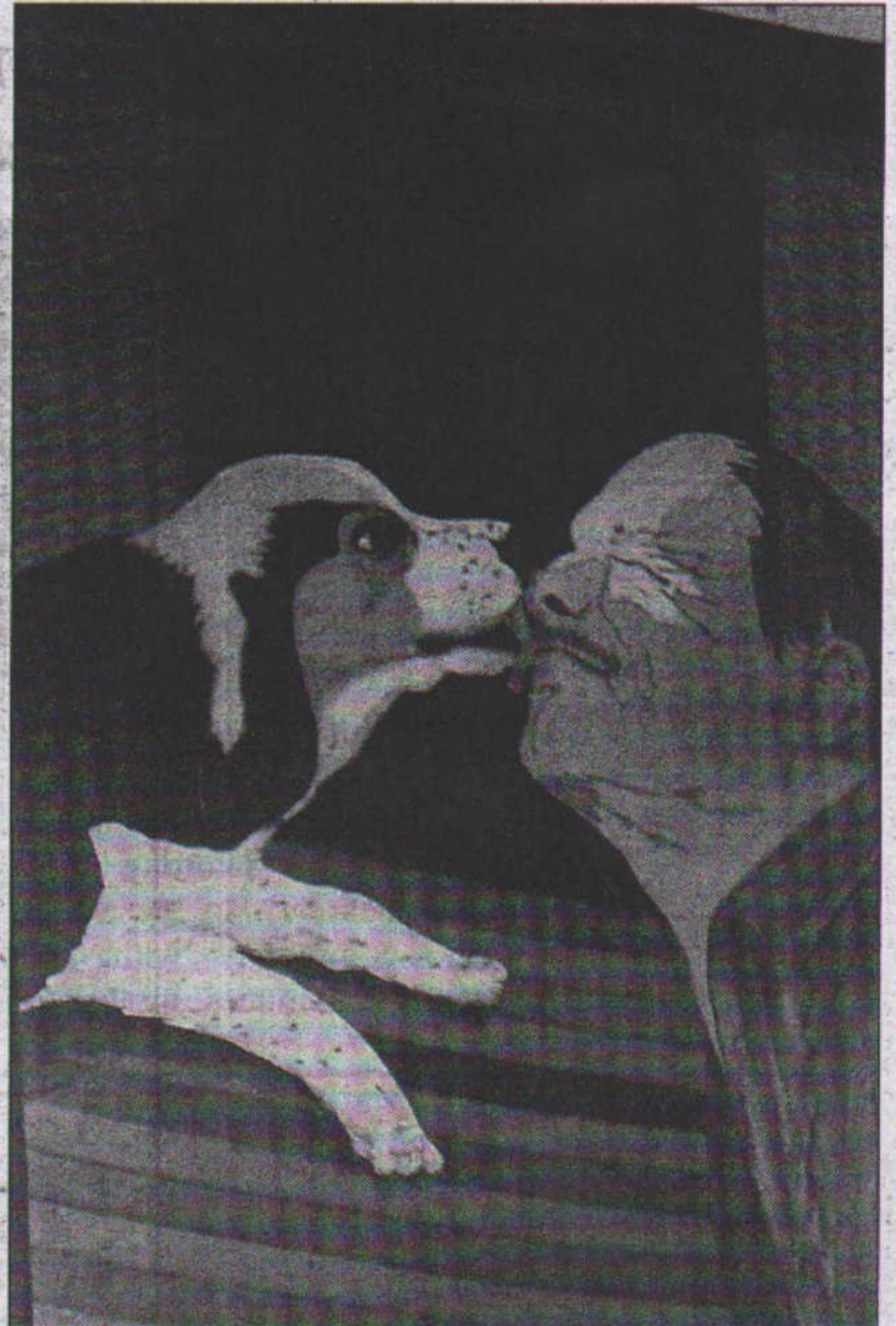
Patrons enjoying the fine traditional handcraft displayed at the quilting exhibition

16 members will add quilting stitches throughout the exhibition.

Ms. Bigelman comments that public response has been on the level of what the gallery hopes to inspire each time it opens an exhibit. "It is bringing in many people who are visiting an art gallery for the first time. By making them see quilting in a new light, the exhibition also changes their perspective of art," she says.

She thanks friends of the gallery, volunteers and the Agriculture Department for contributing to the success of the opening evening, a factor she believes led to good word-of-mouth and strong attendance.

Interested persons may visit the *From the Heart* exhibition at the National Gallery through March 17. Opening hours are weekdays from 10am-7pm, and Saturdays, 11am-4pm.



Colourful and creative, one of the quilts on display.