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Giordano's ancient' objects are items of Inwardness

By Joan Altabe

ART CRITIC

The eye advances slowly, dragging itself across impenetrable slabs of graveyard grays and umbers-entranced by their pale, moistureless planes.

You're looking at Joan Giordano's paper sculpture, which looks like cobbled shale, like the remains of a day beyond recall.

In Giordano's hands, paper - the marble of modern sculpture - ranges over the rocky terrain of invention and "-ism," beyond history, past pre-history, back to places of legend: to Altamira, to Lescaux and Salisbury plain, where cave paintings and stoneworks had magical function.

But the journeys that the paperworks suggest also are yours. The fragments, resembling chunks of megalithic monuments, look like tense silences, aloof to specific time, full with emotional resonance. And you think of these objects as signets of vulnerability, as your own wreckage.

Her new works, underpainted to give the impression of an illuminated surface, are songs to reverie - not only to places where champions of Greek epic poems lived, but also to private shrines - the invisible ones to which we all pay homage.

The air of ancient stone in the paper is so vivid that it can have you remembering the stone grotto thrust up from the sea in Leonardo's quieting "The Virgin of the Rocks" or drawings of Paul Klee, who sought to re-create cosmic becoming, to be at one with the primeval.

Giordano has you seeing both the world's first morning and momentous first in your own life.

This is a good one

