

Town focus **Solana Beach**

Artist uses cracked tiles to mend hearts

By **Marisa Lowe**
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SOLANA BEACH — D Goth finds faces in the cracks of tiles.

Using a screwdriver, she chips into stones and keeps on hitting, until she sees a nose, a mouth and two eyes take shape.

She compares the art form to mosaics. But in this art, she creates pictures from the pieces she broke herself. Then, she adds the color.

Called "Cracked Art From a Cracked Mind," her collection of cracked tiles will be on display through Sept. 30 at Trion Gallery in Solana Beach, 130 S. Cedros Ave.

Goth has created hundreds of cracked pieces through the years, so gallery visitors will see a variety of mosaic-style faces, animals, hearts and hands.

A heart-shaped, chipped rock began her creative journey.

Goth found the rock while taking a walk on the beach in 1998. At the time, she was trying to escape the pain of several personal losses.

She was dealing with the deaths of a best friend and several close family members and a divorce. She also was making the transition from housemaker to full-time artist and feeling a bit broken.

The crack down the rock's middle reminded her of her broken heart, and that night she painted a heart onto the rock.

It made her feel better, and she continued to make more. The rocks became therapy, she said.

She gradually turned her creative passion into a business called Hearts of Stone and sold the pieces at craft



Diana Goth laid two works made of cracked tiles that depict a man and a woman kissing when they're hung side by side. A left is another of her cracked tile works. *Charlie Neuman / Union-Tribune*

shows and online.

At the craft shows, people who bought the rocks told her they connected with the pieces, because they reminded them of their own broken hearts.

One customer asked Goth to paint a broken heart onto a chipped kitchen tile in her home.

Goth loved how that project turned out, she said. "I loved the way the surface

of the stone took the paint, I liked the whole idea of the cracked image," Goth said.

Goth liked the art form so much that she started painting hearts on chipped tiles, and one day she painted her own face.

The painting contains a barely visible outline of her face. Its blue eyes look sad, and the lips are slightly open. The picture won first place at the Del Mar Fair in 2001.

A trip to Puerto Vallarta in 1999 inspired a series of tiles and faces with dark colors and Aztec-looking features.

In the future, Goth will try painting portraits on the tiles, using the cracks as background instead of the defining features.

She hopes ultimately to teach art as therapy.

"People get these emotions, and they don't know what to do with them," she said. "Art

is such a therapy. Creating, writing and dancing is so therapeutic. That is what got me through all the stuff that I was going through."

Do you have a story idea for Solana Beach? Contact Marisa Lowe at (760) 476-8221 or Marisa.Lowe@uniontrib.com. For special events, contact us at least four weeks in advance. We work ahead.