



AMERICAN  
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# Standing STILL

BY JOHN O'HERN

**D**espite their nutritional value, dandelions are the bane of the existence of homeowners devoted to impeccable lawns. **Margot Glass** elevates the maligned plant in her lustrous gold point drawings of negative X-rays on black paper. Their lacy structure comes alive again in the delicate drawings. Exploring the ephemerality of seasonal plants, she says, "I prefer to draw grasses, weeds and other plants considered to be mundane or undesirable to discover the hidden beauty in overlooked natural subjects and elevate them through close examination."

Far from the ephemeral, **David Cheifetz** paints solid and traditional still life objects such as silver teapots, glass goblets and fruit—with a twist. His painting *Overgrowth* is a composition of tarnished silver objects, rusting saw blades and an ethereal vine encroaching on the setup—as well as the mysterious shadow of an unseen teapot—or the saw blade wishing it were a teapot. "I had been contemplating how a sharply drawn profile can in some ways be an unnecessary crutch while I paint," he explains. "After all, if the interior of an object was sufficiently described with accurate texture, reflection, value, color, highlight, shadow, etc., wouldn't the object be just as real, even without a crisply defined profile? How far down the road could I take this idea? I love paintings that are mostly mystery, with a minority of detail at the focus/foci...All profiles were painted as ghostly/amorphous shapes at first, with definition and detail restricted mostly to the interiors. Sharp edges and details were then minimally and selectively added to profiles for drama and focus."

**David Dornan's** painting *Aglow* tells even more of the story of creating a still life. The diminutive rose sits in a glass bottle on the artist's stand, in front of its large interpretation in oil. Subject and object are seen among items that tell the tale of the artist's studio—the frequent setting of his paintings. Each object is a still life on its own. He says, "At a distance my paintings are depictions of familiar objects—cups and bottles, studio objects on a palette and, more recently, flowers—but the up-close view exposes the abstract juxtaposition and layering of paint, not the three-dimensional imagery. You can see the splotches, handprints, scratches—evidence of the way I put paint on canvas. There is interaction between the two-dimensional and three-dimensional aspects of my paintings."

**Jeness Cortez** paints paintings within paintings. In

1. Meyer Gallery, *Aglow*, oil, 52 x 60", by David Dornan.

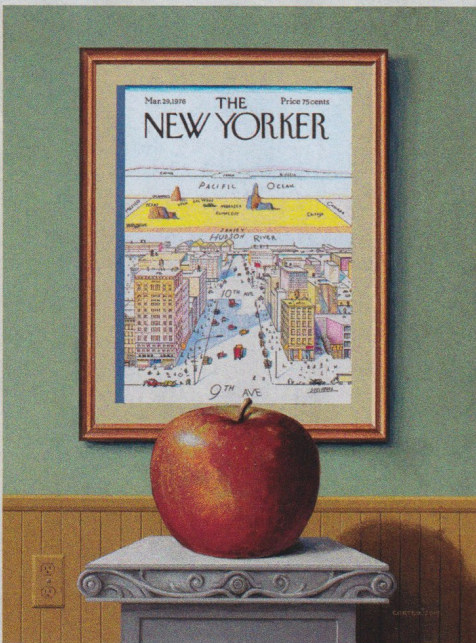




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2. Garvey|Simon, *Blue Dandelion*, 14 karat gold on prepared paper, 12 x 9", by Margot Glass. 3. Gallery 1261, *Overgrowth*, oil on panel, 16 x 16", by David Cheifetz. 4. C Galleries, *The Big Apple*, acrylic on mahogany panel, 16 x 12", by Jenness Cortez. 5. PoetsArtists, *Tempus ad Requiem XXIX*, acrylic on panel, 12 x 15¾", by Lorena Kloost

*The Big Apple* she pays homage to Saul Steinberg's iconic 1975 cover of *The New Yorker*, *View of the World from 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue*, one of his many graphic, stylized maps. The Saul Steinberg Foundation refers to it as "a parody of Manhattanites' provincial perception of life beyond the Hudson

River..." Cortez displays the framed cover above an equally iconic apple displayed on an ornate pedestal. For 20 years, Cortez was well known for her paintings of thoroughbred horses. She later turned to still lifes featuring iconic paintings by artists from Kandinsky to Grant Wood, set with

objects relating to the theme or for the painting depicted. She remarks her engaging still lifes, "All the past legacy. I reference this richness of gratefully in my paintings. But for gift to blossom in the present, by craft of the artist and the receptivity



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