

August 30 through October 25, 2020

Beyond the Super Kitchen

works by

Becky Hyberger
of Salina, Kansas

Peggy Media (1957-2020)
of Salina, Kansas

Debbie Wagner
of Bennington, Kansas

Exhibition Statement

In the summer of 2016 while changing the papers on the bottom of her parrot's cage, Becky Hyberger came across an article from the Home and Garden section of the *Salina Journal* called "Super Kitchens!" It immediately sparked new possibilities for art. Becky, Debbie Wagner and Peggy Media were already planning for a group show in the fall of 2017 at the Lincoln Art Center. During a brainstorming session over lunch in Lindsborg, the artists decided their Lincoln exhibit would be called, *The Year of the Super Kitchen*. Each would contribute 12 works encompassing this *Super Kitchen* idea. As they had for many years, the women continued to meet for lunch each month, sharing stories and discoveries about their art and lives.

Becky methodically worked throughout the year creating and completing a new piece each month. Debbie continued to work on different projects in different mediums all at the same time. Although she did specifically create work for the exhibit, as the deadline approached the pieces finally chosen came out of a large body of work. Peggy immersed herself into *The Year of the Super Kitchen* by gathering materials, experimenting, preparing, and contemplating. She used eleven of the twelve



Private Elevator
by Becky Hyberger



Tao by Peggy Medina



The Bee Saver
by Debbie Wagner

months for the incubation of her ideas. Then, she completed all 12 works during the last four weeks.

It was not until the final working month that the artists began to see not only how their exhibit had evolved, but also how they had influenced one another. Each artist's style highlights a different way of being, thinking and working. For Debbie, it is about an openness to possibility and finding inspiration in the seemingly mundane. For Peggy, it encompassed a willingness to explore, experiment, and think intuitively. For Becky, it is about articulating and illustrating concepts through the use symbolism and the transformation of materials.

Following its debut in Lincoln, *The Year of the Super Kitchen* was exhibited at the Emporia Arts Center in the fall of 2019. Two additional dates were added for 2020: Kansas Wesleyan University in March and The Birger Sandzén Gallery in September. Since their intention was to expand and add new work to the Lindsborg show, Peggy chose the new title, *Beyond the Super Kitchen*, to embody this transition. Then tragedy happened. Peggy was struck with a ruptured brain aneurism and died on January 13, 2020.

This exhibit is dedicated to Peggy Medina – a vibrant and passionate artist and friend, who was just beginning to realize her full potential.

Becky Hyberger's Statement & Biography

My work is a series of scaled constructions exploring possible ways awareness happens. One way of glimpsing into the subconscious is through an appreciation of the hidden language of dreams. Over the years remembering and writing down dreams has allowed me the opportunity to make personal discoveries and to understand the nature of metaphor. The work I did for the original group exhibit, *The Year of the Super Kitchen*, was focused on visually illuminating all aspects of the "creative process." For me, "kitchen" metaphorically represents the place in the subconscious where creativity happens – a space of spontaneous ideas and synchronicity. In this current exhibit, *Beyond the Super Kitchen*, I continue to expand on my interest in psychological and spiritual processes and concepts. I love the idea of creating small spaces that draw the viewer into deeper contemplation. I believe when we are able to “see” in this way, the stuff of the unconscious surfaces and awareness is amplified. Our past, present, and future changes. We are transformed. My work illuminates this transformative process, both in materials and subject matter.

For over 40 years I have been creating my own unique style of art from small framed scaled pieces sold at art festivals and in gift shops and galleries to larger mixed media constructions. I build my illusions by manipulating scale and transforming small common objects and their parts into something other. My artwork is an extension of the paper doll houses I built as a child, when for me, a jewelry box was a dresser; a perfume bottle was a lamp; and a book was a bed. Today, everything I create is an evolving series of related work that reflects my personal story and illuminates transformation.

Early on, I was voted as Salina’s favorite artist in the Journal’s Readers’

Choice awards and received a Horizons Grant from the Salina Arts and Humanities Commission for the development of my brochure and traveling exhibit, *From Miniatures to Metaphors*. In 2018 three of my works were included in the *Salina Biennial*. My work has been exhibited at art centers and galleries throughout Kansas. Photos have been included in such magazines as *Nutshell News* and *Miniature Showcase* as well as numerous newspaper articles. I was a featured artist on the KPTS-PBS program, *Kansas Arts Today* and profiled on Salina Community Access TV. Throughout the years, I have donated both time and artwork to many community arts programs and charity events.

A degree in psychology, a fascination with dreams, and a deep interest in the creative process provide the underpinnings of my art.

Peggy Medina's Statement (for the *Year of the Super Kitchen*) & Biography Written Prior to Her Death

In this exhibit, I have interpreted the Super Kitchen as a place of creation and exploration. I have stepped outside of my comfort zone, pulled out the stops and dared to experiment more than in the past. I wanted to push my former boundaries and create work on a larger scale and to incorporate my ceramics into assemblage. In the spirit of the Super Kitchen, the lab of creation, I have used serving pieces as the bases for my assemblages along with tile work and utensils and found objects. Included in the kitchen theme, I have also highlighted the plight of the bees in our ecosystem. The small, white ceramic pieces are recreations of microscopic pollen and I use an amber glaze as a reminder of the honey the bees create. As always in the past, my focus and concern is on the interaction between the natural world and humankind.

This is a celebration and collaboration created from the bond of friendship between 3 artists. In *The Year of the Super Kitchen*, we have pushed, challenged and inspired each other.

A lifelong resident of Salina, Kansas, I have wanted to be an artist since I was a small child. Over the years, I have always had my hands in some kind of art or craft. After raising my children, I returned to school and graduated from Kansas Wesleyan University in 2005, with a Bachelor's Degree in Visual Arts. I was selected to participate in the mentorship program at the Salina Art Center in 2008. I have participated in exhibits in Salina and the surrounding region including: the Salina Art Center, the Salina Country Club, the Gallery at Kansas Wesleyan University, Lincoln Art Center in Lincoln, the Fiber Studio in Wichita, Hays Arts Council Gallery, Thornhill Gallery at Avila University in Kansas City and One Door North Gallery (Clayworks) in McPherson. After 5 years, I recently retired as the Gallery Director at Kansas Wesleyan University to better focus on my artwork.

Debbie Wagner's Statement & Biography

The kitchen is the room of nourishment, nurturing and love. It is traditionally

dominated by women. The interpretation of the word “super” for me suggests that the woman’s responsibilities for family have gone beyond the kitchen. Yet, sisterhood, female friendships and family remain essential to a woman’s mental stability. The title *Beyond the Super Kitchen* reinforces this thought further. The pieces in this show include work with fruit, which for me is often the female personified, pieces revolving around the female relationships, a piece called *7 Women 6 Generations* which shows the women in my family displayed on an old kitchen cabinet, and several pieces dealing with the important issue of sustaining the honey bee. This small but mighty pollinator is such a major sustainer for the balance of our fragile ecosystem. Honey, like women, is a sweet sustainer for the balance of life, thus, for me, this show is full circle, showing the balance between humanity and our responsibility towards the environment. Not having our third partner, Peggy Medina, here with us to continue our exhibits together emphasizes the fragility and uncertainty of our future. It is important to share love to others and to our small piece of the earth.

As a brain tumor survivor two times in 2002, I've challenged myself to create a fulltime career as an artist. In the later part of 2005, I began painting daily sunrises and continue that practice through today. These sunrises have found homes all over the world to commemorate special events in the lives of many. In 2008, the Kansas Figure Drawing Group took form and soon began meeting weekly in my studio. 2020 has seen many changes and this group now meets through zoom and has continued the practice of weekly drawing. The colors of the sunrise and the gesture drawings of the human figure have greatly influenced my interpretive work. In 2012, I began a shift towards a suppressed love of working with fiber. For me, fiber offers a lively, colorful visual language for communicating passions.



Birger Sandzén
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