



Media Contact:

Leanne DuPay, Owner/Artist

Dazzling Mélange

512-243-6036/ 949-282-9915

[l.dupay@hotmail.com](mailto:l.dupay@hotmail.com)

Photos of artwork and artist available upon request

**Dazzling Me'lange**

**INTRODUCING 'DAZZLING ME'LANGE'**

**ONE-OF-A-KIND ART CELEBRATING THE JOYS OF LIFE**

AUSTIN, TX.— You have them. We all do. In a dusty shoebox underneath the bed, pushed in the back of a drawer ... small treasures we don't know what to do with...that we can't bear to part with. And, now that spring-cleaning season is upon us, you will probably run across them again. They could be barely-worn baby shoes, a rhinestone brooch from a favorite aunt, old black and white photos or knick-knacks from vacations past. From this scenario, assemblage artist Leanne DuPay has developed Dazzling Mélange, a new company out of Austin where treasured trinkets and vintage ornaments are used to make one-of-a-kind art for any room in the house.

“It all started when I found a box of wonderful, tiny, vintage Christmas items that belonged to my grandmother. I would never get rid of them, so I worked them into a holiday wreath,” DuPay said. “I added old Christmas ornaments---the more oxidized and faded the better. The aged patina of these items gave such a wonderful quality to the wreath.”

The word “mélange” in the company name is French for “mixture,” which is certainly apropos. To find additional items for her projects, DuPay joyfully scours flea markets, antique shops and thrift stores for unique items that assist making each project one-of-a-kind.

As friends and family saw the results, DuPay was asked to create custom projects using their treasures and Dazzling Mélange was born. Not wanting to be limited by the holiday season,

New Dazzling Mélange Wreaths

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she quickly expanded her projects to include any subject or theme for year-round décor. For a custom project, clients are asked to send 7-10 small, personal items, a theme idea and color preferences.

DuPay incorporates client treasures into a wreath or centerpiece and adds vintage ornaments and other items she has found to enhance the piece. Ideas she has worked with include weddings and anniversaries (working in the cake topper and party favors), new babies, hobbies, vacations, sports teams, favorite toys, pets and more.

Each of DuPay's wreaths are 16-18 inches in diameter and consist of more than 30 items combined with 36 feet of tinsel garland and each one takes hours to build. "I like to take my time and make sure each piece complements the whole and supports the story I am trying to tell."

DuPay, who recently moved back home to Texas, has had more than 20 years of creative job experience ---as a freelance writer, a PR executive, an interior design student and most recently as a marketing manager at Disney. "Working for Disney taught me how important attention to detail in a theme is," DuPay says.

There are many notable assemblage artists, and DuPay is a fan of two in particular. Famed artist Joseph Cornell is known for amazing assemblage art pieces using found items in unique combinations. His work is featured in museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It has been said that "Cornell could create poetry from the commonplace," and he was "fascinated not by garbage and the discarded, but by fragments once found beautiful and precious," from articles he gathered from flea markets in New York. DuPay too sees found items the same way, appreciating the history and nostalgia of each treasure she finds.

"I am also a big fan of jewelry designer Wendy Gell," says DuPay. "She would combine and pile outrageous and colorful items to make her jewelry pieces." Gell's fun and funky pieces (especially from the 1980s) are collectors' items today.

For those interested in purchasing a ready-made Dazzling Mélange piece, DuPay's work is available exclusively at Cowgirls & Lace, a boutique in Dripping Springs, Texas. "We look for the beautiful and the unique," said Beverly Tuntland of Cowgirls & Lace. "When I saw Leanne's work, I said these are magnificent!" The shop carries a number of Dazzling Mélange pieces to choose from.

For more information, contact Leanne DuPay at Dazzling Mélange at (512) 243-6036 or via cell at (949) 282-9915 ([www.dazzlingmelange.com](http://www.dazzlingmelange.com) is under construction). To contact Cowgirls and Lace for pre-made pieces, call (800) 982-7424 or visit the shop at Highway 290 West in Dripping Springs, Texas. Prices begin at \$149.95. Tax and shipping fees may apply.

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