

## Drawings, sculpture reflect artist's recovery

Surviving to Soar at the Creole Gallery, 1218 Turner, Lansing is a story of wings. Like Icarus, it is a story of escape. But, it is also a story of infinite beauty and tragedy much more akin to the story of the Phoenix, because in the end there is rebirth.

The drawings and sculpture in this show tell the story of a recovery from sudden widowhood. Left alone to raise a tiny child, local artist Susan Hensel clawed her way toward recovery through journalistic drawings.

"The drawings chronicle the first year alone and the huge transformations in my life," said Hensel.

"Throughout our lives, we are offered many opportunities to change. Sometimes we are courageous and choose them. Fifteen years ago it was chosen for me."

The show, Surviving to Soar, is sponsored by Integra: The Association of Integrative and Transformative Grief.

See the drawings at Creole Gallery, the show runs through the end of July.

For more info about Integra: call Susan Zimmerman 339-7964.

For more info about the show call Creole Gallery 487-9549 or Susan Hensel 337-8370.

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## Art, grief and the re-creation of life portrayed at Creole

LANSING — "Surviving to Soar," the life-changing transformation of Susan Hensel's 15 year experience following the death of her spouse are played out in this work displaying at Creole Gallery in Lansing's Old Town area.

A fatal accident, a transformative class, 15 years and a series of chance meetings led to a ground-breaking show of drawings by Susan Hensel of East Lansing. An opening reception from 1 to 5 p.m. today, honors the artist and her works at the gallery, 1218 Turner.

Fifteen years ago, Hensel lost her husband in an auto accident, took a class in widowhood at Lansing

Community College and changed her art career. After 20 years of art fair ceramics, Hensel switched to paper, text and books.

Fast forward to her chance meeting with Susan Zimmerman, a grief counselor at LCC, and the transformation comes to life. Another chance meeting, this time with Creole Gallery owner Robert Busby places Hensel's works from 1985 to 2000 on the walls of an art gallery to show the complete journey from destruction to re-birth. These powerful drawings are full of text, predicting Hensel's change to the artists books for which she is now well-known. For more, call 487-9549.