**COMPOSITION WITH UNIQUE MATERIALS: MS. BAGAYAWA'S FIRST EXHIBITION, A DUET OF TEXTURE AND COLOUR**

Exhibition: "SURFACE"

Translated article

Morioka Times

February 2002

An exhibition of the works of Ms. Karen Bagayawa, an English teacher residing in Nagai, Morioka, is being held at Gallery La Vie (Saien 2-Chome, Morioka) until February 29. The interplay of texture and colour in works made with such unique materials as fabric (textile and knit), tile, paint, spice, and more is refreshing.

Karen Bagayawa lived in Toronto, Canada before coming to Japan in 1998, since which she has continued her artistic work on the side while teaching English. This is the first exhibition of her works from 1999 to the present.

"These several years have been a journey not only geographically, but also emotionally and creatively," reflects Ms. Bagayawa in thinking about her "journey to study new materials and new processes of expression."

"100 Studies for A Wall" is made up of smaller works, which form the base of Ms. Bagayawa's work. After softening the tile surface, materials such as tablecloths were pressed on the tile and then removed. The aftermath of this process was used as a base for painting and collage.

"I was attracted by the beauty of the fabric patterns," says Ms. Bagayawa. When the tablecloth is removed, cracks and irregular bumpiness remain, creating a unique textural foundation.

Works using spices like paprika and turmeric in place of paint to create vibrant colours are included in the exhibition, as are ten larger works that are expansions of a new image from this production process.

Ms. Bagayawa says she gains inspiration from the beautiful green of the mountains and parks in the Morioka rea. "Like Canada, Morioka is filled with green and the rivers and mountains are beautiful. It's nice that people

are taking it easy in a small city, and are not busy like those in a big metropolis like Tokyo." For Ms. Bagayawa, who studied painting at university, the number of art galleries is also attractive.

Since her arrival in Japan, Ms. Bagayawa has married, and her daughter Hanna will soon be two years old. "She still needs a lot of care and keeps me busy," smiles Ms. Bagayawa, who nevertheless is making the effort to learn about Japanese culture and is practicing ikebana and the tea ceremony.

She concludes, "There are a lot of differences between Japan and Canada, but since coming to Japan, I met my husband and had a baby, and am very happy. I plan to continue my art fom here on, too."