



Artist's Statement

Even though we assume that seeing is the simplest and easiest thing that comes to us automatically, there is something strange about our perception of reality. We can't seem to see two different things at the same time. It seems that one perception of reality always blocks out, denies, hides, or eliminates another equally truthful perception of the same thing.

Classical realism shows us that if we look at things in great detail, without moving or shifting our eyes, that every line, every color, every shape becomes at that point either true or false. This unified, single perspective was expressed in the ideal of unity of time, place and action. It results in paintings of sumptuous beauty and exquisite detail. I see myself following in the same tradition, but I think a contemporary realist has a very different challenge now. Not because of the difficulties of painting, but because our idea of what reality is has gotten much more interesting.

The fascinating thing about reality is that in order for us to see it, we need a certain context to understand what we are looking at. And that context is not independent of the thing that you will see. What the classical realists didn't realize, and what humanity has struggled with ever since, is that much more than one single unified perspective seems to exist. We can all look at something with either a philosophical eye, a merchant's eye, or a scientific, a poetic, a religious, a greedy, a lustful, a playful or a physicist's eye, the list goes on.... We can all come up with several totally different descriptions of the same reality. All truthful. That is the richness of human perception, of human sensibility. But what then, is the truth? And what is false?

More intriguing even is the fact that it is fundamentally impossible to find one single perspective that unites all of the above perspectives - because a lot of these views cancel each other out. Some of them are contradictory to others. And yet both can be true at the same time. The failure to be able to determine which of these views gives the one and only true view is often seen as an imperfect aspect of the human mind.

But most modern research in physics, mathematics and also in psychology seems to point toward the fact that we should actually celebrate and embrace the ability of the human psyche to simultaneously see and hold onto two different interpretations of the same reality. This seems to be at the deepest level the basis for our intelligence and forms our ability to perceive beauty, meaning, empathy and humor.

When I paint something, I want to make us aware of this intriguing process of seeing. I want to break the illusion that we can see only one singular true reality. And I do that by breaking the classical unity of perspective, I purposely switch painting styles or descriptions of the things I see in order to show that the human mind doesn't have a preferred way of seeing or interpreting the world. To show that what we call our objective reality is often a mixture of depictions, all painted with a different eye, and then put back together as one.

By jumping through all these simultaneous perspectives I hope to give a more accurate, a more truthful depiction of what it means to be human and to experience beauty and life in this world.