

Selina Trieff... Abstract Artist

Born in Brooklyn in 1934, Selina Trieff studied at the Art Students League in New York in 1951 with Morris Kantor, at Brooklyn College from 1951 to 1955 with Ad Reinhardt and Mark Rothko, and in 1955 with Hans Hoffman. The pensive, introspective character of Trieff's work; its spirituality and its iconic format have all been attributed to the influence of abstract painter Mark Rothko. Of her early experience at Brooklyn College the artist has said "From Reinhardt and Rothko I learned that art is a philosophical exploration and that art making involves a mysterious process of self-discovery."



Committed throughout her life to richly painted, figurative imagery, Selina Trieff is among the most extraordinary, through too little known artists of her generation. While she draws from a model on a weekly basis and regularly depicts highly expressive human and animal subjects in her paintings, Selina thinks of herself as an abstract artist. For her, a painting's abstract compositional elements are of paramount importance.

Throughout her over forty-year career, Selina Trieff has painted herself, her family and her friends in a highly generalized, abstract format. More than they are portraits of specific individuals, these paintings in their abstraction represent archetypes—images of Everyman and Everywoman—and in their generalization, the specific becomes universal. Selina Trieff creates oil worlds where theatricality is reality. Her figures' smooth faces are unscathed by expression, contrasting modernity's obsession with the film and television close-up. Instead, Trieff's gestures speak emotional and historical volumes. One single, solemn gesticulation expresses profound and acutely identifiable feeling, amplified in its association with drama, where bodily expression dominates.



Front of Selina Trieff's 2010 lunchbox

Recognizably theatrical costuming as well as Renaissance-reminiscent gold leaf use and compositional organization pronounce the pathos innate to each work. Utilizing viewers' cultural associations, Trieff makes Figurative Expressionist history while she explores it.

Selina Trieff has been called "an American original" by New York Times critic John Russell. In addition to being represented by the [Berta Walker Gallery](#) in Provincetown, Trieff exhibits in various other places: currently she has some drawings at the Denise Bibro Gallery in Chelsea (NYC) and work at the Laurel Tracey Gallery in Red Bank, NJ and the Bechert Gallery in Summit, NJ. Selina Trieff is shown regularly at Ruth Bachofner in Los Angeles; the Art Store in Charleston, WV; the Handsel Gallery in Hudson, NY and Lori Bookstein in New York City. Trieff's work is included in such public collections as the Brooklyn Museum, Kalamazoo Art Institute, Bayonne Jewish Center, Snite Center at Notre Dame, Citibank, New York Public Library, Long Beach Museum of Art (California); Best Products, and the [Provincetown Art Association and Museum](#).



Back of Selina Trieff's 2010 lunchbox