

New gallery presents spectrum of fine art

Who: Owners Heather Sacre and James Carona, gallery director Lyndsay McCandless

What: Heather James Fine Art

When: 10-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday (off-season hours)

Where: 172 Center St.

Web: www.heatherjames.com

Telephone: 200-6090

By Katy Niner

A work of art, when placed in a different setting, can appear anew. Such is the same within an art community: A new gallery can shift the aesthetic composition. With its arrival, Heather James Fine Art adds new perspective with the breadth and depth of its world-class collection.

From antiquities to the avant-garde, old masters to contemporary photography, Heather James bridges art genres and periods. The gallery pledges to do the same between art channels in Jackson – a vow underscored by recruiting gallery director Lyndsay McCandless, who will forge new opportunities for aesthetic communion with owners Heather Sacre and James Carona.

Heather James Fine Art, modeled after the owners' existing galleries in Palm Desert, Calif., presents a diverse spectrum of art, past and present. With little duplication of artists, each piece simultaneously stands alone and in concert.

To transition from the outside world, visitors are greeted with tranquil works like Seiju Toda's meticulously composed photographs and

Yoshio Ikezaki's watercolor concentrations of chi.

Then they can travel through distinct yet dialoguing galleries – from the extinct botanical explosions of Penelope Gottlieb to the mesmerizing nebula of Timothy Tompkins, moving on to a Japanese embroidery of a bird of prey and the Modernist planes of Milton Avery, then Tim Hawkinson's ram's horn of gingerbread molds, before concluding in a corner of Latin American art or a nook of photography.

"The full spectrum of art lovers in this community will feel welcome here," McCandless said.

Echoing the narrative of so many Jackson transplants, Sacre and Carona fell in love with Jackson as a pit stop between their home, Palm Desert, and her family's in South Dakota. Jackson fulfilled latent longings, like Sacre's love of animals, nature and winter. In 2006, the two got married atop East Gros Ventre Butte at Spring Creek Ranch and bought a condo here.

"We always thought of Jackson as the place we would be someday," Sacre said.

Fate accelerated that time line. Stepping inside Bland Hoke's Center Street space, they knew.

"The actual decision was a *Blink* moment," Sacre said, referring to Malcolm Gladwell's book.

"Instead of waiting for someday, we would make it happen now. It's a dream come true," she said. "This wouldn't have happened three years ago or



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Owner Heather Sacre and director Lyndsay McCandless feature a wide variety at the new Heather James Fine Art.

three years from now."

As gallery owners, Sacre and Carona have learned they must be flexible and change, assess and take risks – an approach mirrored by McCandless' experience. Sacre sees Heather James Fine Art as building on what McCandless started at Lyndsay McCandless Contemporary.

"She laid the foundation for people like us to come here," she said.

For McCandless – who graduated with an art history and studio art degree from Princeton University, has worked with pARTners and the Snake River Institute, and spent five years at Martin-Harris Gallery before opening her own – an opportunity like this previously only seemed possible in big cities. To her new role, she brings her background as an artist, an

art student, an art teacher and advocate, and as an art dealer.

McCandless feels her route has been shared by all who weathered the recession together. One way to channel such an experience is to "come out with new collaborations, new energy," she said.

Such innovation is palpable in the gallery, particularly in its design by architect Dianna Wong, of Los Angeles, (designer of the new W Hotel in Washington, D.C.). Wong traveled to Jackson and toured sights and structures for inspiration. The finished space uses a local palette of materials, colors and textures to create an ambience at once serene and electrifying.

Paramount to the design was constructing four galleries while fostering a flow throughout. Sightlines forge relationships between artworks. The

design demonstrates how art might live in clients' homes as a conversant whole.

Beyond Teton recruitment, Sacre and Carona also enlisted the team they have built at their two Palm Desert galleries, Heather James Fine Art and Heather James Art and Antiquities. Curator Chip Tom lends contemporary prowess, while Carona brings expertise with antiquities, impressionist and modern art.

Like McCandless, Sacre and Carona value education, she as a former schoolteacher and he as a martial arts instructor (he holds a fifth-degree black belt in karate). They approach selling art as building long-term relationships with clients. As a former investment banker and voracious news reader, Carona connects with people's professions and honors the investment of an art purchase.

"When people come into the gallery, I want to educate them so they leave enriched, whether they purchase a piece or not," Sacre said.

After this soft launch, the gallery will host an official opening in the next few months and present its first major show in June. New shows will be staged periodically, with a focus on summer and early fall.

"The fact that Heather and Jim opened a business here not only attests to their desire to be a part of Jackson on a long-term basis," McCandless said, "but it also attests to what everyone else in the arts community is doing. There is strong support for the arts in Jackson."