

By Suzanne Reeder

Dream Weaver

Tina Puckett gets rich color and texture into all her wondrous woven works.



Home decorating takes on a new twist with Puckett's intricate baskets and free-form sculptures.

A few steps inside Tina Puckett's Winsted home is a giant sea anemone that thrives without water, a poppy and sunflower with blooms as large as wagon wheels, and a burst of fireworks. There's a patch of mountains and woods, even a fisherman small enough to fit in your pocket. Nothing out of the ordinary, really—at least not in the living room of an accomplished weaver surrounded by some of her latest three-dimensional work, inspired by her love of nature, color and the pristine beauty of the Connecticut countryside.

"Sometimes, I don't know what I'm creating; I let it flow, go with it," Puckett admits of the handcrafted pieces that include landscapes, flowers, tables, free-form sculptures and baskets. In vibrant shades of yellow, green, purple and

orange, her fireworks sculpture and wall hanger, called Happy New Year, exemplifies her philosophy. It didn't start out with a specific intention but ended up reminding her of happy beginnings, she says.

Puckett—whose work has been displayed in galleries and craft shows across the country—describes her pieces as "rustic but contemporary, folk-artish, too." The combination seems to be a good fit for a lot of folks, whether it's a one-of-a-kind wedding gift Puckett does on commission or a custom piece that coordinates with the colors and textures of a client's swatch of fabric.

Casually dressed in jeans and relaxed on a sunny Sunday afternoon, Puckett is nonetheless at work, answering questions from two visitors who drove from West Hartford. Soft-spoken at first and unfailingly polite (she apologizes for the mix-up, explaining they were running late after getting

