

'EYE ON ART'

Sculpted mixed-media wall hangings are mysterious, emotional

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At Hickory's June Art Crawl, the artwork of artist Susan Kummer made its first Hickory appearance. Making its debut on display at Juene Boutique, in Union Square, Kummer's work was so well received that owner Jill Guidry invited Kummer to decorate the walls of the boutique for an extended period.

But there is more to this artist's work than meets the eye. Kummer's sculpted mixed-media wall hangings are not only well-crafted and mysterious, but they are contemporary and have meaning. They also have something extra – a thematic content that hauntingly echoes the tone of economic and social upheaval that has been prominent in Hickory in recent times.



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Susan Kummer has been one of Hickory's finest faux finishing painters for several years. And, her artwork stems from her background in faux finishing. Kummer's wistful 11- by 14-inch mixed media panel, "Solitude II," shows how her love of creating fascinating visual textures has progressed into a deeper form of creativity. Her wall sculptures actually seem to



Susan Kummer's 11-by 14-inch mixed media panel, "Solitude II," shows the artist's love for creating fascinating visual textures. Right, "Dance," a sculpted panel uses playful textures to describe a positive motion towards healing and renewal. Photos special to Outlook by artist Susan Kummer.

describe the texture of emotion. They are often about loss and healing, upheaval and change.

Kummer's work is largely inspired by personal experience. However, artists who use emotions as themes for their work also tend to express what they see in the world around

them. Kummer, a long-time Hickory resident, admits that the tone of change that has permeated Hickory in recent years (largely influenced by the closure of area manufacturing plants) has impacted her and her work as an artist.

Susan Kummer's experience as a faux finishing painter also has an interesting effect on her work as an artist. Faux finishers are experts in texture. They reproduce texture through painting techniques.

However, Kummer seeks a way to express emotional experience by using expressive textures in her artwork.

One of her works at Juene Boutique, "Mayhem," describes the feeling of deep sad-

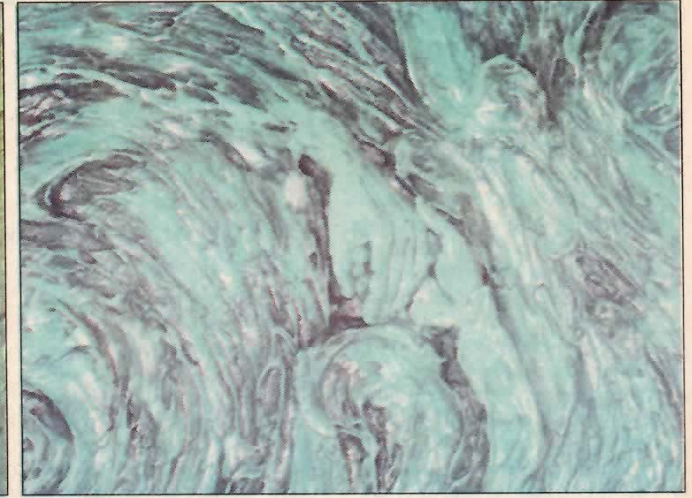


PHOTO SPECIAL TO OUTLOOK

ness and sliding away into deep despair. In this work, faces seems to be melting away in a chaos of dripping textures.

In contrast, this sentiment, her sculpted panel entitled "Dance," uses playful textures to describe a positive motion towards healing and renewal.

The joining of two hands within a swirl of activity shows how people may join and work together in this act of healing.

To view the artwork mentioned in this article, please visit Juene Boutique at 256 Union Square, in downtown Hickory.

Lisa Marie Gordon is a Hickory-area artist, sculptor and an award-winning student of art history

