

BEHIND THE
SCENES...
... at the Dove Awards
in Nashville.
PAGE 11C

Entertainment

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Dayton Daily News

Found items become art in two shows

BY JANE A. BLACK
For the Dayton Daily News

Enter a light-filled room full of books. Carefully lift them from their elaborate receptacles, cradle them in your hands, turn the pages. Feel their textures, read their words, examine their pictures.

Enter a darkened gallery and confront a wall of plates, handkerchiefs, platters. Read the words painted, stitched or embossed on their surfaces. Study the intricacies of embroidered corners, tatted borders. Revel in the careful script lovingly brushed on smooth china surfaces.

Two galleries, both filled with a mixed-media synergism of common household objects and found materials appropriated and altered; two artists giving voice to their ideas. Vastly different in feeling, both installations speak to our quest to be heard, our desire to communicate.

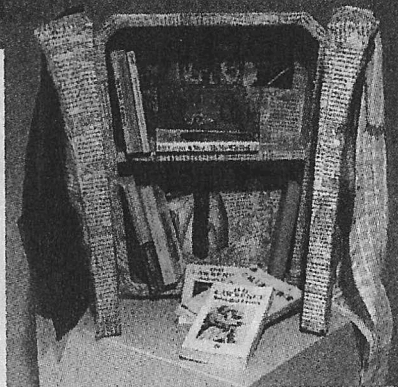
Susan Hensel, a self-described



"fine artist of books," is featured in the Burnell R. Roberts Triangle Gallery (above) and at Sinclair Community College. Carol Kumata of Pittsburgh is exhibiting her installation work at Rosewood Arts Centre Gallery in Kettering.

PIECES FROM Carol Kumata (above) and Susan Hensel (right).

Please see EXHIBITS/11C



How to go

- **WHAT:** Installation art by Carol Kumata.
- **WHERE:** Rosewood Art Centre Gallery, 2655 Olson Drive, Kettering.
- **WHEN:** Through May 12; 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.
- **COST:** Free.
- **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** 296-0294.

- **WHAT:** Book art by Susan Hensel.
- **WHERE:** Sinclair Community College, Building 13

at West Fifth and South Perry streets, fourth floor.

- **ALSO:** The woodcarving of Kentucky folk artist Minnie Adkins in the Hypotenuse Gallery, on the third floor of Building 13. Also on display through May 1.
- **WHEN:** Through May 1; 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.
- **COST:** Free.
- **FOR MORE INFORMATION:** 512-5381.

EXHIBITS: Words, visuals work to communicate

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Hensel, of East Lansing, Mich., creates both limited editions and one-of-a-kind books. She has a bachelor's degree of fine arts from the University of Michigan and has studied paper- and book-making extensively since finishing college.

She describes her work as dealing with "issues of personal responsibility, the role of faith and values in individual lives and the responsibility of the individual in the actions of the state."

Seeing book art in a gallery setting is a different sort of experience; don't expect the sort of visual impact one gets upon entering a room full of paintings. Looking at art in book

form requires a different sort of engagement. It requires touching — carefully, of course.

Some are bound drawings, some are spiral notebooks full of altered photographs, some are elaborate structures paying homage to favorite authors. Found materials combine with meticulous constructions. Many pieces feature paperback texts that are familiar yet gain new meaning in the ways they are housed or altered.

Bodyscape is a tiny but powerful piece in which fragments of graphite life drawings become miniature landscapes accented in yellow. No words are offered. *Millennial Language* shimmers and glows with text twisting around emblematic images

of statuary. *Clichés* offers clever visual puns on the language that surrounds the notion of home.

These books are mindful of the daily ways that most women live, engrossed in the physical and emotional care of others, creating and altering the places we inhabit.

Kumata also uses materials that are replete with sensation, familiar and homey. The messages she encodes into their surfaces belie this sense of comfort. Words function like background noise, lists that bring up ideas without explanations; it is for the viewer to feel, to figure out.

She is a professor of sculpture at Carnegie Mellon University, with a master of fine arts degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

In her artist's statement, Kumata describes her work as being concerned with ambivalence toward food, using objects associated with eating to address issues of manners, etiquette, dining rituals, consumption.

Kumata uses the combination of text and materials to address ways in which we are encouraged to participate in, and also control, three basic human functions — speaking, eating and crying.

Both artists show that adding text to the visual language of form, color and composition can be a strong and effective means of communicating.

► **Jane A. Black** is a Dayton-area artist and free-lance writer. E-mail her at BLACK@erinet.com