



For Immediate Release

TL SOLIEN

To the West

Recent Paintings

This exhibition at Luise Ross Gallery presents a new series of paintings by T.L. Solien commemorating and celebrating—and perhaps, at times, deconstructing—the westward expansion in the United States in the 19th century. Several of the paintings were suggested by old photographs Solien found in researching the period. Others are informed by an amalgam of artistic invention and interpretation of the institutional history—economic, social, religious, familial—and the impact of the natural environment on this extended chronological and vast territorial adventure. Underlying all, neither incidentally nor anachronistically, are the artist’s personal life experience and autobiography.

In “Love Trains,” Solien pays ambivalent homage to the Union Pacific railroad, which won for the new city of Omaha the encomium Gateway to the West. “Desolation Sisters”—a stark landscape of devastation wrought by tornado or epidemic and rendered by the artist in fearsome layered tones of red—is redeemed and humanized by the presence of a teenage mother and child in the foreground, signaling hope and survival. “Widows Painting Furniture” ironically portrays the social altruism of the financially secure to the poor and destitute during the recurrent and prolonged depressions of the era. “HDSTNVHCL,” part memorial to an infant ambiguously dated ’76, part stylized and insatiably devouring conveyance ridden by the bereaved mother to a new beginning, is simply heart-wrenching.

Viewers familiar with Solien’s work will readily recognize the role of Ahab’s widow as the fictional protagonist in this chronicle of the defining chapter of the American experience. All will marvel at the artist’s painterly exposition of the subplots in this national epic by his surreal but very human narrative images.

Title: **TL Solien: *To the West***

Dates: 7 November – 9 January 2010

Opening: Saturday 7 November 3 – 6