

Artist rediscovers childhood passion and 'Digs' in

By JILL BODACH
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NORWALK — The willowy, blonde woman standing in the center of the Haviland Gallery, staring at the colorful prints that are the only decorations on the stark white walls has come a long way.

Mindy Green didn't travel a long physical distance to get there; the distance she covered was more mental and emotional.

When Green was a young adult she didn't think she deserved to be an artist.

"I didn't think I deserved to just make art all the time," Green said. "It just seemed like too much fun."

So, although Green spent most of her childhood drawing and graduated college with a degree in art and psychology she turned to the business world for 13 years.

It took a long time for Green to come back to art. It wasn't until after having her second child that Green returned to her art work by taking a class at the Silvermine Art Guild.

As a result of her class, Green received her first commission in the student gallery painting portraits.

"I became fascinated with the human face," Green said. "It was difficult and challenging, so it almost felt like work."

Green then started teaching art classes to preschoolers. Now, she teaches classes to all

ages and to special populations, such as cancer patients and people with disabilities, out of a studio she created in garage.

Green's own art has grown as well.

She took an abstract art class in 2006 and then tried printmaking. Both are heavy influences in her latest artwork which is part of the "Digs" exhibit on display at the Haviland Gallery.

All 39 pieces in the show were created by Green in September and early October of this year.

"Once I had the concept the images just came out of me," Green said.

The name "Digs" is the effect of the emotional and physical digging Green did in preparation for this show.

Green literally dug through boxes in her own attic and as those at tag sales and second-hand shops.

She also figuratively dug through memories to recall images and moments from her childhood.

The result of all that digging is a culmination of all that she has experienced in her life as an artist, as a daughter, as a mother, her as a sister and as a woman in the world.

"These pieces are deep internal feelings that are embedded in me from my childhood as well as external feelings from things I've found or experienced in the world



Hour photo/MATTHEW VINCI

Local artist Mindy Green will be giving a talk at the Haviland Street Gallery tonight about her artwork on display. The exhibition is called Digs, a collection of 39 pieces that includes prints, paintings, found objects and wearable art.

around me," Green said. "I found that if you're open to nature and to the world that certain things will present themselves to you."

One of the things nature presented to Green was an odd-shaped twig that bends into a circular formation in its middle before straightening out again, an image that appears in several of Green's pieces.

Two of Green's favorite pieces are called "Psyche" and "At Home."

Psyche contains an image of Green's grandmother at 14, an altar, Asian symbols and nature.

The image of her grandmother reminds Green of her

self, she said.

"At Home" is a painting that Green said she can hardly take credit for creating.

"It painted itself," she said. "I had no plan for it. It just came out of me and kind of combined all the images that I've dealt with while created the art for this show."

As for future projects, Green said she plans to keep digging.

"I don't just want to make decorative pieces," she said. "I want my art to resonate with people. We all have experienced strife and grief and terrible things in our childhood, so I don't need to dig all that up and present it to people. What I do want to dig up and

present are healing, positive feelings so that when you look at something I've created it touches your soul."

And if someone asked her now if she deserves to be an artist, Green said she would definitely say yes.

"(When I create my art) I'm so at home and at peace...so centered," Green said. "I deserve to make art not just for myself, but so that I can use my art to make other people happy."

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