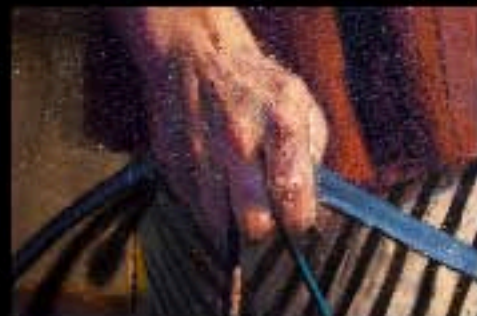


THE FIGURE IN CONTEMPORARY ART

CYPRESS COLLEGE ART GALLERY

SEPTEMBER 20TH - NOVEMBER 1ST, 2012



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CURATED BY THOMAS BUTLER

SIGMUND ABELES
JULIETTE ARISTIDES
DOMENIC CRETARA
KATE LEHMAN
VITO-LEONARDO SCAROLA
RUTH WEISBERG

SHARON ALLICOTTI
STEVEN ASSAEL
PAUL FENNIK
ODD NERDRUM
THOMAS STUBBS
JEROME WITKIN

Special Thanks to:

All of the exhibiting Artists

Jack Rutberg and Julie Robert, Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Los Angeles, CA.

Nicola Lorenz and Bethany Widrich, Forum Gallery, New York, NY.

John Pence, John Pence Gallery, San Francisco, CA.

Dr. Charles Sims, Los Angeles, CA.

Ann Schranz, Upland, CA.

Michael and Cynthia Sitton, San Juan Capistrano, CA.

Christian Bible, Cadogan Tate Fine Art

All of the Cypress College Art Department Faculty, Staff and Students
and to

Sigmund Abeles and Domenic Cretara for their generous donation
to the Cypress College Art Department Collection

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www.johnpence.com

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Domenic Cretara, courtesy of the Artist, ©Domenic Cretara www.cretaraart.com

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Odd Nerdrum, courtesy of the collection of Dr. Charles Sims, Los Angeles, CA. ©Odd Nerdrum www.nerdrummuseum.com
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Ruth Weisberg, courtesy of Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Los Angeles, CA. ©Ruth Weisberg www.jackrutbergfinearts.com

Jerome Witkin, courtesy of Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Los Angeles, CA. ©Jerome Witkin www.jackrutbergfinearts.com

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The exhibition “The Figure in Contemporary Art” is a group show exploring the varied and rich figurative painting, drawing, and sculpture produced by contemporary artists from across the world. It fills a void among Southern California exhibitions by surveying and interpreting 27 works by 12 internationally known artists working in the figurative tradition. The works include genre paintings, contemporary narratives, complex figurative compositions and portraits.

There is a powerful chain of figurative work being produced by a large number of artists around the world. The artists in this exhibition are gladly embracing the figurative traditions of the past and using them as a springboard for their own personal visions. The cornerstone of this tradition is an approach to interpreting form based on the observation of nature. Unfortunately, the opportunity for today’s art students in Southern California to be exposed to this type of work is very rare. This exhibition aims to remedy this predicament. It provides a stage on which to present a body of work that revitalizes several themes and genres thought to be obsolete in some areas of contemporary art. These artists show that the “concept” in art is not something that can be separated from the “skill”. They are one and the same.

Thomas Butler, Curator

Sigmund Abeles

Sigmund Abeles is an artist whose work deals with the expressive and psychological aspects of the human figure; an art focused on the entire life cycle. Drawing informs all his work. He works in pastels, oils, the graphic media, and sculpture. He works full-time in his studio in both New York city and upstate New York. Recipient of numerous grants and awards, a National Academician; Abeles work is in the collections of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Chicago Art Institute, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Philadelphia Museum, the British Museum, London and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among many others. Coastal Carolina University awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2000. A major one-artist exhibition was at Thomas Williams Fine Arts, London, England in 2000. The Pastel Society of America made him their Hall of Fame Honoree for 2004 and was awarded their Degas Pastel Society Award in 2006. In 2009 he was included in Humanity, One Hundred Years of Figurative Art at the ACA Gallery in New York.

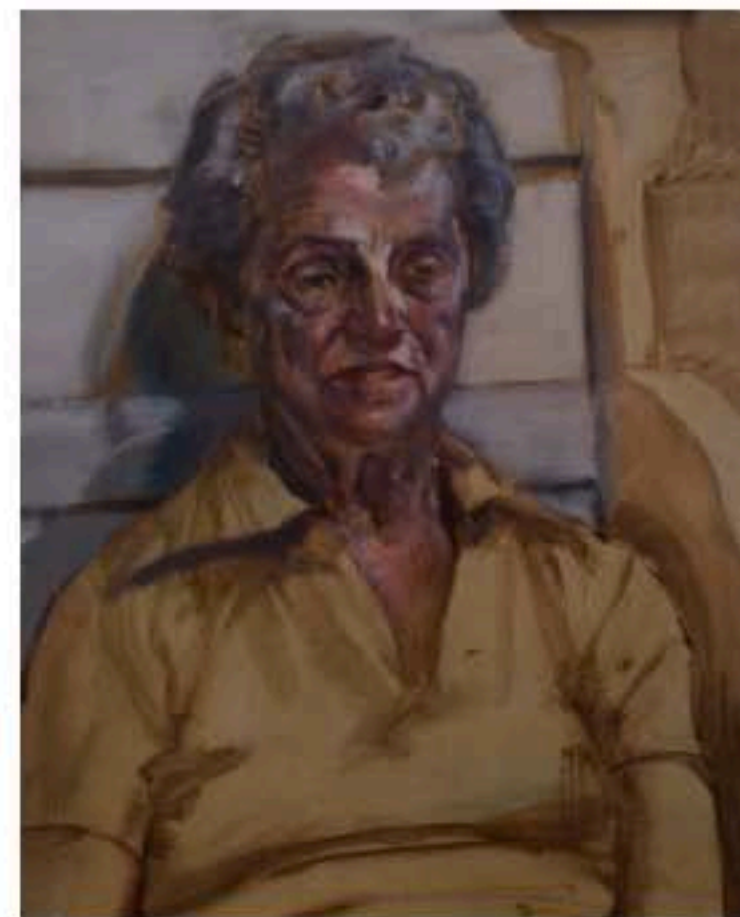


“A Parasomniac (Self Portrait)”

12” x 12” Oil on Panel



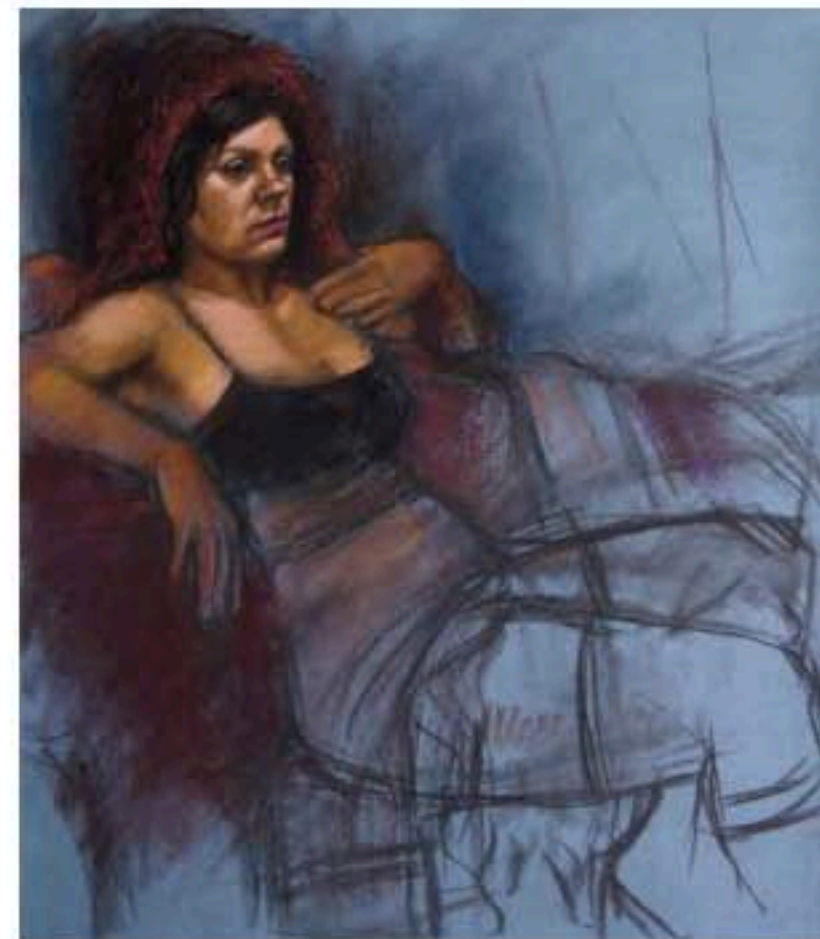
"My Holocaust Survivor Cousin, Vilmos Abeles on His Death Bed"
14" x 16" Oil on Canvas



"The Fire-Chief's Wife, Lucia Richard"
12" x 16" Oil on Panel

Sharon Allicotti

Sharon Allicotti was born in Los Angeles, California, where she continues to reside and work. She completed her graduate studies at California State University Long Beach working with international realist painters Alfred Leslie and Lynn Foulkes, as well as art critic and painter, Peter Plagens. Upon graduating she received the CSULB Art Department Outstanding Graduate Award for her MFA thesis exhibition, and began teaching at the college level and traveling during breaks to study the painting collections of London, Paris, and Italy. She has shown in solo and group exhibitions regionally and nationally and has won numerous awards including a grant from the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation, to live and work at their Taos, New Mexico artist colony. Her paintings depict scenes inspired by the vast desert regions east of her home in Los Angeles. Although characterized by great specificity in clarity of realist detail, it is her intention that the images remain - as with poetry - open to individual interpretation.



"Nicole Wearing a Chenille Hat"
30" x 22" Pastel on Paper



Study for "Cradled"
30" x 22" Charcoal on Paper

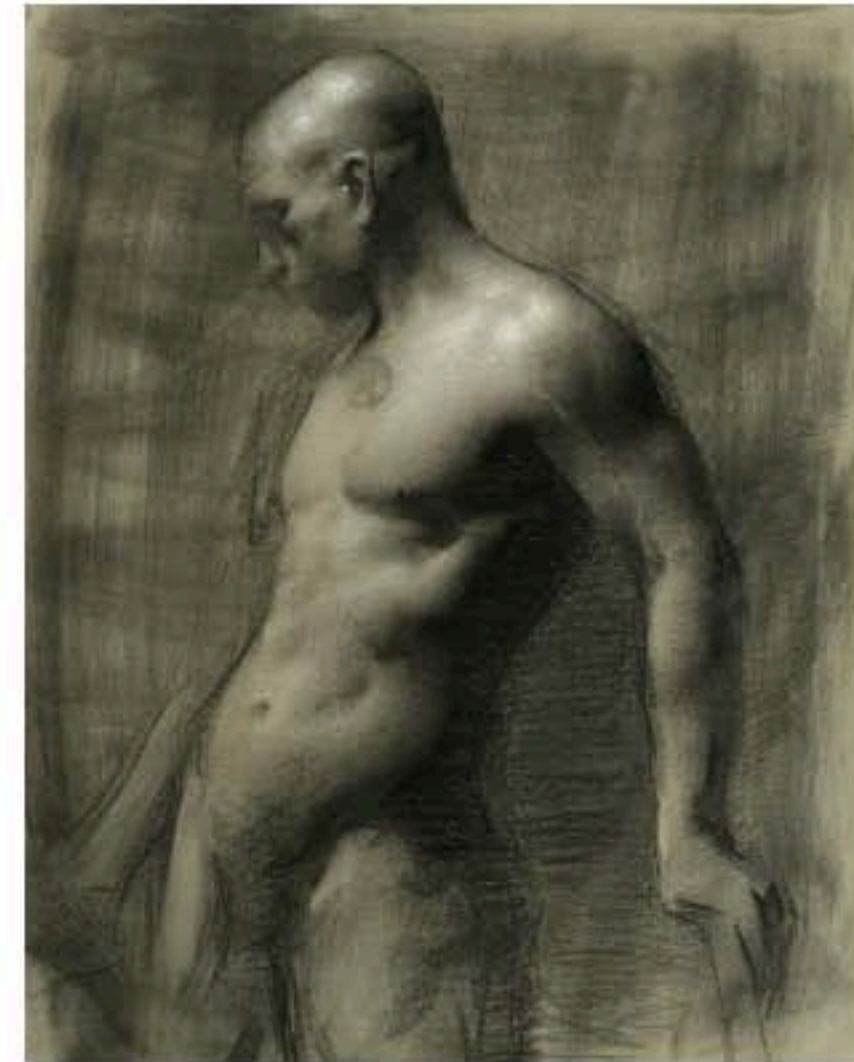


"Maude Reclining"
22" x 30" Gouache and Pastel on Paper

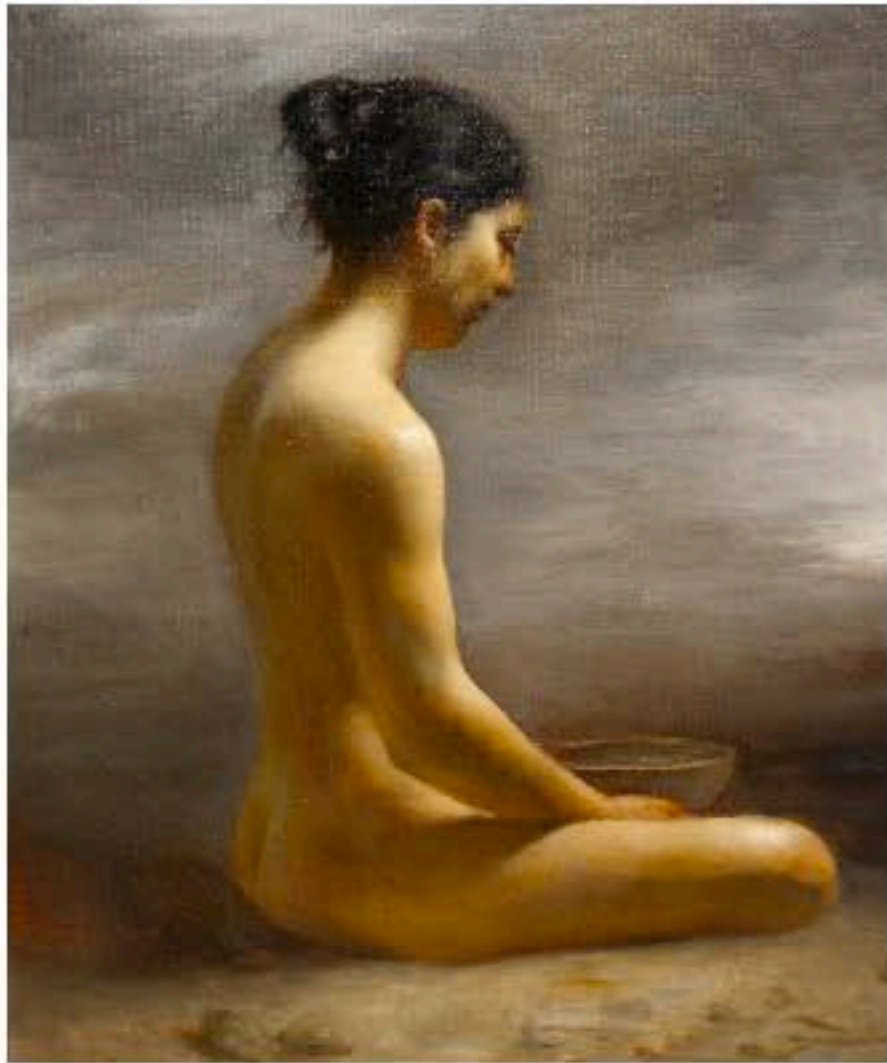
Juliette Aristides

Juliette Aristides lives in Seattle, Washington. She has studied at The National Academy of Design and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art. Aristides is an Elizabeth Greenshields Grant recipient. Juliette Aristides is actively dedicated to rebuilding a traditional arts education in the United States. She was an original member of the Water Street Atelier and currently teaches in the Aristides Atelier, at the Gage Academy of Fine Art in Seattle WA. She is a regular contributor to Artist Magazine and has published two books; Classical Drawing Atelier and Classical Painting Atelier.

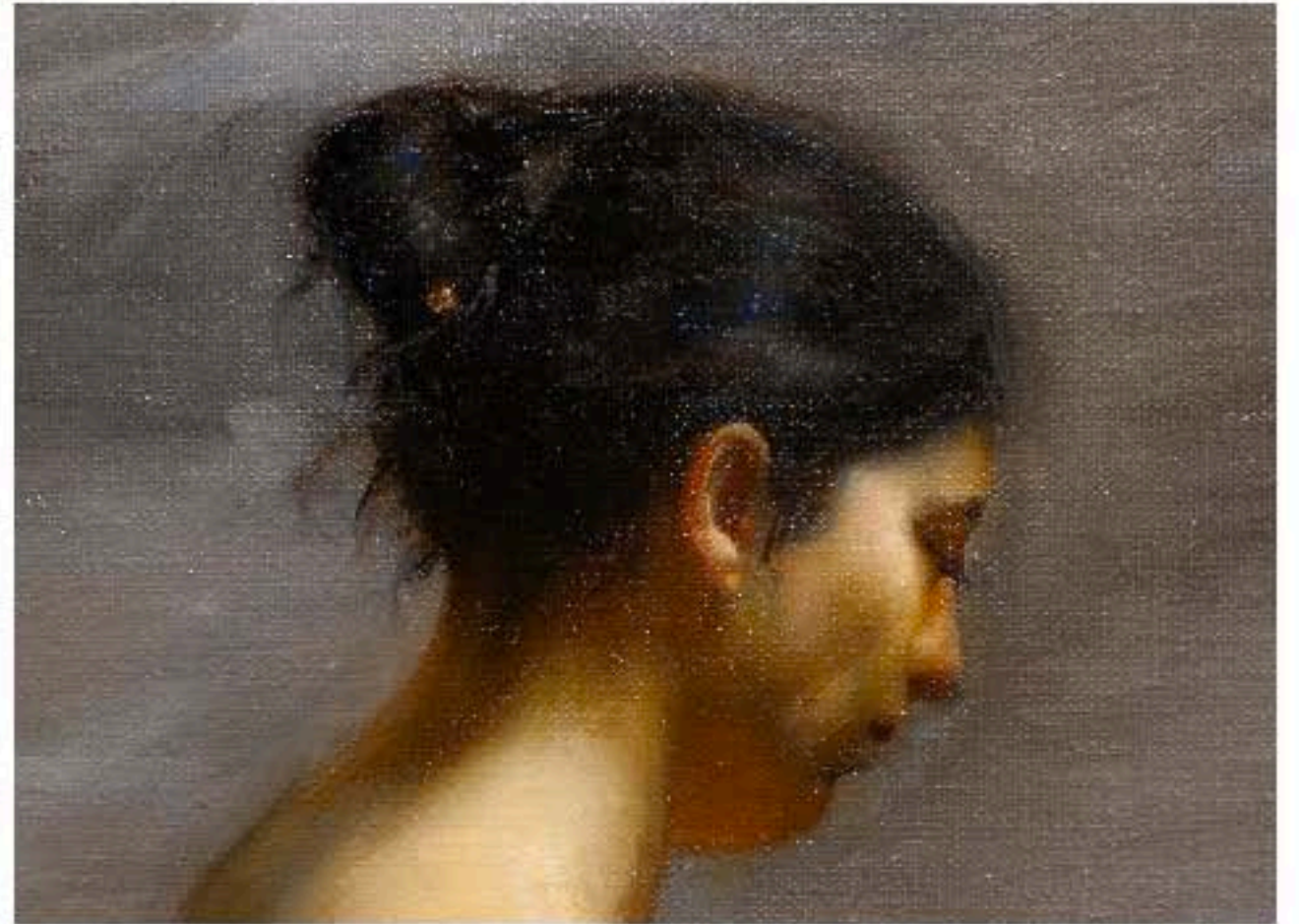
Aristides' brushwork is comprised of expressive, flowing strokes, giving each object she paints a sense of movement. Her palette is bold and lively, and she pursues a variety of subjects from perfectly composed still lifes to dramatic figurative work. Her work invites the viewer to share an inner world as she explores her identity through the roles of artist, teacher, historian and mother. Her drawings are examples of her extraordinary draftsmanship, and provide a glimpse into the complex structure of her seemingly effortless painting style.



"James"
22" x 16" Charcoal and Sepia with White Accents on Toned Paper



"Oracle"
24" x 18" Oil on Linen



Steven Assael

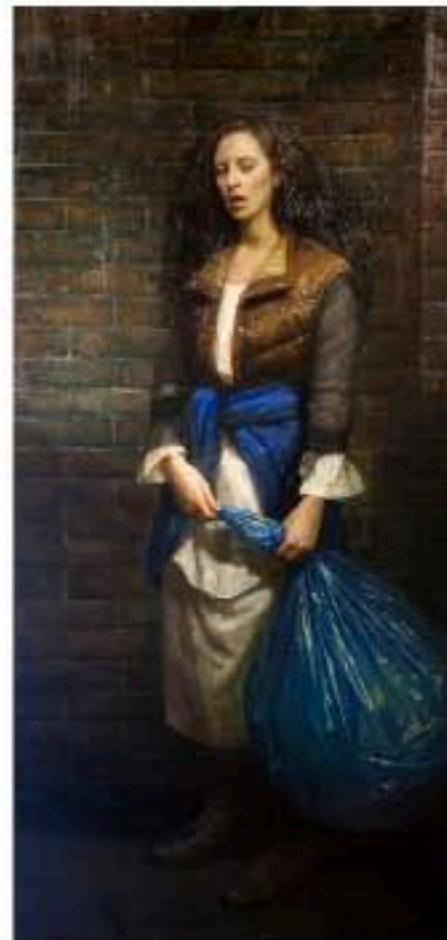
Steven Assael is recognized nationally as one of the leading representational figurative artists of his generation. Assael's figure compositions synthesize the characteristics of the past masters with a selective eye for the present, suffusing elements of naturalism and romanticism to blend contemporary techniques with those of the past. His paintings have been called Post-Post Modern and works strictly from live models. In speaking of his work and how it contributes to contemporary art, Assael stated that, "Even though art is dead as we have known it, painting is not."

Born and raised in New York city, Assael showed an enthusiasm for art at a young age, taking art classes at the Museum of Modern Art at the age of four. He attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and currently teaches at the School of Visual Arts in New York and at The New York Academy of Art.

Assael's work is included in public and private collections around the world. Some are, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas, MO., the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, and Yale University, Hartford, CT. Solo and group exhibitions have included the Staempfli Gallery, New York, NY, Forum Gallery, New York, Yale University Hartford CT, and the National Museum in Gadansk, Poland. In 1999 his work was exhibited in a ten-year retrospective at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, Washington.



"Crowd #1"
72" x 96" Oil on Canvas



"Bag Lady Twice"
97" x 92 (diptych) Oil on Canvas



Domenic Cretara

Domenic Cretara, Professor of Art at California State University, Long Beach, works primarily in drawing and painting. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Boston University School of Fine Arts, graduating with honors. In his academic position at CSULB, he has received marks of distinction for teaching, scholarship, and creative achievement. Among other tributes, in 1974 he received a Fulbright Grant to Italy, which allowed him to spend a year painting and studying in Florence. In the late 1970s, he was the artist in residence at the Foundation Camargo in Cassis, France. A Sister Cities Grant allowed him to return to work in Italy for a summer in the city of Padua.

As an artist, Cretara has been a particularly active exhibitor, with many solo exhibitions, including the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, a retrospective at the Las Vegas Art Museum and several group shows in venues on both coasts and Europe. His works are in the collections of major institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY and the Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA. Cretara's images not only have graced the covers of magazines and illustrated poems but have also been the subject of many publications and feature articles for *American Arts Quarterly* and *American Artist*, and reviews in the *Los Angeles Times* and *Boston Herald*.



"Caretaker"
66" x 84" Oil on Canvas

"The Forgotten"
84" x 122"
Charcoal on Paper



Paul Fenniak

Paul Fenniak is a major figurative artist and vastly talented painter. Originally from Montreal, Canada, he paints detailed psychological portraits and figures in settings with implied action. Deep in thought, Fenniak's subjects are contemporary in setting but reminiscent of studied portraits that follow the tradition of the late artist Raphael Soyer. His paintings have luminous surfaces and compelling images that offer a combination of disquiet, uncertainty, urgency, calm, and spirituality. His painting style contains a contrast of inner light with his attention to detail, texture and atmosphere. This unique vision has been recognized with grants from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation in 2000, the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts in 1998 and the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation in 1993 and 1994.

He has had several solo exhibitions at Forum Gallery in New York (2009, 2004 and 1999), Galerie de Bellefeuille in Montreal (2002 and 1996) and The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Canada (2000). Paul Fenniak's work was also included in group exhibitions at Arkansas Art Center's "Collector's Show" in Little Rock (2003), Arnot Art Museums "Re-presenting Representation IV" in Elmira, New York (2000), and Galerie de Bellefeuille's "The Human Figure in Contemporary Art" (1999).



"Arrival of the Homing Pigeon"
48" x 60 Oil on Canvas



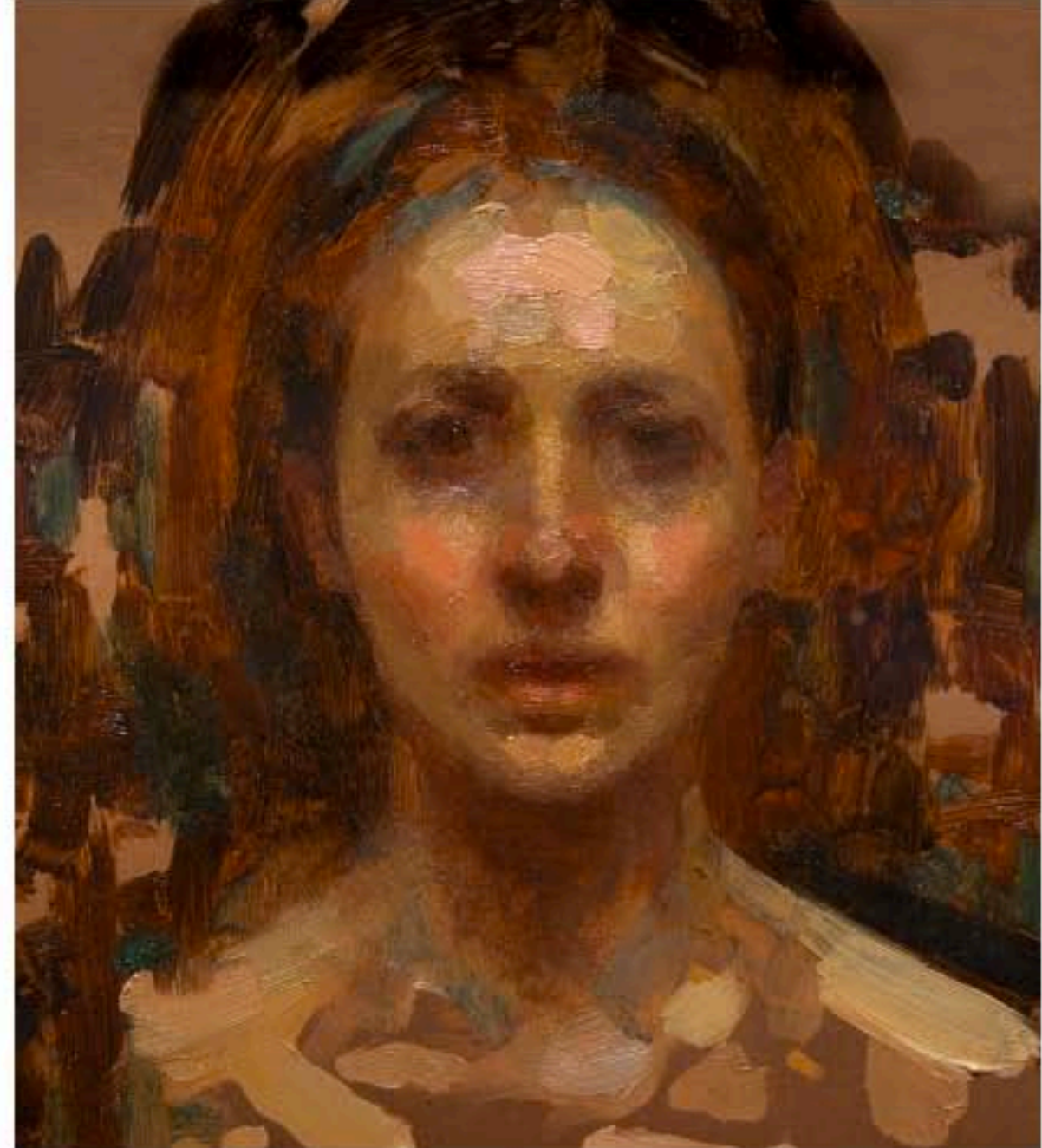
"Out of Reach"
48" x 36" Oil on Canvas



Kate Lehman

Kate Lehman was born in London in 1968, raised in Paris, and has lived in New York City on and off for the past twenty years. She began studying art at the age of 15 at L'academie Roederer in Paris. She then focused her training on traditional academic techniques at the Minnesota River School of Fine Art with Patrick Devonas. She continued her studies with him in New York and later in Brooklyn under Jacob Collins at The Water Street Atelier for four years. Her work is bold, articulate and assured. Working in a classic, painterly tradition her work ranges from the grand to the intimate. At the same time she has also ventured into experimental territory with her stunning portraits and insect studies painted on brushed copper.

She has been included in several solo and group exhibitions at John Pence Gallery, San Francisco, CA and Grenning Gallery, New York, NY. She currently teaches at the Janus Collaborative School of Art in New York, NY, which she is she co-founded in 2008.





"Portrait"
5 ¼" x 5 ¼" Oil on Copper



"Roman"
Bronze Sculpture 33" tall

Odd Nerdrum

Odd Nerdrum is one of the world's leading figurative artists. Themes and style in Nerdrum's work reference anecdote and narrative, while primary influences by the painters Rembrandt and Caravaggio place his work in direct conflict with the abstraction and conceptual art considered acceptable in much of his native Norway, and in opposition to the art of the time.

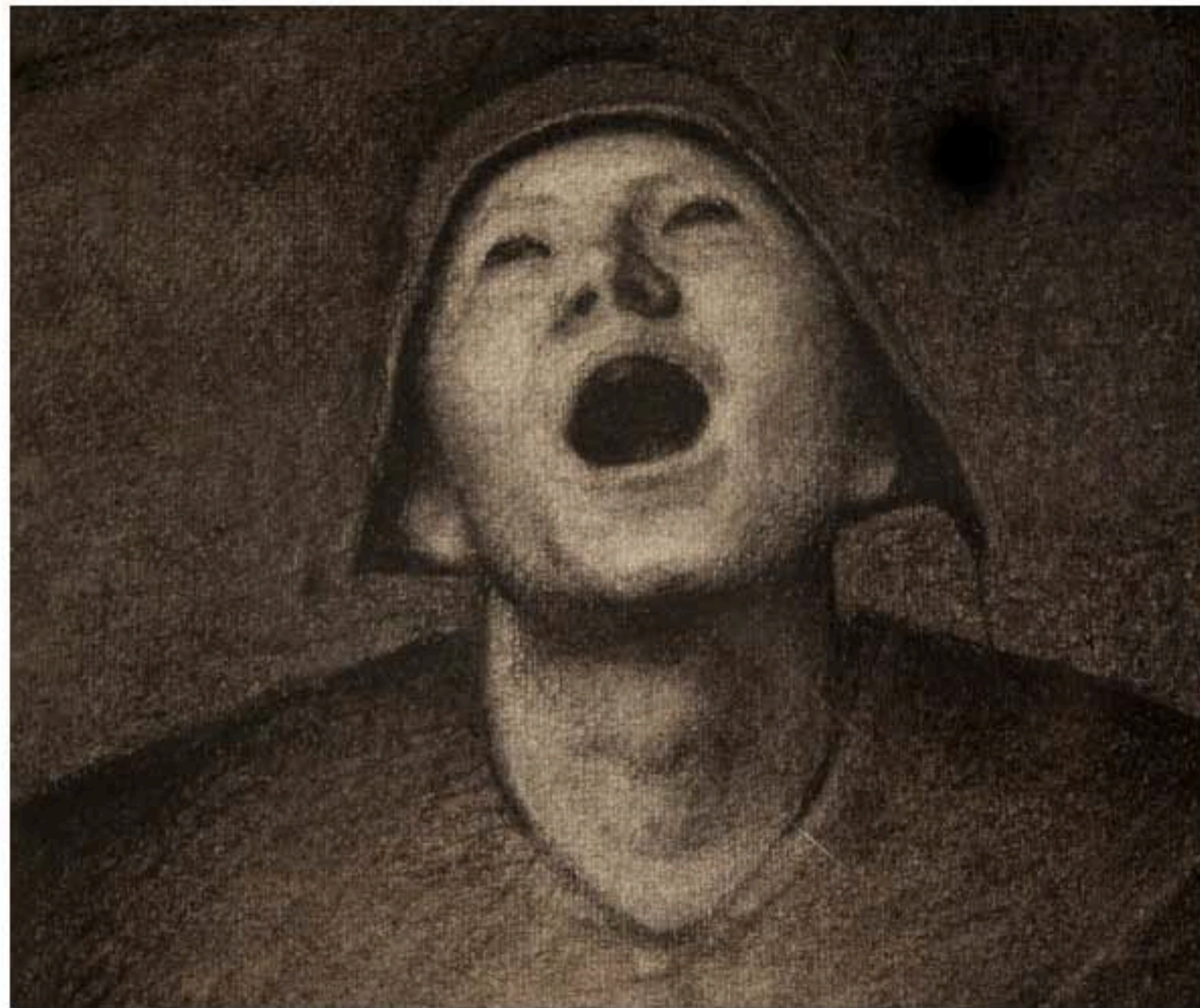
Nerdrum creates six to eight paintings per year. These include still life paintings of small everyday objects like bricks, portraits and self portraits whose subjects are dressed as if from some other time and place, and large paintings, allegorical in nature that present a sense of the apocalyptic and again reference another time. His approach to painting is based on traditional methods that included mixing and grinding his own pigments, working on canvas he had stretched or stretched by assistants rather than on pre-stretched canvas, and working from live models often himself, and in many cases members of his own family. Of his process Nerdrum says, "When I paint, it is as if I struggle in the water. I will try with all means not to drown. Sandpaper, rags, my fingers, the knife-in short everything. The brush is rarely used."



"Self Portrait in Ashes"
36" x 31 1/2" Oil on Canvas



"Two Story Singers"
Charcoal on Paper 50" x 57"



Vito-Leonardo Scarola

Vito-Leonardo Scarola is an accomplished artist and educator. He is currently a full time professor of Drawing and Painting at Saddleback College. Over the course of thirty five years of pedagogical experience in the visual arts, he has served as Dean of Visual Communication at the Laguna College of Art and Design and has also been a faculty member at California State University Fullerton and California State University, Long Beach. He holds a MFA degree in Drawing and Painting from California State University, Long Beach and a BA degree in Art from the State University of New York, Brockport.

He is a native of Italy and has lived and studied in France. While in France, he earned two degrees in Art History, Language and Civilization from La Sorbonne and L'Universite de Caen, respectively. He has exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States and Europe.



"Spiritual and Personal Growth"
40" x 30" Charcoal on Paper



"Nude on Gurney"
36" x 80" Oil on Panel



Thomas Stubbs

Thomas Stubbs studied at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Governors State University, University of Wisconsin Madison, and California State University Fullerton, and holds an M.A. in printmaking and design, and an M.F.A in printmaking. He has exhibited extensively, has won many awards in juried art exhibitions, and has many works in permanent collections throughout the United States. Thomas is an accomplished printmaker, draftsman and painter, and is very knowledgeable in the area of methods and materials. His subject matter is highly varied from political to realism to surrealism, and how it is communicated is dictated intelligently and creatively by the materials he chooses to use.

Thomas has taught several courses in the figurative tradition at Riverside Community College, California State University Fullerton, Hollywood Art Center, Laguna College of Art and Design, and Mt. San Antonio College. His work is included in the collections of the Contemporary Museum of Art, Phoenix, AZ, the University of Wisconsin, Madison and Brigham Young University among others.



"Casting Pearls Before Swine"
50" x 30" Oil on Canvas



"Pretzel Light Logic"
30" x 24" Oil on Linen



Ruth Weisberg

Ruth Weisberg received her M.A. from the University of Michigan, and her Laurea in Painting and Printmaking from the Academia di Belle Arti, Perugia, Italy. She teaches drawing and printmaking at the USC Roski School of Fine Arts. From 1995 to 2010, she served as Dean of the Roski School, and, before that, she served as chair of the school's studio arts department and as acting associate dean for the School of Architecture and Fine Arts.

Weisberg works primarily in painting, drawing and printmaking. Her work is widely exhibited nationally and internationally. Her solo exhibitions including "Ruth Weisberg: Unfurled" at the Skirball Cultural Institute, Los Angeles, and "Michigan Collects Weisberg" at Eastern Michigan University. Additionally, Weisberg's work is in the collections of major museums, including the Getty Center, Norton Simon Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Smithsonian Institution, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Jewish Museum in New York, Art Institute of Chicago, Harvard University, Biblioteca Nazionale d'Italia (Rome) and Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris.



"Ariel"
30" x 18 1/4" Mixed Media Drawing



"Ravished"
 67 ½" x 57 ½" Oil and Mixed Media on Unstretched Canvas



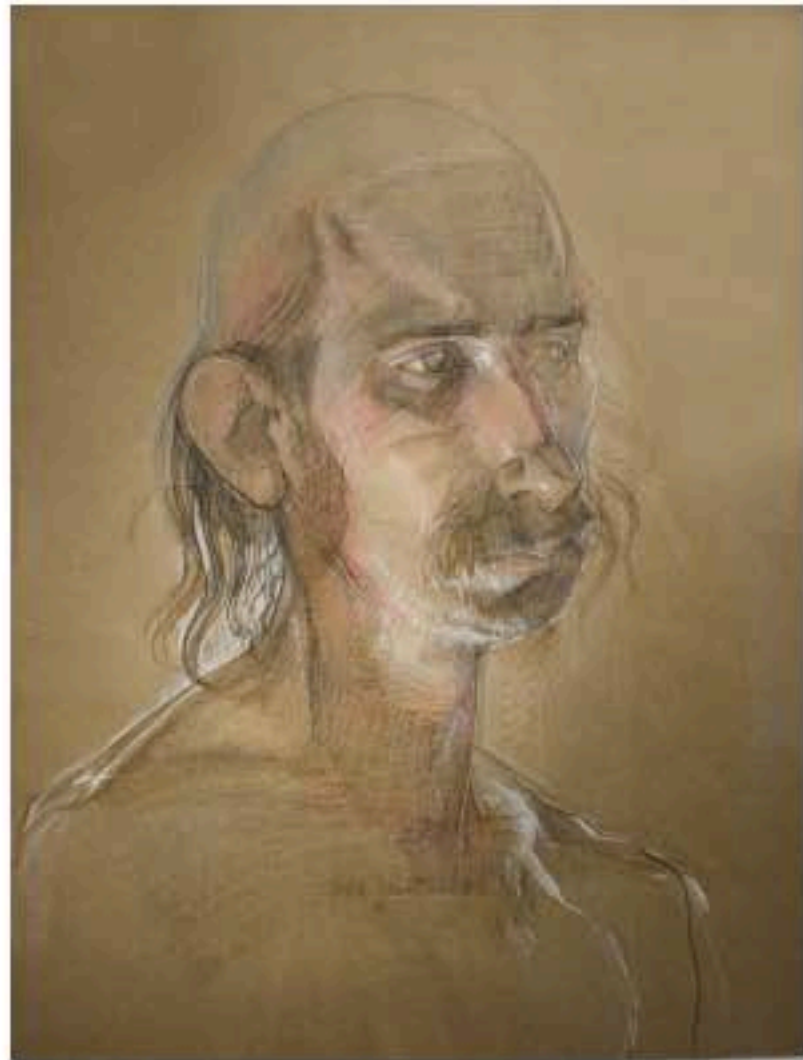
Jerome Witkin

Jerome Witkin is an American figurative artist whose paintings often deal with political and cultural themes. His portraits and ambitious narrative paintings are characterized by a virtuosic handling. He was born in Brooklyn, New York. At fourteen he entered the High School of Music and Art in New York, and subsequently studied at the Skowhegan School of Painting, Cooper Union, the Berlin Academy, and the University of Pennsylvania. In 1971 he became a professor of art at Syracuse University.

The death of his father induced Witkin to explore mortality in his work, and resulted in series of paintings on the themes of torture, assassination, AIDS and the Holocaust, the last of which the artist worked on for twenty three years. While his paintings reference the work of the old masters, social realism, and Abstract Expressionism, Witkin refers to himself as a "cornball humanist". In a fuller explanation of his motivation, Witkin has said "If this society continues to the next two thousand years, people will be looking at the twentieth century and saying, 'What did artists do about the strange goings-on?'" Witkin's work is included in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Uffizi, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Hirshhorn Museum.



"Alexis Firsty and Her Collection of Socks"
63" x 36" Oil on Canvas



"Steve Grant"
25 1/2" x 19 3/4" Colored Pencil on Paper



"The German Girl"
80" x 124" Oil on Canvas





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