

## IMDI 2001 TRAVEL GRANT

By Miriam Rice and Nancy Denison

One of the aims of the IMDI is to provide travel grants to financially enable deserving textile artists to attend International Symposia. This year's grant was presented to a group of fiber artists from Estonia ... Lina Kool, Uve Ramet, Asta Tuusti and Helle Vääsi to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> International Fungi and Fibre Symposium in Rovaniemi, Finland. It was a pleasure to have them participate and an additional pleasure for the IMDI to accept their gift of framed handmade paper with stones from their country attached to the frame. It was entitled "Stoney and Windy", paper made of fungi (*Piptoporus betulinus*), RMK Sagadi Training Centre, Sagadi Nature School, Estonia 2001.

We were given information about the Sagadi Nature School which is an environmental center, located in Sagadi Manor and in Lahemaa National Park. Their mission statement is a quote by Artur Toom, creator of the first nature reserve in Estonia in 1910: *"The child who takes nature as a friend, breathes better from the soul."* The school is a vital part of the Sagadi training center and is financed mostly by the Estonian State Forest Management Center.

The purpose of the school is to improve environmental sensitivity, show how nature and humans interact and are interrelated, and to teach students environmentally sound values and responsibility. They believe that learning by doing, using all a senses, group work, cooperative study, and teaching by using different methods, are key to students retention. The center is constantly evaluation the curriculum, teachers and methods to ensure a top quality program. This nature school is the first and only one of its kind in Estonia...and they hope that there would soon be nature schools available to all students around the county to help raise the environmental consciences of the entire Estonian society.