

Get crafty!

The American Craft Council show, coming to the Cobb Galleria in March, features the work of more than 200 artists and craftspeople. Among the local participants are four who talked about how arts are part of their personal living spaces.

By H.M. Cauley



Beth J. Tarkington is a painter by training, but she specializes in hand-built ceramics, with a variety as broad as small tea bowls to large sculptures. Thirteen years ago, she moved into a 1966 ranch house in East Cobb and added a studio next to the garage. It's her favorite space, with an exposed brick wall that's the rear of the house and a stretch of windows overlooking a golf course. Like the rest of the house, the studio is dotted with Tarkington's works, from blue jay sculptures to vases. "I want to show my work, my friends' work, my mentors' work and my husband's passion for music," she said. "I want people to walk in and say, 'Yeah, this is where they live,' and I think it does."



Although Ann Finley began her career working with metal sculpture, she now devotes all of her efforts to jewelry. But regardless of the medium, it's always about color for this Decatur artist. Visitors to her 1950s ranch house can see her passion in the artwork and ceramics she's picked up throughout the years. "I've acquired a bit of a collection, and it's all become part of the decor," she said. "Whether it's folk art or abstracts, they all have a lot of color and very bright images." Vibrant shades also are part of the renovation she finished a few years ago. "I went for maroon in the living room and various shades of orange in the kitchen," she said. "The only place that's not colorful is my basement studio; it's a dungeon!"

Hudi Sandgren has dabbled in art since he was a child, always looking for a medium that would showcase his Native American heritage. For the past dozen years, he has specialized in putting his distinctive style on gourds. He's also applied that style to his 17-year-old, two-story stucco home in Suwanee, where his studio is tucked onto the lower level. "I love the Southwestern look, so as soon as I moved in, I started decorating with a lot of my own stuff, as well as things I've picked up in my travels," Sandgren said. "I've stuck to mostly pastel shades, so I can show off the richness of the artworks around that."

