

# Creativity Bursts Into Full Bloom

By MARY FORTNEY  
Tribune Writer

A self-taught artist who began her creative career in the Deep South making paper flowers for the funerals of neighbors, will have a one-woman show at Mayfield Mall in Mountain View next week.

The artist is Mrs. Mary Ann Hyman, a warm, relaxed woman who lives in East Palo Alto with her husband Henry and six of their nine children. Hyman is employed at Raychem Corp., Menlo Park.

Mrs. Hyman was reared in Little Rock, Ark. Her parents were always busy working but she has warm memories of an elderly retired school teacher, "Uncle Richie Samuel" who cared for her and her sister and three brothers.

Reminiscing about how Uncle Richie Samuel taught them to sing their multiplication tables, Mrs. Hyman says, "Maybe he was thinking that he would soon be off this planet and he was giving us his knowledge before he left."

The family was poor, so it was difficult for Mrs. Hyman to express her urge to draw and paint.

She taught herself to make paper flowers by experimenting first with old newspapers. A big garden around her home provided real roses for models.

Mrs. Hyman cut the newspaper into the shape of rose petals and finally got the knack of putting them together to look like roses. When there was money available, she bought crepe paper to make the flowers.

When a child in a neighboring family died, Mrs. Hyman learned the family was too poor to buy flowers for the funeral. It was winter, and fresh flowers weren't available and florist flowers too expensive.

Mrs. Hyman remembers, "I really got busy that day. I started about three that afternoon and I finished about 12 that night. I remember how sleepy I became but I finished. Then I went to bed happy."

"I was glad I had made them," she says, "for my bouquet was the only flowers on the casket."



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Mrs. Hyman repeated her flower-making contributions again and again.

"I didn't have the money to buy crepe paper but someone would buy the paper for me and instead of making flowers for a hobby, I was making flowers for funerals. But it seems like I was forced to make them, for I thought how unhappy the family would be without any flowers on their loved one's casket."

Mrs. Hyman also spent hours of her time drawing with wax crayons and considered that her "No. 1 hobby."

She learned how to create colors by working with crayons, again using nature as her model. For instance, she says, "I always knew as a little girl in Little Rock that orange was for sunshine."

When Mrs. Hyman began working with oil paints about four years ago, she just translated crayon colors into oils.

Where she had used yellow crayons, she used yellow paints, and where blue crayons, blue paints.

She doesn't like dull colors, and didn't go for the raw umber color suggested by a sales person at an art supply store.

She loves bright colors — green, purple, blue, pink and especially orange for sunshine.

The love of color is reflected in her 50 oil and acrylic paintings that will be displayed in Mayfield Mall from Tuesday through March 30.

The works include a wide range of subject matter, from simple, bright landscapes to dazzling floral pictures. One of her favorites, "Dream Daisy," is a mass of greenish bluish daisies, with touches of purple in the background, that has a dream-like quality.

Mrs. Hyman called her first oil painting, "Paradise Garden." It was a colorful depiction of "Eve and Adam, white rocks and all kinds of flowers."

A visiting insurance man saw the painting hanging in the Hyman's living room and convinced the family it had value.

Mrs. Hyman had given some of her paintings to the Children's Society in San Jose and to Faith Temple Church in East Palo Alto, but she had never thought of trying to sell them.

Encouraged by the insurance man's words, she took some of her work to an art gallery in Redwood City to be appraised. The gallery owner felt the paintings had merit and agreed to put "Paradise Garden" on display in his shop.

The painting sold quickly, to Mrs. Hyman's dismay. She had reconsidered and decided — too late — she didn't want to part with her first work.

The Mayfield Mall exhibit will be her first major show.

Mrs. Hyman still hasn't taken any formal art lessons. She'd like to, sometime, but she's still too busy caring for her family.



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## SELF-TAUGHT ARTIST

Mary Hyman of East Palo Alto today applies to oils and acrylics the knowledge of color she learned from using crayons during her childhood.



Bright colors and simple themes characterize Mrs. Hyman's paintings.

Tribune photos by Gene Tupper

