



Oriana Hammerstrom, owner of Woodinville Florist, takes pride in her work. She is passionate about floral design and views it as an artistic endeavor.

This year, her creativity won her a blue ribbon at the recent Northwest Flower and Garden Show.

"I was so surprised to learn that I got first prize for my design," says the local businesswoman. "I found out when my husband went down to the show to water the arrangement for me and he saw the blue ribbon on it. He called to tell me I was a winner. It's awesome because it's such an honor to get that kind of recognition from my peers."

This was the second year for Woodinville Florist to have an entry in the floral design competition, but it was the first time for Hammerstrom to take on the job herself.

Her design, "Sphere of Influence," consisted of a combination of black calla lilies, several types of orchids, berzillia, green gypsy dianthus, pink mink protea, black pussy willows, flax leaves and grape vine spheres.

The flowers were grouped together using galvanized wire and a band from a wine barrel, which she got from Ste. Michelle Winery.

"My inspiration came from the pink mink, which I put with the black calla lilies and pussy willows," explains Hammerstrom. "It was basically a black and green colored arrangement with pink accents." She adds, "I emphasized color and texture because this type of design is more of an art piece. It's sculptural."

Entering the competition was a no-brainer for Hammerstrom. She sees the show as a great way to market her business and promote her work.

"It's good visibility to the public," she says. "The show attracts lots of people. I do it for my existing customers and to attract new people."

For Hammerstrom, winning is a bonus. She just loves the opportunity to be creative and to express herself artistically.

In her day-to-day business, there are always limits and constraints to the arrangements she does, but not so for this type of show.

"The sky's the limit," she adds. "You can be as creative as you want, which is wonderful."

Woodinville Florist moved last year from its long-established location on 175th St. to a place off Woodinville Drive.

Hammerstrom is happy with the new spot, as she finds that it has numerous benefits.

"The lighting is really good and the visibility is so much better from the road," she comments. "This really helps make people aware of where we are, which in turn helps business."



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