

Judi Birnberg

I'm the one whose license plate says C♥LLAGE, although I suspect many people seeing it think I really enjoy my classes at the university but can't spell.

In fact, I do love collage and walk with my head down, my eyes sweeping the path before me for bits of detritus others might have discarded as junk. I once tore a wonderfully curled piece of a billboard on a wall in Spain as my husband repeatedly despaired that I was going to be arrested; that trophy now lives on a collage in his office. All my scraps of paper, wood and metal invariably find new life in my collages, works that also might incorporate watercolor and acrylic.

The first collage I did was in high school. I vaguely recall assembling it very quickly and then forgetting about it until my teacher told me she had entered it into a citywide art competition in which the juror awarded me a blue ribbon; the collage was then sent to New York City for a national contest. It came back without further decoration and was the last collage I did until ten years ago, when I took a Gerald Brommer workshop and was immediately and irrevocably smitten by the medium.

The risk-taking I exhibited in Spain is also reflected in my art: I work spontaneously, putting down one element – it doesn't matter which one – and letting that lead me to the next and the next and the next; if I don't like something, I peel off or cover it up. I don't want



to know where I am going ahead of time; I love to be surprised and see where the elements of creativity lead me.

As a literature major and former college English teacher, I should not be surprised when a work calls to me to incorporate words and letters. They may not mean anything to me; they may be in a language I don't understand, and sometimes their form is all I want.

I am drawn to the irregular and the imperfect, perhaps as a reflection of the human condition, perhaps just of my condition. I love to vary my palette and try new approaches. The pieces I have chosen for this exhibit use different colors, techniques and media. They might not even appear to have been created by the same person. What might that indicate? Creativity? Experimentation? Schizophrenia? You be the judge.

—Judi Birnberg

improvisations?

Big E, Little x.....	Watercolor, collage, transfer type	\$500
Imagination vs. Knowledge.....	Collage, watercolor, plastic	\$250
Lady Luck.....	Collage, gutter screen, Asian tile, paste paper on birch bark.....	\$100
Note in a Pocket.....	Acrylic paint, netting, paper, gilding.....	\$200
Reef.....	Watercolor on Yupo.....	\$350
Tick But No Tock.....	Acrylic paint, collage, altered paper, metal, on canvas.....	\$100
Weigh Yourself Daily.....	Caran D'Ache, collage, metal, cord, wax.....	\$200