

Exhibit: Silk Accessories



Wearable silk art is featured this month at Opus 5 Gallery, 136 E. Broadway.

Local artist Betsy Conlin's wearable art accessories are currently on display at Opus 5 Gallery.

The exhibit of silk scarves and other accessories is Conlin's first at the Gallery. Her designs explore the French technique of Gutta Serti, a resist-dye method. Gutta is a natural latex which is used to outline shapes. It is squeezed through a small applicator bottle after which dye is

painted into the outlined areas.

Her most recent work is inspired by African textiles and music; the work is more rhythmic and textural. Although she has received degrees in fine arts, the Gutta Serti technique has been learned by Conlin through experimentation.

She has taught this process to students at the Maude Kerns Art Center, LCC, and the EMU Crafts Center. "When I make

art that is wearable I feel that I am providing raw material for some other artists' work. I like knowing that my handpainted silks, when combined with the imagination of the owners, will become new works of art," Conlin says.

The exhibit continues through the month of May. The Gallery is at 136 E. Broadway on the downtown mall. Hours are Monday-Saturday, 10-5:30.

The Genesis Juice Story— from one who was there.

Dear Editor and Paul Ollswang:

That was a nice feature article about Genesis Juice, which described the intent of its members accurately. It did make some very significant mistakes I thought I'd correct.

I was a member of Genesis Juice from Oct. 1977 to June 1979, a very struggling and early time for the co-op.

The biggest error you printed was about the original health of the business. It was not a "soon to go under juice business," but a very healthy business owned by an intelligent, creative person, Bill Snyder. He had begun the Juice Bar at the 5th St. Public Market, and things were going well at the warehouse on Almaden St.

This was a happening time for co-ops, and many workers wanted to convert Genesis Juice Company into a cooperative. Bill allowed that to happen in a very reasonable way, beginning May 1, 1977. I believed it to be a very fair deal for a thriving business. Bill had to be persuaded to sell to the co-op, but the enthusiasm was there among the workers.

Worker-owner ideals were high, and the cooperative began with lowering prices and relaxing the structures. In the first 6 months the co-op made a number of naive mistakes and sank seriously into debt, as well as needing to meet \$600 monthly payments to buy the business from Bill. In one two-day period we lost over \$2,000—by bottling a bad batch of juice that had to be done over again. Efficiency was low,

despite spirit being high. Bill Snyder even joined the co-op as an equal worker to try to help it pull together, but we had gotten about \$10,000 in debt by winter of 1977.

In Spring of 1978 economics were so bleak that we had tentatively agreed to sell the juice making business entirely, and keep a small co-op at 5th St. Market only. The apple companies were owed lotsa money, and were refusing to sell us apples until we paid our debts.

We halfheartedly found a buyer and even took down payment money. Just before signing the co-op away, we decided to give it another try, largely because two of us stuck ourselves out on a limb with loans and pledges of near martyrdom. Between the down payment cash and what Richard Calicrate and I loaned the co-op, we struggled ahead and made some strong management decisions, like raising the price and selling much less juice and acquiring more labor saving equipment. One analysis proved that our carrot juice prices were so low that the more we sold, the more money we lost. And we were way too labor intensive with minimal equipment.

Our volume dropped at least by half, but we began to pay off debts and run the business more efficiently. Our first priority was to repay the "down payment money," which we all felt poorly about taking and spending.

Over the next four years we slowly paid off the debts, the business was paid off and Richard and I were eventually repaid. I'm delighted and proud to see Genesis Juice co-op still serve our community as it does.

—Ken Meyer
Cottage Grove

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