



Daily Quote

*Do not fear to be
eccentric in opinion,
for every opinion now
accepted was once
eccentric.*

-- Bertrand Russell

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[Visuals: Bones and Stones](#)

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[Arts & Culture](#) By Jud Yalkut

Jan Jackson and Corinne Bayraktaroglu are two artists whose works have explored the borders between pure visual beauty and didactic messages of protest and humanity. Jackson is known particularly for her mixed media work fusing highly symbolic and actively textured markings that recall primitive cultures, and Bayraktaroglu has emerged as an artist who puts "into images what I cannot say with words."

Collaborating on an exhibition called "Bones & Stones: The Sacred and Profane" for the Alley Frame & Art gallery in West Carrollton through November 8, Jackson and Bayraktaroglu have created interactive sequences of new pieces that incorporate the basic materials of the show's title. With an underlying theme of "an exploration of the human experience from a global and personal perspective," they chose "bones and stones as our main medium because they are symbolic of the human experience... as materials that have been and are used in our daily lives in one form or another."

A native of Michigan, Jackson received her B.F.A. in art and art history from Wayne State University in Detroit, has taught elementary school in Illinois for 20 years, and has studios in Wisconsin and Arizona. Conversely, Bayraktaroglu started painting at the age of 40, then studied under Marie Linnekin at Ann Arundel College in Maryland and now lives and works in Yellow Springs. She characterizes her work as confronting "how humans can justify the most atrocious acts against humanity... and creating a visual language of the attitudes that horrify me is my way of dealing with it."

There is much impact and substance in the range of pieces here, mostly small but dense with powerful meanings. Bayraktaroglu's self-portrait piece "Ectasy" (sic) in acrylic on Lucite looks out with real eyes through a skeletal mask over flesh tones and a wildly patterned crown, all contained within an arched, black frame. Jackson has an exaggeratedly

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large pair of denture plates bound with and hanging from heavy wire as mirrored collages of letters on the bright pink gums spell out the title, "Keep Your Big Mouth Shut."

Jackson's pastel work is well known, but here she reveals some of her darker sides. "Someone To Watch Over Me," with its characteristic patterns and cross-hatch textures, reveals a skeletal form merged with haloed chickens and a submerged floral sun in some mysterious dark ritual, and "Reaching Out," with its overall patterning and fish, bird and animal forms in pictorial outlines, recalls South American and aboriginal designs.

"Hobgoblins" by Bayraktaroglu, is a textured, white wall-mounted box with rows of teeth mounted at the top and bottom of a small window, looking into a black interior featuring a crouching, white hobgoblin below eye level and handwritten text above.

Making the viewer work to discover the pertinent elements is part of these works, as in the black mesh, narrow window over a mirror, a reference to the enforced "burkas" that cover the heads of certain Muslim women, which is mounted over a threatening oil painting in grays of a hand holding a rock about to be thrown.

"Sticks & Stones: A Prelude" is a caustic comment on genocide as seen in intertribal African conflicts. One painting of a black hand holding a gun to the head of a grinning black boy is mounted besides a portable radio about to broadcast the outrage.

Bayraktaroglu's "Camp Irene" has a faceless figure standing behind a tombstone, saying: "They are not buried here, they are planted," as this image is mounted above a cylindrical glass vial holding fragments of bone, earth and other unknown matter. Jackson has constructed a black shelf, decorated with floral patterns in her staccato style, which holds numerous small pieces such as two black "Mask Forms" encrusted with buttons, beads and glass hangings. Also, a gilded, beaded, and shriveled roadkill bird remains displayed in a Romeos miniature cigar case in "Cuban Jeweled Early Bird Gets the Agave Worm." Also to be discovered is a red ceramic ashtray with green indentations that contains a contorted Day of the Dead skeleton with the warning title, "No Fume."

Within a black frame collaged around with pictorial fragments, including an image of a pill labeled "LSD 1943-1993," Jackson forms the face of a "War Mask" from lacquered bones interspersed with cut-out color strips. Two black frame boxes with stylized rosettes on their apexes contain figures constructed of fabric, buttons and bones.

"Let's Play" features limbs of bones and one jointed doll's leg with a foreign ceramic hand reaching from

behind to cup its crotch, and “Have You Seen the Mitten Man” showcases double-beaded lips around a pair of hanging, mini-knit mittens and its male equipment as described by buttons and a stuffed appendage.

“Bones & Stones” applies many iterations to the implications of its materials, from dotted, bone-like figures with carved skull heads (Jackson) to armless and earless gray females in black sheath dresses (Bayraktaroglu). “Knick Knack Paddywhack” (Bayraktaroglu) is a small oil of an outrageously large-eared yet small dog whose bulging eyes are focused intently on the gold-painted bone inset in a framed alcove above its head.

Alley Frame & Art is located at 5 North Elm Street in West Carrollton. Gallery hours are 10 am-7 pm Monday-Friday and 10 am-5 pm Saturday. For more information, call (937) 859-8395.

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