

ENTERTAINMENT

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Continued from 8D
er pieces, in works that appear as whole, then deconstruct into discrete parts, like images that float in and out of a dream. "I spent so long trying to make perfect pictures, this is so freeing."

The show springs from another aspect of her drive. "It's me needing to use my hands. I could be composing something simple in the computer, but making it myself is important for me. The subtleties, the variations in the transparency, and the way the scanner sees it."

Born in 1950 in Indianapolis, Goldstein moved to Colorado to attend the University of Colorado at Boulder. (Her father owned a hardware store, and was an inventor of objects including the urethane hammer, she said.)

Goldstein was a distributive major—"art, biology, it got me absolutely nowhere," she recalled, of her 1972 degree.

She lived in a cabin above Boulder (the rent: \$35 a month). "I made hippie jewelry, and sold it. I lived on nothing." She knew "nothing about Denver," but moved here (keeping the cabin) in the late 1970s. "I couldn't get a job. I delivered *Westward*, demonstrated sausages at Safeway, scrubbed the halls of my apartment building." That saved her \$25 a month off her \$75 rent.

She bought a camera, and began shooting, including on a trip to Haiti. But she moved from the point where "photography was only for myself," and attended the Woodland School of Photography in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va. Freelance jobs led her to want to exhibit her work, which spurred her to submit work to shows at various co-op galleries.

That includes Edge, where she has exhibited since 1992, with a non-photographic entry in a show on reproductive freedom. She became a member in the late 1990s. "I had no idea what I was doing. I had no idea how to make a show, to do the lights or hang something on the wall properly."

But Edge member Roger Beltrami, who died last year, "took me under his wing." The co-op atmosphere suits her. "I want to go off half-cocked and do a political show that will barely pay for the materials, I can do that there."

That would be a political show such as "Good vs. Evil: Gross Oversimplification," which in 2003 worked to point out the tangle of issues at hand in the United States' invasion of Iraq. In the title piece, Goldstein drew from the look of the precise lines of an engraving to pit an obviously American "angel" against a large head of Saddam Hussein (lifted from an Iraqi dinar).

"Some people thought I was saying that America was the angel, but the issue was more complex than that," she said. "People think doing political things is passé, but politics makes up a big part of our world."

In 2004, Goldstein came back with a nonpolitical exploration of the ghostly contents of a factory in Pennsylvania that had manufactured religious statuary.

She found the Poli Vesture company on a trip years ago, and has kept returning to photograph deftly lighted statues of saints and disembodied parts such as hands and heads. In some images, she set objects meant for an altar against the more secular reality of a factory telephone or door.

And then there is "Elements," the kind of work "that lets me do collecting and hunting. Finding things is half the fun."

And so is the occasional step out of the political arena.

"Sometimes, I just have to stop dwelling on issues that are so important to us, and pay attention to something else in the creative process. It is not disjointed to go from political to nonpolitical. I keep trying to make work for me."

Elemental pieces

Provocative stirs creative process for Susan Goldstein

By Mary Voelz Chandler
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

As much seeker as artist, Susan Goldstein finds the hunt for the evocative object as important as creating provocative objects of her own.

Consider shows at Edge Gallery that have ranged from a series of haunting photographs of religious statuary at an almost-abandoned plant in Pittsburgh, to political artwork that incorporated currency from Iraq in an exhibition on the nuances of good and evil. The quest for an Iraqi dinar sent Goldstein on an Internet search that cost her \$17 for 100 low-denomination bills.

Then came what she called "a slight blip" in value. "For 10 days, it was worth about \$3,000 more," said Goldstein, sitting in her West Highlands studio, which is filled with trophies from various treasure hunts, as well as work she was preparing for "Elements," her current show in the front gallery at Edge.

The old corner store from the 1920s is nondescript on the outside, but inside Goldstein has remade the space into storage and work areas that happily—and

generously—overlap.

In "Elements," Goldstein explores another area of photo-based work, combining images she took with her toy Diana camera of various natural and architectural features with figural pieces found in printed material of all sorts, including old books and Victorian trade cards.

Working with master printer Ron Landucci, Goldstein created three versions of the pigment prints: large-scale assemblages of images printed on aluminum and arranged in a rectangle; the same assemblages in smaller versions printed on paper; and individual images of the specific elements involved. Throughout the show, the prints of individual components hang near the related assemblage, serving as a sort of reference point.

In the centerpiece work, for example, *Architecture of the Mind*, which hangs on the back wall of the front gallery, Goldstein has combined structural elements with the face of a man, in a combination broken up into squares and rectangles on metal.

Girls, baby dolls, plants and animals populate the oth-

Flip to ART on 9D

Artist Susan Goldstein

Denver, who works in photography and various mixed-media styles will have a show at the Edge Gallery. She uses various items taken from books and old photos along with original photography to layer elements to create her art.

LINDA MCCOY/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Elements

■ **What:** New photo-based work by Susan Goldstein, with a show of abstract paintings by Kathryn Oberdorfer

■ **Where and when:** Edge Gallery, 3658 Navajo St.; through May 22

■ **Information:** 303-477-7173



An image from Susan Goldstein's 2004 exhibition, "Poli Vesture."