

Sally Judd



Sally Judd's Shelburne Falls home holds the output of many years of art making-- ceramics, soft sculpture, painting, stained glass, mixed media construction. Sally has branched out in many directions over the years. What is seen at the Shelburne Arts Coop is just the tip of the iceberg as far as Sally's creative output is concerned. She is very fond of all her creations, many of which are made of bits and pieces of materials that she holds a deep personal attachment to. She does enjoy feeling like she is "in the business of art," producing items for a market. Sally seeks the artistic freedom of creating according to whatever inspires her,



regardless of the salability of an idea.

Currently Sally is very interested in working with fabric, stitching together wall pieces in a crazy quilt style on various themes.

Some of these hangings incorporate "milagros" collected in Mexico. Milagros are religious folk charms that are used to express gratitude or focus prayers on a particular ailment or unfulfilled desire. Some are shaped as body parts,

little figures in various poses, or represent objects like books, plants, or animals.

Seizing these little molded metal charms as inspiration, Sally has puddled solder into abstract silver shapes that suggest forms in the way that clouds do. She works a combination of homemade and ready made milagros into the surface of the quilted piece.

One piece is called "Put your problems in a pocket with a hole in it." A pocket on the wall hanging is surrounded by symbols suggesting fighting, broken hearts, illness, etc. Colorful fabric and interesting stitches combine the elements into a whimsical scene.

Photographs printed on fabric have been utilized to make wall hangings that serve as family memorials or scrapbooks. One focuses on the role of her husband's family during the Civil War, with period portraits printed and attached to the hanging. Another heirloom piece features the women of the family in current and previous generations, complete with copies of art work made by some of them.



One of my personal favorites is a black on black work with milagros, and there is another beauty that is a quilted homage to Klimt's "The Kiss."

Coming here in retirement after 29 years of teaching in the New Jersey public schools, the house sits on acreage that has been in her family for many years. Her grandparents bought 98 acres during the depression, and now five family members have divided and made their homes there. Sally recalls her aunt lived on this land when she was growing up and was an inspirational figure to her, as she was often making paintings when Sally visited.

In college, Sally studied English, and sort of laughs at herself for what looks now like an unimaginative choice. Her artistic training came as "trial by fire." She took a full time position as art teacher without any prior experience in the

K-6 grades. Summers she could work on her own studies in art and craft to bolster her experience. She still has some soft sculpture dolls she made in the 1980's, large dolls that are nicknamed "Ladies of the Night" complete with their "pimp."

Other figures that are similar to the ones she has in the gallery fill a wall near the kitchen in her home. These free form little spirits are inspired by the twisted wood they are made out of. The wood was found on the beach in Aluthera, an island south of the Bahamas that she visited several years ago. "The customs agents thought I was nuts carrying this big box of wood back," she laughed. The twists and turns of these pieces are suggestive of limbs, and are dried tree roots that were entwined in the rocks at the sea shore. Hands, head and feet are added of polymer clay, with other elements added like shells, wool, and fabric, that illuminate the personality of each woody stance. The precious wood is not something she wants to part with; she



enjoys her wall of dancing figures.

There are an assortment of framed mirrors that she has decorated, some in metal embossment, some in paper mache, and painted designs. The designs are quite lovely and detailed; Sally completed these in 1993 during during a period when her husband was suffering from, and eventually succumbing to, prostate cancer.

Sally has been a member at the Coop for five years. She enjoys the community of artists, although she is not a working member, and gains inspiration by being part of a group of artists who consistently present fresh work.