

Precious relics

Like artifacts from a mythical past, Jan Sessler's new work dazzles

Commentary by Rick Romancito

All art is a fictional history of sorts. Whether it is painstakingly reproducing a physical thing or nonobjectively commenting on nothingness, it is the end result of a process that has sprung from the artist's intellectual workspace. While some performance art and other neo visionary works attempt to move forward from the present, its activity leaves a temporal trace that is the only thing a memory can grasp.



FYI

Visual discoveries

■ **When:** On view now

■ **Where:** Hulse/Warman Gallery, 222 Paseo del Pueblo Norte

■ **Admission:** Free

■ **Information:** (575) 751-7702

Jan Sessler's exhibition, titled "New Work on Paper and Sculpture" now on view at Hulse/Warman in Taos, embraces this trace, following it though an elegant landscape of mysterious recollections and artifacts from a repository of dreamland devices. "Through a primarily intuitive process in my painting, printmaking and other media, I explore the mysteries of space, subtleties

of color and touching the unknowable," she says in a statement on her website (jansessler.com). "The process of discovery along the way allows me to enter a meditative space where

SESSLER continues on Page 6



Courtesy image

'Bird of Paradise' by Sessler



Courtesy image

'Passage' chin collé by Jan Sessler

SESSLER *continued from Page 4*
 the unconscious and thought meet
 and interweave themselves as in a
 dance.”

Sessler has been working in Taos since 1993, gradually building her resumé as one of our leading artists. In fact, in 1998, David Witt, former curator of the Harwood Museum, chose her part of a group of 14 artists representing “The Next Generation” of Taos artists. When we first took notice of her work it was grounded in finely wrought abstract expressionist paintings, but it quickly grew beyond the borders of our community. Now, her work is in collections in Austria, Italy, Germany, Mexico, Guatemala and throughout much of the United States. In 2008 she was awarded a grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation in New York City.

In June 2010, according to her website, she had her first European solo exhibition, “Wiedergeburt,” in Vienna, Austria. And, in 2005, had her first one-person museum exhibition, “Jan Sessler: Works on Paper” at the Harwood. In 2003 Douglas Dreishpoon, senior curator of The Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY, selected her to participate in “Contemporary Art/ Taos,” again at the Harwood Museum of Art, along with other 16 other artists including Agnes Martin, Ken Price, Larry Bell and Ron Davis.

Little known bit of trivia: Sessler has also worked in the film industry, with off-screen credits for “I’m Gonna get You Sucka,” “Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death” and Bryan Singer’s debut picture, “Public Access,” among others.

Sessler says she loves to collect things as she travels, inconsequential bits of ephemera. “I come across them. They come to me in a way,” she said. “With the found objects, maybe I get out of the car and there’s this beautiful flattened bottle cap, and, in a way, that reminds me of mark-making, like the stamping of a document, a



Courtesy photo

The artist in her studio



Courtesy photo

‘Cocoon’ sculpture by Sessler

medallion. They are some kind of artifact.”

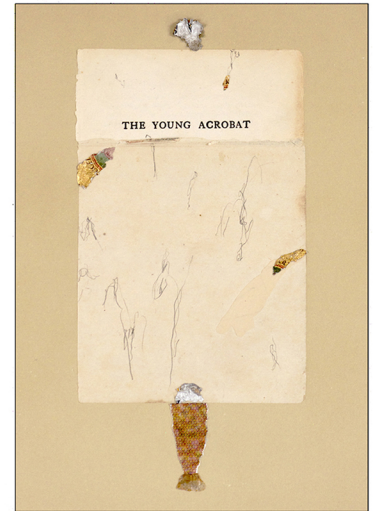
The chin collé works share space with curious sculpture that are equally enigmatic, standing like



Courtesy photo

‘Ancestor’ sculpture by Sessler

silent sentinels of a fictional ancestry. A piece titled “Cocoon” looks like it could either be something shaped by the sea or maybe a ritual object from a tribal society. It pro-



Courtesy image

‘Leap,’ chin collé

voke the viewer to imagine.

Hulse/Warman Gallery is located at 222 Paseo del Pueblo Norte. For more, call (575) 751-7702 or visit hulsewarmangallery.com.