



Carol Hooberman stands between a Paul Jenkins painting on textile and a metal sculpture from Israel, two important works in her gallery.

New gallery part of craft renaissance

By Shirlee Iden
staff writer

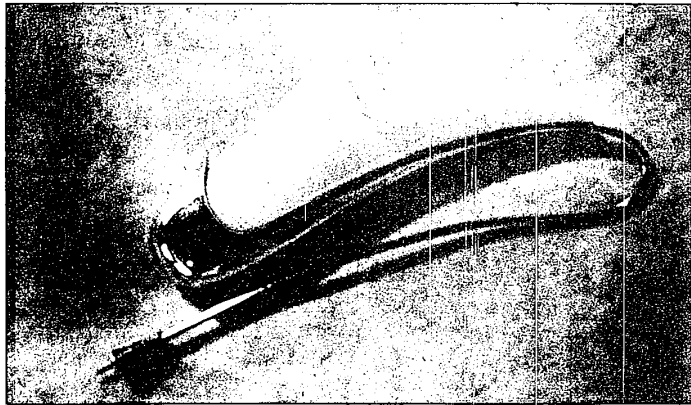
Don't ever tell Carol Hooberman not to make snap judgments. Making instant decisions is just what got her into the art-gallery business late last year. First, while on a trip to Israel with her husband, Paul, she kept falling in love with examples of fine contemporary crafts. So she decided to buy much more heavily than she had intended. When the Hoobermans came back to Southfield where they have lived for 14 years, she found it not impossible to sell those "finds." "I had bought five wall hangings telling myself I could sell them to friends," she said. "Then I bought two sculptures and well — the gallery grew from that." Another instant decision came when she found the space the Carol Hooberman Gallery now occupies at 155 S. Bates in Birmingham.

"The space was so good I made up my mind instantly to take it, and probably that's good," she said. A former art teacher, she had never before thought of opening a gallery. Today, although she may be the "new gal in town" she is fast becoming part of the art establishment of Birmingham. SO FAR, husband Paul and children, Jimmy 15, and Jill, 10, approve. For the still-learning entrepreneur, being a full-time business person has added considerably to her personal date book. "I'm up at 6 a.m. to jog and by 9 a.m. dinner is cooked," she said. Business hours at the gallery are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. as far as the public knows, but for Carol Hooberman, it's a seven-day commitment. "I'm there on Monday though we're closed and Sunday is the day I vacuum the gallery," she said. Her husband helps, she's quick to add.

Doing things quickly is Mrs. Hooberman's *modus operandi* it seems. Once she found the Bates Street shop, it was decorated and ready to open within a month. That happened in time for a November opening and the capturing of some of the holiday trade. Before she opened the gallery her only business experience was designing and painting T-shirts, which she did for five years. "That business was called 'I Name It' and I enjoyed it," she said. "But before this gallery, I never sold anyone else's products before." A one-time art teacher, Mrs. Hooberman said she was always interested in the arts. She graduated from Wayne State University's College of Education with a degree allowing her to teach art to children. "FOR TWO years I taught art in the Southfield Schools," she said. "One time I almost slid right into the Leonhard School on a very wintry day."

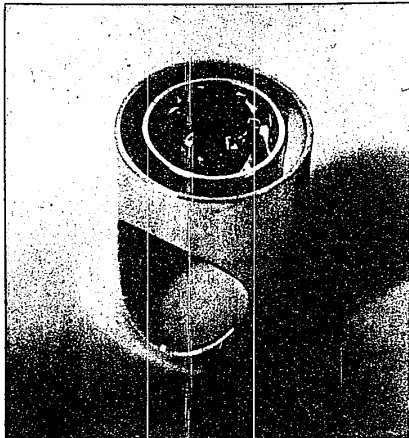
"I was one of those teachers who went from school to school." And busy as she is with her new business, her activities on behalf of the schools are still quite high on her priority list. Another priority right now is to learn more about the business end of her business. "My husband has helped a lot, but I'm still learning," she said. In a business as competitive as the art business, becoming specialized might be thought of as taking a chance, but the Carol Hooberman Gallery specializes. "This is a gallery of fine crafts," she said. "I love crafts because I can see value, technique and workmanship in them. With fine arts, I can't always judge that well." "And also, there's a renaissance in crafts right now. People appreciate handmade things, so much has been made by machine up to now."

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DICK KELLEY/staff photographer

Bob Fisher, who studied enameling in Connecticut and metal smithing at Cranbrook, makes jewelry such as this ivory-and-gold pin (above) in his Beverly Hills home. When not creating original jewelry, he teaches others to make it at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association. Cary Stefani, who also studied at Cranbrook, maintains a small studio in his Highland home. A former student at the Center for Creative Studies, he has had great success with pieces like the gold and amethyst ring at right. Stefani chose jewelry as his medium because he likes "the intimate size of working small."



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