Vicky Lougher

*Elegant Creations*

by Pam North

 A U.S. Navy veteran, Vicky Lougher lived in Hawaii and southeastern Virginia before returning to her native Michigan, where she now has a large studio for her bear creation. “It is jam packed with all kinds of goodies that I have collected and use in the creation of my bears,” she said, “and it is where I spend the majority of my time. I have always been creative, I learned how to sew when I was about 6 or 7 years old. I never owned a teddy bear as a child. I was into dolls, and I still like to create soft sculpture dolls. I discovered teddy bears as an adult, and quite by accident. At a holiday craft show in 1991, I discovered handmade mohair teddy bears, and I was in LOVE with mohair! The teddy bear maker graciously provided me with her sources. Once I obtained the mohair, creating bears became an addiction, and I soon discovered that there were actually shows dedicated exclusively to the exhibition and sale of the teddy bear. I avidly sought out and researched as many books as possible concerning bear-making, and devoured the chapters detailing construction, design, and marketing. It wasn’t long before I was designing my own teddy bears.”
 Lougher makes about 120 bears per year. “Each of my bears is designed and created entirely by me, and I'm known for their sweet soulful expressions and the quality of my workmanship. I make bride and groom bears, elegant ladies, and Father Christmas bears. I mainly sell my teddy bears at online teddy bear shows, and from my website, and I advertise my bears in teddy bear magazines. My bears seem to appeal to a lot of different collectors, probably due to the fact that I create dressed and undressed bears. I use mostly mohair and alpaca, but I also use French Tissavel faux fur, Belgian plush, and sometimes faux fur from vintage coats. I don't use real fur brom recycled coats due to my allergies. Something new I have been experimenting with lately is dyeing mohair with acid dyes and dye pigments. It is just amazing the colors one can get!  So far, my favorites have been delphinium blue, which has highlights of violet throughout, and hyacinth. Soon I will have some pretty pinks and violets.”
 “I recently designed a new bunny pattern, and I'm going to create some dogs and cats this year. I have been using color for shading on most of my creations. I plan to use my airbrush more for highlights and shading, but right now I am finding it a bit daunting to airbrush on expensive mohair and alpaca, since those fabrics are about $150 dollars per yard!”
 Lougher has been honored with several of the highest awards and recognition in the teddy bear world, including: Golden Teddy Awards in 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2009; TOBY Awards in 2000, 2001, 2014; and TOBY Nominations in 1996, 1998, 2009. She also designed a Mr. and Mrs. Santa Bear pattern for Teddy Crafts Magazine in the fall of 2001, and Ashton-Drake Galleries produced 14 of her designs in the late 90s until 2001.

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