

New England HOME CT



Wanderlust

*Seeking Inspiration
Near & Afar*

Breaking the Mold

From Jell-O to shower caps, Roxy Savage takes the stuff of everyday domestic life and turns the mundane into the sublime. BY PAULA M. BODAH

Those of us of a certain age look back at the artifacts of our childhoods with a mix of fondness and horror. We recall sandwiches on Wonder Bread and family dinners where Mom proudly unmolded a fancy Jell-O salad. Some of us, including Fairfield artist Roxy Savage, even remember wearing Wonder Bread bags inside our snow boots to keep our feet dry.

For Savage, Jell-O and Wonder Bread, gelatin molds, and other artifacts of domesticity in the mid-twentieth century are fodder for exploring her fascination with daily life in general and women's place in it in particular.



ABOVE: *Wonderbread/Wish* (2021), AI-generated digital image.
LEFT: *Joy + Dawn/Martha* (2021), AI-generated digital image.

Savage describes herself as an interdisciplinary artist, and indeed, her medium of preference can vary from printmaking to digital photography to sculpture to performance art. Pigeonholing her is next to impossible. She has created sculptures out of those colorful, puffy shower caps ladies used to use. Her *Smashmold* sculptures resulted from an exhibition during which she crushed Jell-O molds with a four-ton steel plate. Recently she's been using an artificial intelligence program to manipulate her own digital photos of such domestic items as bottles of Joy dishwashing liquid, tubs of butter, and yes, loaves of



Wonder Bread, yielding prints with an almost hallucinatory quality.

Her artistic mission, however, is constant. “The thread that pulls all my work together is my interest in domestic space,” she says. “My art is a response to everyday domestic life.”

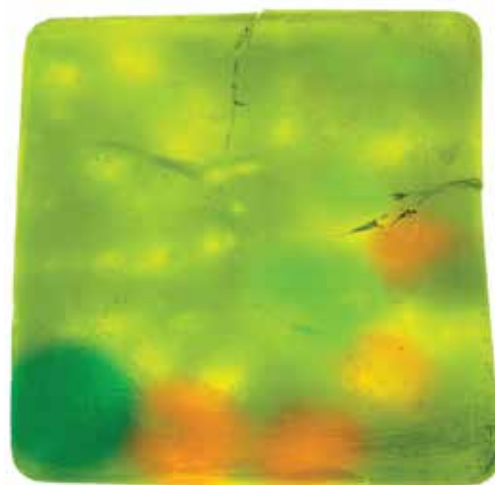
While her work isn’t overtly political, Savage acknowledges her art contains statements about women in society. “When I smashed the Jell-O molds, I was speaking about smashing the female mold,” she says. “My work is serious and funny. I don’t want to be strident, but my views are in there.”

Gallery owner and art consultant Amie Appleton Greenspan is drawn to Savage’s work in part because of the artist’s constant experimentation with new techniques. “I’m intrigued by both her

technical processes and her passion. Every time we meet, she’s exploring some new way to express herself,” she says. “And visually, her work is just really playful and appealing.”

Savage, who grew up in Boston, studied at Boston University, and earned her B.F.A. from New York’s Pratt Institute, is fearless when it comes to trying new things, from developing a working gelatin recipe after her first Jell-O sculpture melted to diving into artificial intelligence. “If you have skill and intuition and you’re willing to fail, something is going to happen,” she says.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Roxy Savage is represented by Appleton Art Design, Westport, appletonartdesign.com. To see more of her work, visit roxysavage.com.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: *Smile Sweetheart* (2020), shower caps, 5”H x 4”W x 1”D, available as a digital image. *Butter/Wand* (2021), AI-generated digital image. *GreenGLOW/ChaNorth* (2022), digital print of gelatin sculpture. *SMASHMOLD/Twister* (2020), gelatin mold, 12”H x 8”W x 3”D, available as a digital image.