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Dish the Dirt
with Holly Hayes

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Collage craft

SANTA CLARA ARTIST LEAVES A SUCCESSFUL CLOTHING BUSINESS BEHIND TO REINVENT HERSELF. NOW SHE FINDS BEAUTY IN DECAY AND A POTENTIAL FOR NEW LIFE IN FOUND OBJECTS

By Holly Hayes

Mercury News
The Bay Area's creativity extends to more than chips and software. In our midst are talented tinkers and artistic souls who are producing some very interesting stuff. Here's a look at one:

WHO: Teresa Eaton, 52, a textile artist who works out of her studio at the Santa Clara home she shares with husband Tom and 8-year-old Scoutie. She is one of 250 artists who will show and sell their art at the American Craft Show, Friday through Aug. 12 in San Francisco. (See show details below.)

WHAT SHE'S MAKING: Eaton creates mixed-media wall hangings made of handmade paper, acrylics, metallic pastels, collage, and recycled and found objects. "My work features many warm colors — russets and reds," Eaton says. "I love combining materials, color and texture to create balance and beauty from objects that aren't considered inherently beautiful, like a piece of rusted metal." The pieces range in size from 12 inches square up to 36 inches by 60 inches.

HOW SHE GOT STARTED WITH TEXTILES: Eaton started as a hand weaver and designer of wearable art pieces — jackets, vests and other custom designs. "I've loved clothing and design since I was a girl. I received my first loom as a wedding gift and threw my passion into weaving," she says. "A fantastic teacher in a weaving course I took at community college helped me believe that I could turn my hobby into something I could do for a living." For more than 20 years, she designed jackets and coats that incorporated silk and the ethnic textiles she loves.

WHAT DREW HER TO THE CRAFT: It's the fascination of working with interesting materials to create something new. "I loved weaving and sewing, yet by the time I reached my mid-40s, I wanted to try something new," Eaton says. But she was scared to make a switch because she had a successful clothing line that offered a steady income. "I always wanted to work with paper and explore more abstract expressions," she says. "I envisioned much of my current work long before I ever created it."

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT: "When I was diagnosed with breast cancer seven years ago, I was inspired to make a radical change in my work. Life's too short! After treatment, I was determined to pursue the ideas I had within me," she says. She started making paper by hand and working with found objects, rusted pieces and items from nature to create her mixed-media collages.

"Working with these materials to

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"Passports of the Sun"
Collage on canvas, handmade paper, acrylics, metallic pastels, applique, found objects



"The Palimpsest Vol. II"
Collage on canvas, handmade paper, acrylics, metallic pastels, applique, embroidery, metal work, found objects



"Tassajara Journal"
Collage on canvas, handmade paper, acrylics, metallic pastels, applique, stitching, found objects

Handcrafts in the spotlight at S.F. show

By Candace Murphy

Mercury News
The American Craft Council brings its San Francisco show to Fort Mason on Friday. While the council's largest show in terms of the number of exhibitors with booths is in Baltimore in February, the three-day San Francisco show is perennially popular.

Craft Council President Mary Fichter attributes it to that special Bay Area dynamic.

"The first show was in 1975, and ... the nation as a whole was turning away from mass-produced objects and embracing natural materials, like clay and

wood, out of initial concerns for the environment."

Fast-forward 32 years, and things haven't changed much here in Pinnacled-by-the-Bay. Concern for the environment is a trademark of the Bay Area, with nearly everyone doing something to reduce their carbon footprint.

"The whole green phenomenon is something that's made craft very appealing," Fichter says. "We'll have lots of green artists at the show. But in 2008, we'll promote them heavily. ... It's something we think is important,

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American Craft Show

What: A juried craft show presented by the American Craft Council.

When: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday and noon-Saturday and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Aug. 12.

Where: Herbst and Festival Pavilions, Fort Mason Center, Marina Boulevard and Buchanan Street, San Francisco.

Et c.: Part of the Marina Green, where a free shuttle will be available to the show site. Valet parking also will be available.

How much: \$12 or \$18 for a two-day pass. Buy a membership in the American Craft Council for \$25 and you get free access to all Craft Council shows and a year's subscription to American Craft Magazine.

Details: www.craftcouncil.org or (800) 836-5400

The push is on for manual mowers

By Caroline Davis

Seattle Times

What's low-cost, environmentally friendly, virtually maintenance-free and quickly reclaiming its place on our lawns? (Hint: It's not those plastic garden gnomes.)

It's the manual lawn mower, and it's boosting business at hardware and garden shops large and small. "We're always out because they're so popular," says Brian Shook, owner of a hardware store on Seattle's Queen Anne Hill, where shiny new manual mowers are lined up in front.

What's pushing the increased demand for new old-fashioned lawn mowers, called reel mowers because of the mower's rotating cylinder? Environmental concerns, of course, are big. But lawn mower retailers say it's not just about having a green thumb.

They reel off a number of reasons:

■ The downsizing of the American yard. New houses often come with smaller yards, notes Gordon Kirkpatrick of Aurora Lawnmower in Seattle, "so the (manual) mowers are becoming more viable for people than big power mowers."

■ They're easier to use and maintain than gas-powered mowers. "There's a lot more to go haywire, so it can be more costly," says Kirkpatrick, whose father, Howard, has worked in the same small

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PEOPLE-POWERED MOWERS
Reel mowers like the Brill Luxus 38 offer a gentler cut compared to gas-powered rotary mowers.

They laughed but she's still mowing strong

By Sylvia Ullas

Mercury News

My family started making fun of me as soon as I told them I had fired my lawn guy and bought a push-reel mower.

I said I was saving \$100 a month, helping the environment and getting some exercise.

My brother said I was spending \$250 to mow my lawn one time, then I was going to call my lawn guy back.

Well, after that first painful mowing I was afraid my brother might be right.

I did my homework on push-reel mowers before I bought one. Using a reel mower eliminates a lot of greenhouse gases. According to the state Air Resources Board, 30 minutes of gas-powered mowing emits as much greenhouse gas as driving a 1995 car for 100 miles.

I also found out that reel mowers are friendlier to lawns. The spiral blades of the reel mower trim the lawn like a nice snip at the barber shop. The whirling blades of the rotary mower tend to tear the grass, leaving a jagged top that's open to infection. Another bonus: If you mow regularly, you can leave the clippings on the

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