

## Jill Shwaiko

AT FIRST GLANCE, one might think of Jill Shwaiko's bronze sculptures as simple stylized sheep. But as their comical forms draw people in, much more is revealed. Shwaiko explores basic human experiences and emotions, diving beneath the surface to something deeply primal, even spiritual. "My interest is people and how they experience the world," she says, "and how I experience the world."

"The funny thing is to talk about a spiritual level," Shwaiko says, laughing. "They're sheep! But there is this great thing that

comes across. There is a language that they have, and people are touched [when they see them]."

Although Shwaiko received a master's degree in fine art, it wasn't until she first experienced primitive art that she was touched in a deeply personal way. "Teachers teach you what they love and what they know," she says, "but they can't bring you to what you need to do and say [in your art]." The purely visual and conceptual art she'd studied in school simply didn't affect her on the same level as the primitive art she experi-

enced in Mexico's Yucatan and at anthropological sites in the Southwest.

Shwaiko's rounded forms speak of abundance in a world of fear and scarcity. Square forms speak of a heaviness and a firm grounding but are also humorous. "There's not a lot of heavy concept," she says. "I like getting out of my head. But there are all these layers of interaction." Shwaiko is represented by Indigo Gallery, Madrid, NM; Carole LaRoche Gallery, Santa Fe, NM; and Mirada Fine Art, Indian Hills, CO. —*Laura Rintala*



▲ Taken by the Wind, bronze, 16 x 14 x 10.

◀ Lessons of the Balance, bronze, 18 x 17 x 9.