

Pleasant Hill · Martinez

RECORD

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Listening to 'local voices'

■ Bedford Gallery displays locally produced pieces for a look at 'what kind of art is being made here'

By Janice De Jesus
CORRESPONDENT

After many years working on design in a corporate environment, and as a graphic artist, Susan Sharman returned to her roots — exploring the realm of design that marries traditional forms of art with the experimental.

Reverting to her childhood desire to discover the many facets of design through different media, Sharman likes to incorporate her own design into already existing pieces. Examples include embroidering words on doilies — pieces that will be on display at the Bedford Gallery's newest exhibit "Local Voice 2008: Defining Community Through Art," beginning June 29 and running through Aug. 31.

"I've combined more traditional textile work with my own imagery. I love the traditional aspect of linens and textiles, and then I come along and add my contemporary flair to it," said Sharman. "This is relatively new work so I was excited this got into the show."

Sharman, a Martinez resident, was among 346 Contra Costa County artists who submitted pieces to be juried for the show. Phil Linhares of the Oakland Museum selected 186 works out of 661 entries, said Carrie Lederer, gallery curator.

The every-three-year exhibit, which will highlight a cross section of artists who live and work in the county at the gallery, is designed to open a dialogue between local artists and the community, Lederer said.

"When we started in 2005, many of us didn't know our neighbors who lived and worked here were artists. So we started this exhibit with a question in mind — who are the artists here in our backyard?" Lederer said. "This provides us an opportunity to introduce them to the community, to see their work and open up dialogue, to explore what kind of art is being made



BOB LARSON/STAFF

SUSAN SHARMAN, a Martinez resident, is among the local artists whose works will be featured in a new exhibit at the Bedford Gallery.

here, by whom and why."

Sharman first heard about "Local Voice" when her husband Tim was featured in the first exhibit in 2005.

"I love the Bedford Gallery. It's exciting to get an opportunity both as an artist and as a patron to see what's going on in our community," Sharman said.

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Other local artists whose works will be highlighted include Concord artist Timothy Clare, who submitted a colorful 2-D collage constructed with printed tin and brass nails on plywood; Pleasant Hill artist and Civic Arts Education instructor Tara O'Siochain, who submitted two acrylic paintings; and Steven Falk, city manager of Lafayette, two of whose paintings will be featured.

"I have pictures in my head and feel a need to paint them on canvas," said Falk, whose work was also featured in Local Voice 2005. Since he started painting six years ago, Falk has participated in national and international art competitions.

"I'm really impressed with the depth and breadth of the works submitted," said Lederer. "All of the artists who submitted should be celebrated."

'LOCAL VOICE'

- **WHAT:** "Local Voice 2008: Defining Community Through Art" exhibit
- **WHEN:** June 29 through Aug. 31
- **WHERE:** Bedford Gallery, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek
- **INFORMATION:** For details, call 925-295-1417 or visit www.bedford-gallery.org