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Artist finds inspiration in life's little leftovers

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By NANCYE TUTTLE, Sun Staff

Catherine Evans finds inspiration in familiar, everyday things -- a rubber bathmat, nails hammered into wood, coffee creamer covers. She calls the works she creates from them "object art."

Objects Solo, an exhibit of Evans' contemporary mixed-media designs and sculpture, runs through Oct. 1 at The Gallery at Dunia, an eco-friendly store located at 43 Nason St. in Maynard.

"I like using objects that are so common, then taking them out of context and using them over and over again," said Evans, whose studio is in ArtSpace Maynard.

Some work is serious, while some is fun.

"I did some wooden pink flamingoes that were larger than life and exhibited in Stella Bella in Cambridge," she said. "Those were fun."

Her work at Dunia is more serious.

"I am offended when I go into a store and see that everything is beautiful -- just an endless supply of beautiful things," she said.

That's why she chooses to use the mundane in much of her work.

"I like the integrity of things that aren't so beautiful -- like the back of a rubber bathmat. The paint moves on it and goes up and down in an interesting dance," said Evans.

"Emergence" is made of red and black coffee creamer covers arranged in rows "The objects take on a regalness of design," Evans said.

Her works play off the eco-funky personality of Dunia, while adding depth and dimension, said co-owner Paige O'Brien.

"I love how Catherine's art forces me to confront urgent issues on many levels. I can enjoy her piece 'Emergence,' for example, as a study of rhythm and beauty, but I can also delve deeper into it and reflect on the consequences of empty consumerism," she said.

And that suits Evans just fine.

"I want to change the way people relate to everyday objects," she said. "If, after seeing my work, you start to notice those things that once escaped your consciousness, then I feel I've accomplished something positive."

Evans' work is on view during Dunia's regular hours, Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., except for Wednesday, when the store closes at 8 p.m. A reception will be held on Monday, Aug. 15, 7-9 p.m. The public is invited. Call 978-897-8850.

Nancye Tuttle's e-mail address is ntuttle@lowellsun.com.

GALLERY NOTES

COOL Gallery, 338 Market Street, Lowell. 978-446-7162.

Destination Cameroon, art show features masks, textiles, batik and crafts from mother country of many Lowellians. Opening reception tonight, 5-7:30 p.m. Judith Tadfor-Buh does cooking demo at 6:30 p.m. The film Destination Cameroon will also be shown. Through August.

Nashua Area Artists Association Gallery One, 5 Pine Street Extension, Second Floor, #6, Nashua.

Celebration of the Arts, featuring painter and fiber artist **Beverly Rush**; jewelry designers **Rene Bodmer** and **Tatyana Cherepova**; printer/artist **Loretta Hubley**; glass painter **Nancy Lee Black** and sculptor **Adelle Leiblein**. Demonstrations and activities for children. Tomorrow, 6-9 p.m.

Chelmsford Public Library, Boston Road, Chelmsford. 978-256-5521.