

The Lasting World: Simon Dinnerstein and The Fulbright Triptych

This exhibition celebrates the artistic practice of New York artist Simon Dinnerstein, whose creative arc evolves from early, hyperrealist works through more introspective and fantastical later works. At first glance, these paintings, drawings and prints seem conventionally representational, and everyday interiors are depicted in such detail that figures compete with their settings for our attention. But all is not what it seems. Dinnerstein's works change constantly yet subtly in perspective: what at first appears to be simple one-point perspective breaks down into multiple perspectives and different approaches upon closer examination.

The exhibition's centerpiece is *The Fulbright Triptych*, a monumental three-part painting that is part autobiographical essay, part homage to Renaissance artists and their craft, part reflection on the historical legacies of the 20th century, and part meditation on the power of images to inspire across time and place. The *Triptych* is joined by Dinnerstein's subtly evocative drawings and paintings from the 1960s through the 1990s, which continually interrogate the role of art in lived human experience.

The exhibition was organized by the Museum of Art & Archaeology, University of Missouri, in collaboration with the Nevada Museum of Art.

That's where art exists.

Look at the *Fulbright Triptych* for a minute and the mind begins to fill in the blanks, sketch lines between data points, assemble a story out of pigment and air. Is this about Judaism and Germany? Is this about family and work? Is this about learning to paint and learning to be a father? Ten million brushstrokes of color touch three huge canvases, and we see a woman's eyes, a pair of windows, a baby's cheeks. Two dimensions become three. A table surges into the room, loaded with tools, waiting for you to come and pick one up.

The best paintings are like dreams. They convince you they are real, they fold you into their worlds, and then they hold you there. Only then, when you're anchored in the moment-by-moment detail of an experience, when your eyes have extended across the room, when the copper plate is shimmering in front of your hands, can you let yourself reach out into the space between brain and image, into the great mystery of what it means to be viewer and printmaker, reader and writer, listener and singer. That's where our brains find meaning in the world. That's where art exists.

—Anthony Doerr, author, *All the Light we Cannot See*

My father's *Triptych* has loomed large in my life. It tells the story of my parents right before I was conceived, through my infancy. It's a story that I find endlessly fascinating. Who were they then?

So the *Triptych* was born at the same time as I was, and it contains my parents' DNA just as much as I do. When I look at the *Triptych* I see where I come from. And if I wanted to tell someone who I really am deep inside, I would just need to show them those three panels.

—Simone Dinnerstein, pianist

Simon Dinnerstein's *Fulbright Triptych* is one of those singular and astonishing works of art which seem to imply a description of the whole world merely by insisting on a scrupulous gaze at one perfect instant.

—Jonathan Lethem, author, *The Fortress of Solitude*