

Wanted: Modern love goddess



Venus Crossings, Barbara Bickel's new exhibition at The Centre Gallery is a collection of 16 works which are part of a collaborative effort to

redefine the Venus image for the modern woman. The group of seven women have assembled various art forms to weave their own expression of the image of Venus.

The visual art reminded me of album covers by Dave McKean for the Nettwerk record label and also the covers of the *Sandman* comic book series.

The images in the works are powerfully symbolic, both on a personal and spiritual level. Religious sym-

bols of numerous faiths are present in many of the works. A large cross dominates "Quantum Questions," obscuring the audience's view of the woman behind the cross reaching out around it.

Bickel also uses objects which carry powerful meanings, such as knives and swords. Each piece in *Venus Crossings* is based on the image of one of the other women involved in the show, who modeled for Bickel.

Bickel uses many unconventional

media in her works. The pieces in *Venus Crossings* integrate lace, plywood attached to the paintings with screws, pages from books, and sewing patterns, to name a few. The mixed-media gives her art a unique and enjoyable effect. In most pieces you can see words on the pages of books or the pattern of a dress through the paint.

In one piece, "Passionate Dignity," Bickel uses either lace or a veil as a backdrop behind the figure creating an interesting effect.

Although I didn't get to see the live performance, I heard the music while I was in the gallery. It was very good and tapes are available. *Venus Crossings* is scheduled to run until Dec. 20, and Bickel will give an artist's talk on Sat., Nov. 29 at 2 P.M. Call 237-0383 or 243-4615 for more information.



"Passionate Dignity" by Barbara Bickel, mixed media on wood, 1997