

ART *and* HEALING



*Using Expressive Art to Heal Your
Body, Mind, and Spirit*

B A R B A R A G A N I M



FIGURE 5-11.

Picket Fence Skirt

ALLISON NEWSOME

"For me, the action of making art is like having a conversation. As the conversation unfolds, a series of sculptures and paintings work their way out. One conversation leads to another, and the imagery takes on a new course. This process can be described as an internal dialogue. I am not always aware of the intention or direction of the work, sometimes a few years may pass before I realize how the work related to my environment and state of mind at the time. An ongoing theme has remained an undercurrent in my work, this being the change of our environment from the wilderness, to the agrarian, to the industrial. I realize now that I focused on 'The Agrarian' in 1996-1997 as I physically performed agriculture on my own body with the emotionally stressful in vitro fertilization procedure. I became preoccupied with the midsection of the figure, doing away with the head, arms, and hands. Thus emerged The Dress Maker Dummy series, of which Picket Fence Skirt is a part. Now, four years later, with the birth of my twins two years ago, I realize the act of making this work helped me through that stressful time."

MATERIALS

It is best to keep your imagery simple and to the point so that you do not run the risk of becoming so involved in the artistic execution of your images that you misinterpret the message your imagery is attempting to convey. To facilitate this, I suggest you limit your imagistic expressions to drawings using either pastels or crayons to express your visualized imagery.

Begin by taking four large sheets of drawing paper, and at the top of each one, indicate whether it is part one, two, three, or four, and then write the title of each individual visualization.

PART ONE:
HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT

When you are ready to begin, retreat to your healing space, place your drawing materials in front of you, and pretape this visualization or read it through, and then with your eyes closed, lead yourself through each step.