



## **LOCAL: IN OAKLAND**

# Art Meets Auto Row: Vessel Gallery forges a new era in Oakland's Garage District

By Oakland Local on May 21, 2010 at 8:39 AM















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The last occupant of 471 25th St. served as a part of William Traverso's blowing complex, known as United Glass Co.

By Oakland Local Contributor Patsy K. Eagan

Soon after President Barack Obama nominated Rocco Landesman as chairperson of the National Endowment of the Arts, Landesman changed the agency slogan to "Art Works." He told the New York Times last summer that the new motto signaled art's role as an economic engine.

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Oakland has taken this philosophy to a literal level.

Many of the city's auto shops off Broadway's Auto Row and defunct factories of Jingletown are now making fine art instead of mending fenders. Its newest addition to the auto-becomes-art scene – **Vessel Gallery** – opened May 15 in the historic 25th Street Garage District.

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Last weekend, Vessel's gable-roofed warehouse at 471 25th St. brimmed with art enthusiasts. At every turn, a reminder of the buildings former uses stood as its own art piece. Fine art and spot lighting lined the walls that in earlier incarnations served as a glass warehouse, motor parts shop, a furniture repair and a livery stable. Wine and sangria flowed just steps from an iron pulley that once lowered hay bales to horses on the lower level. Patrons tread on the original wooden floors and added balcony space, which opened out to a neighborhood where art is the economic engine.

The artists featured at Vessel's opening show "A Place In-Between" capture the fabric of the neighborhood. Cyrus Tilton's kinetic sculpture "Unicycle" depicts figures in papermache: a headless man holds a baby birds' nest; his legs move to turn a wheel fitted with cast iron bird heads. Tilton's methodology of using found materials (steel) with renewable ones (wood) comes from his 9 to 5 job.

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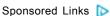
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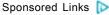
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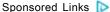
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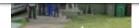
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