

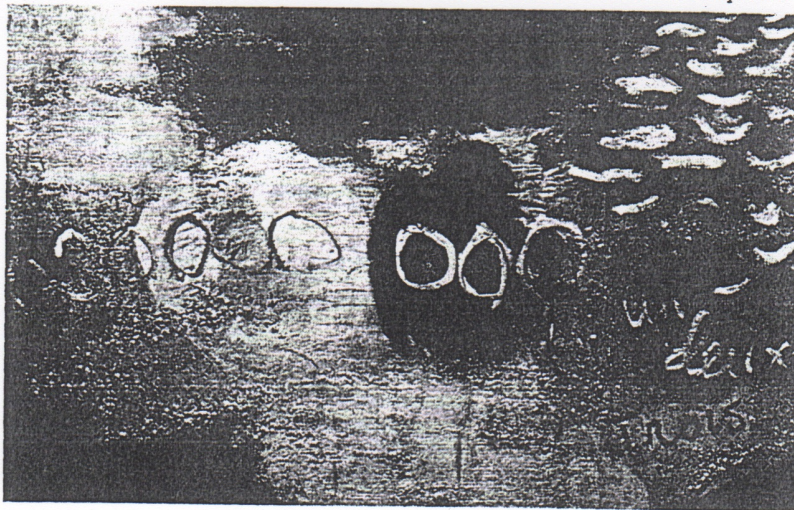
Levinson Kane Gallery/Boston
Sandi Slone

Blackened, scorched, like traces of some geologic process, Sandi Slone's new paintings seem very much of the earth. On a smoldering palette of rust, black, and gold, crystals of mica have accreted like barnacles, clinging tenaciously to the surface, glittering in the dark like diamonds in the ground.

These works seem to be about depth, both literally and figuratively. The artist likens the physical layering in her canvases to "the sediments of a constructed history," in particular to the tortured history of Spain where these paintings were done. Titles such as *The Grand Inquisitor*, *Homage to Catalonia*, *Moreneta/The Black Madonna*, establish specific links between the paintings and aspects of Spanish culture and memory. In *Moreneta/The Black Madonna* a golden shape glimmers in the gloom of a darkened field, like a reliquary revealed by candlelight in the deep recesses of a church. It is an image that speaks poignantly of loss and of hope, of the endurance of the spirit in the face of history's brutality.

Like Robert Motherwell in his series *Elegy to the Spanish Republic*, Sandi Slone has tried to capture the mournful quality of Spain's checkered past. But where Motherwell's paintings seem bold and rationally constructed, Slone's are subjective, not so much addressing their subject as partici-

Sandi Slone—*The Grand Inquisitor*



pating in it. The earth tones that predominate in these paintings recall both the seared landscape of the country and the great tradition of Spanish art, of Velázquez, Murillo, and Goya.

For all their somber tonality, these paintings are not ultimately pessimistic. As in the Spanish temperament, an awareness of the dark side of life coexists with a profound belief in the importance of the spiritual quest. In this the artist might be compared to the miner, a seeker for buried treasure. It may be a fool's errand, mere tilting at windmills, but it is the quest for some higher value that motivates the madman, the mystic, and the artist.

—Miles Unger

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