

## Artist Finds Beauty in Everyday Materials She Uses to Create Her Works

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By Judith Kahn

Local artist, Dyanna Dimick, assembles sundry materials and mediums in fashioning her work. Her compositions are as unusual as her approach to art. Acrylic paint holds found materials and works as a complement to the elements, and “it’s an easy clean up.”

“I genuinely find beauty in ordinary materials,” she said. “I continually mix in something familiar and something new for the viewer, so they feel connected but also curious or challenged.”

Dyanna Dimick, seen here in her studio, likes to use common items and a variety of mediums. Her work has been shown at Avenue 12 Gallery in the Richmond District and other San Francisco galleries. Courtesy photo.

Inspired by contributions of friends and others who pass on things they can’t recycle or other eye-catching items, her challenge is discovering how to use them. Some of the items she collects are beach plastic, security envelopes (with patterns inside), and other colored and patterned paper materials.

“In my work, sometimes the materials are the front-runner and sometimes the mediums are,” Dimick said. “I often mix in oil stick, graphite, colored pencil, latex paint, and pastel too.”

Her current work focuses on relationships between humans, and between humans and the natural world, as well as how it’s all connected.

“It’s a balance,” she said. Dimick feels guilty about tossing things that can’t be recycled: “...bread tabs, color registrations on the insides of snack boxes, magazine cutouts of water.” She collects and works with items in the studio to make a piece, using these materials to convey a concept or idea.

“I clung to this idea in college, associating a material with a meaning,” Dimick said. In this way, she develops her own artistic language and “documents the time.”

Art has always been central to Dimick’s life, sitting and drawing, as a child, while other children were playing in the playground. The creative process brings her to another place, where she can more effectively voice abstract thoughts and combine them with visual language than she can through writing.

She said what she most enjoys about the creative process is, “being in the moment, curating, and the feel of the materials, the stimulation of the colors, and following my intuition. It cleans my slate, so I can keep going, and gives me endorphins! I think I need it to survive.”

Dimick grew up in San Carlos, where her parents watered her “creative seeds.” Her mother had artistic leanings, and her father was an engineer – a creative problem solver who loved puzzles. Her older brother is a musician and engineer.

From San Carlos, Dimick attended the University of California at Santa Cruz, where she majored in fine arts with an emphasis on sculpture. Her sculpture class was not a traditional one in that they did not sculpt in clay. Instead, instructors pushed contemporary work, using new materials to create a concept. This fed her artistic purpose in connecting her audience with nature, the environment, and to each other.

After graduating from Santa Cruz, she moved to Los Angeles for six years. She soon realized she could not create the same type of work without certain, specialized tools, so she embarked upon painting instead of sculpting. Painting was also easier to sell than conceptual sculpture. For a time, she worked on washy color fields with paint and water.

“Then I would let my imagination take over, tell myself a story, and ended up painting and collaging various images on top. They usually had an organic feel or had to do with nature,” she said.

Dimick admires the singular qualities and talents of many different artists. She appreciates Keith Haring’s pop art for the bright and playful colors and lines, but also that he addresses deep concepts like consumerism, death, war, and love to name a few, creating “a strong visual language of his own.” She loves Frank Stella’s versatility in painting, sculpting, and drawing and for the way he uses color and shape. Dimick describes Robert Rauschenberg’s combining painting and sculpture as a “huge influence.” She admires his creative use of everyday objects and imagery and that he really considered the details of ordinary things.

Among Dimick’s many interests are walking her dog, hiking, caring for plants, photography and cooking. In the kitchen, she likes to incorporate what she has around, experimenting with different ingredients to see what develops. She loves to travel and looks forward to doing more of it. Two of her favorite destinations are Mexico and Paris, and in general, she likes places with warm beaches. Her musical tastes run to the ’80s – classic rock, rock, electronic and hip-hop. During her beach walks, she picks up trash and plastic to later use in her work. For Dimick, it feels like connecting with her environment.

“Maybe it’s my way of saying thank you,” she said. Now and then, she organizes small beach clean ups.

Dimick said she looks forward to doing bigger work both physically and in volume. She says that if a work is physically larger, one has no choice but to pay attention. The feeling of working on something extra-large makes her feel she is “in” the piece, using her body to move around the canvas and put energy into it. Last year, she had a show at Avenue 12 Gallery titled “Weight.” Prior to that, her work has been shown at The Great Highway Gallery and Joy Gallery, all in San Francisco.