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## Designer bags herself a beauty

### Women brought to life as art on handbags

BY ANDREA COHEN  
*Special to The Examiner*

Cherry Blossom, Blonde Ambition and Sweet Summer may all sound like cosmetics or perfumes, but to artist and designer Dionne Green, they are the names and inspiration of her hand-painted "wearable art" handbags.

"The line is really a celebration of women," Green said of her limited edition leather totes all with the motif of feminine beauty.

Throughout her collection of 21 different designs, multicultural women are featured in full beauty. And each one is a limited edition, as only 100 of each design will be made.

And paint is not the only embellishment to the recycled leather. Sewn on to the handcrafted bags are beads, 24K gold chains, suede and much more. The interiors are cotton or satin fabric, some even have a fun zebra design — drawstring optional.



Hans Ericsson/For The Examiner

Tote bags by Susej Designs were on display during Dinner in the City's DIP: A Fashion Groove on June 11.

The Texas native always knew she wanted to be a fashion designer, she even went to design school and studied in Italy, but it was the

illustrating that really captured her heart.

Two years ago she began Susej Designs (pronounced sue-jay)

creating then selling these unique handbags. She has recently started her online boutique ([www.susejdesigns.com](http://www.susejdesigns.com)) which features pictures

*Look back next week for more on local designers.*

of the entire line, interesting stories and inspirational poems about each bag.

Although Naturally Yours is her favorite, the most inspirational to her is For Twila, a design dedicated to her late aunt, Twila, who died of AIDS. This bag is the only one which features three different multicultural women on one canvas, "because AIDS doesn't recognize race," she said. Due to the nature, 10 percent of bag sales go to charity.

She has a different inspiration for each handbag she creates — whether she comes up with a fun name and designs what the name means to her, like Blonde Ambition; a quote inspires her to paint, like Tangled Tulle; or an embellishment is the starting point, like the natural stones for Naturally Yours.

It's all about the glittering colors, exotic images and inspiring quotes which are so prevalent on the chic, yet fun totes.

Available online, or call Green at 202-487-1762, the bags sell for \$350 to \$450.

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