

# People

## New thoughts shown on madonnas

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Among the more traditional madonnas and creches on display during the Madonna Festival at First United Methodist Church beginning Saturday, Dec. 8, and continuing through Dec. 11, will be the sculpture "New Thought" by Karin Swildens.

The child at the top of the mother's head symbolizes any new thought, a beautiful thought that has enlightened the mind. "It can be a spiritual thought that helps the body and the mind," Karin says.

The artist was born in Holland, raised in Morocco, studied at Les Art Decoratif's in Paris and spent most of her married life in France.

Her work, unusual as it is, has grown out of her love and respect for life. Symbols, imagination and intuition join to make her work a joy and inspiration to behold. Legends, love and tenderness are the basis of her inspiration, the artist says, adding, "I use archetypal and personal symbols to convey my profound respect for life."

Karen's work is astonishingly beautiful, especially if one stops to inquire as to the symbol she conveys. Karen says when she started sculpting she was timid about showing anyone her work. "I felt it was so much a part of me," she said. "It was almost like appearing naked, like I was showing a part of myself that no one but I knew or understood."

A friend of her late father, who incidentally was also an artist, introduced her to the writings of Carl Jung and this awakened in her the meaning and inspirations of symbols and mythology.

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"It was like I already knew these things, but now I was about to express them in a way that I could understand and perceive them. A new world opened to me."

This new world is bringing wide acclaim to the artist. She has exhibited at Brand Gallery and at many art galleries around the West Coast and in Europe.

Next year, from Jan. 11 through Feb. 8, Karen will exhibit at the Upstairs Gallery in Glendale Federal Savings in Brentwood, 11666 San Vicente.

Her work is for those who enjoy the unusual and for those who seek to understand symbols through art.

"New Thought" stands about 15 inches in height and is **molded** of clay with the mother in deep meditation. The face of the mother is serenity itself. The child is wide-eyed and alive to its newness—symbolically a newness of thought coming from the serenity of the withinness of the mother.

Birth, death (which Karin says is an extension of Life) and many of the emotions of humanity are expressed in her work, especially noted in "New Thought." The Festival is open to the public—don't miss it!



Karin Swildens does a variety of sculptures to symbolize life. On display this week will be

"New Thought," pictured left.

