

out because Joel Silver comes to the Rose Bowl every couple of months, and Joel collects Teco.”

Oh.

“Got any Roadrunner glasses?” I ask. From the dealer’s disbelieving stare, I figure Joel is not collecting those. My back is hurting. I have a thudding headache. This is hard work. Either that or it’s the jerky.

Two weeks later we’re at an Arts & Crafts auction in Pasadena. The auditorium is full. A nice if ordinary piece of Teco four times the size of the one at the Rose Bowl goes for just \$350. We show our disdain by refusing to bid. On the way home I kick myself. I’ll probably see this piece next week in Buddy’s on Melrose for \$1,500. Well, there’s always the Roadrunner.

Back home, I start tearing through the hall closet in a frenzy. Way in the back, I find the box of Warner Brothers cartoon glasses. I know that I have made money on these. After all, they cost sixty-nine cents seventeen years ago. I count them. I have thirty-six glasses in mint condition. At three dollars apiece, they are worth over a hundred bucks. I feel rich. Now for the test: At the bottom of the box, I find two Roadrunner glasses. This is the El Dorado, the Big Score. I bring them up to the light.

Sadly, they both have “Beep Beep” written on them. Too bad. I pull one out and pour a Pepsi into it. What the hell, I’m thirsty. I wonder: Is it too late to start collecting Lambada memorabilia?

—Ned Wynn

TALKING ART: MASAKO TAKAHASHI

Masako Takahashi was born in 1944 in a Utah internment camp for Japanese-Americans. She grew up in San Francisco, and has lived in Los Angeles since 1969. Currently, she divides her time between a studio in Venice and a studio in San Miguel de Allende, north of Mexico City. She talked with BUZZ’s Garrett White.

I’ve always been involved with art. In high school, I won a painting scholarship to the San Francisco Art Institute. I was too restless to stay in school, and by the time I was twenty I’d spent two years traveling around the world, mostly in India and the Middle East. I ended up in Paris.

Travel has been the biggest influence on my work. Because of the difference in language, travel to other countries is mostly a visual experience for me. I’ve learned that there are many cultures in which art is not made solely for museum walls but more as a sacred offering or prayer. For the last five years I’ve had a studio in Mexico as well as in L.A. This encounter between my Japanese-American upbringing, my American art education, and Mexican passion and traditional iconography has been one of surprising force. My work has taken on the colors of earth, rust, blood, sky, water. My attention has focused on manifesting those invisible energies we seem to understand independent of language and background.

My recent solo show, “Ladders and Beyond,” reflected these preoccupations. There was a wonderful, old, beat-up ladder in my studio in San Miguel that I used to draw now and then. In a way, once you’ve drawn something it becomes yours because you’ve looked at it so intimately; your hand has formed it. When I returned to Venice, I remembered the simple beauty and humble character of that ladder. I did one painting of it, then another. It started out on the ground and then one day, like a leap of faith, it began to float in my paintings. By that point I had begun to identify with it symbolically. I like it because it’s an interdenominational symbol. My hope is that it will engage a spiritual sense in the viewer.



Takahashi in her Venice studio: ‘Once you draw something, it becomes yours’