

Wit & Whim Warms Hearts For Holidays

BY PORT NEWS STAFF

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Wit & Whim, Port's philanthropic gift shop, has challenged 12 artists from near and far, ages eight to 68, to adorn a three-dimensional object in the shape of a Russian doll, with their interpretation of the shop's holiday theme, "It's a Small World." Wit & Whim is one of the many Port stores that decorate its windows during the holidays.

The 12 uniquely decorated dolls are displayed in Wit & Whim's windows, showcasing the creatively diverse talent of each artist. To encourage community participation and to spread holiday cheer, Wit & Whim is inviting customers to cast their vote, either in person, or through their social media sites, (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to determine which artist will win a \$500 shopping spree.

Giving back to the community is the core mission of Wit & Whim. One-hundred percent of the store's profits are donated to a different organization each month.

"I love what we are doing here," said Laurie Scheinman, owner and curator of the one-of-a-kind gift store. "We are role-modeling our brand's philanthropic mission in a visual, lighthearted and engaging way."

All of the artists began with the same shape, yet each creation is surprisingly different, as is the story of its creator. Many of the artists are formally trained, while others are simply very talented art enthusiasts.

"There was so much interest in the contest," Scheinman said. "I had to request portfolios to pick 12 due to limited display space. I didn't expect the work of an eight-year-old to make it into the contest, but his portfolio was so exceptional I had to see how he would interpret our small world theme."



Laurie Scheinman with a sampling of the artistically designed Russian dolls.

While Laurie says she is encouraging voter participation, she is not keeping track of who is in first place. "Online there seems to be a three-way tie between the youngest participant, a local favorite, and the work of an acclaimed artist, but there are tons of ballots in the shop that haven't been tallied yet," she said. "We are only allowing one vote per person so it doesn't become a popularity contest. Fair is fair."

The excitement and buzz is all part of the vision for this event and is drawing artists, families and fans into the store to view the awe-inspiring designs. Customers can "gift and give back" this holiday season with Wit & Whim's carefully edited collection of modern, vintage, fair trade and Americana products. For more information, call Laurie Scheinman at 516-353-2298, or witandwhim@gmail.com