T.L. Solien: Along the Way
T.L. Solien: Along the Way

On View:
November 4, 2022 - January 13, 2023

Reception:
Friday, November 4, 5-9 pm

Tandem Press Apex Gallery
1743 Commercial Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53704

Gallery Hours:
Monday-Friday 9 am - 5 pm

This exhibition is made possible by a grant from the Anonymous Fund.

For more information or to inquire about a purchase, please contact Curators J Myszka Lewis or Sona Pastel-Daneshgar.

608.263.3437
info@tandempress.wisc.edu
tandempress.wisc.edu
Instagram: @UWTandemPress
Facebook: @TandemPress
T.L. Solien: Along the Way

As he approached his retirement from a twenty-three-year career as a tenured professor in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Art Department, T.L. Solien sat in class with his drawing students and worked alongside them to demonstrate an artist’s practice of persistent creativity. At the time, he was also becoming disinterested in the figural-dominant compositions which had informed his work for many decades. Instead, he wanted to explore figure/ground relationships in which the “figure” and its environment were intertwined and inseparable.

During his daily drawing practice, Solien drafted networks of lines in graphite across sheets of paper. As he edited these drawings, they developed structures like those found in stone pathways, walls, or patios. As he continued to work on the drawings and develop them further with gouache and watercolor paints, some of the forms began to suggest almost identifiable objects while others remained completely abstract. As they were such a departure from his previous work, these new pieces felt very foreign to Solien, but he found this new method of working to be highly challenging and satisfying. The process was full of moments of doubt, persistence, and excitement. As the development of the composition took precedence over and determined the final image, Solien discarded his dedication to developing a narrative within his work. Instead, each piece depicts a moment on a path, commenting that reaching the end is not the ultimate goal but that one must also relish in the moments of discovery that are found along the way.

Along the Way presents a selection of pieces, predominately works on paper, Solien created through this working process between 2019-2022. Several phases of this project are represented here, including works that are purely abstract and others that begin to depict objects or people. A few art historical references also appear throughout this body of work. Solien stated that he considered his working process to be comparable to Donald Judd’s meditations on the cube or Gene Davis’s choice
to only use stripes of color to create his color field paintings. Pablo Picasso’s Cubist sculpture Chair from 1961, which seemed to be crushed from three dimensions down to two dimensions and then unfolded back to three dimensions, was a particular point of inspiration for The Spanish Chair. Solien shares with these artists a steadfast trust in the practice of persistent creativity, which was the impetus for this project from the beginning. By establishing parameters in which to work and asking questions such as “what is it, and how does it seem to exist?” without actually expecting to arrive at any concrete answers, Solien invites us, as viewers, to join him in this state of creative curiosity.

Since the late ’70s, T.L. Solien (b. 1949, Fargo, North Dakota) has been linked to the continuing evolution of figural painting and has been grouped within the concerns of Neo-Expressionism, Neo-Surrealism, and New Image histories. A self-described artist of the “absurdist cultural critique,” Solien depicts the contemporary collapse of our culture in his work. Using expressive color and imaginative imagery, he often constructs paradoxical narratives with references to his Scandinavian heritage, family memories, and various references to art and literature of the past. Solien received his BA from Moorhead State University and his MFA from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He has received many honors and awards, including a Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship. The Madison Museum of Contemporary Art showed a 25-year retrospective of his work in 2008, and the Plains Museum in Fargo organized a touring exhibition of his artwork in 2013-14. His work is included in many private and public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, National Museum of American Art, Art Institute of Chicago, Milwaukee Art Museum, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Tate Gallery, and others. T.L. Solien lives and works in Madison, Wisconsin.
T.L. Solien, *The Spanish Chair*, 2021
Screen print on Somerset Satin White; Edition of 30
39 x 26 inches unframed
Printed and published by Tandem Press
$3,000 unframed
Colored pencil, marker, and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
Colored pencil, gouache, and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
Colored pencil, gouache, and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
T.L. Solien, *Path: Kite Flyer, 2020*
Colored pencil, watercolor, and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
 Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
 $1,600 framed
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
T.L. Solien, *Path: Headstand, 2020*  
Colored pencil, gouache, and pencil on paper  
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed  
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery  
$1,600 framed
T.L. Solien, *Path: Carrion, 2020*
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
11 x 7 1/2 inches unframed / 15 1/4 x 12 1/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$1,600 framed
T.L. Solien, *Path: Gertrude Stein, 2020*
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 24 1/2 x 18 1/2 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *To Be or Not to Be #1, 2020*
Colored pencil and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *To Be or Not to Be #2, 2020*
Colored pencil, marker, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Divided Path, 2019*
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Pink Path*, 2020
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Narrow Path*, 2019
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Dunce's Path*, 2019
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
Watercolor and pencil on paper
22 x 15 inches unframed / 25 3/4 x 18 3/4 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$4,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Egyptian Quaker, 2020*
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
38 x 26 inches unframed / 43 x 30 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$10,000 framed
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
38 x 26 inches unframed / 43 x 30 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$10,000 framed
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
38 x 26 inches unframed / 43 x 30 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$10,000 framed
T.L. Solien, *Blue Pocket, 2020*
Watercolor, gouache, and pencil on paper
38 x 26 inches unframed / 43 x 30 inches framed
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$10,000 framed
Acrylic on canvas
72 1/4 x 54 1/4 inches
Courtesy the artist and Tory Folliard Gallery
$27,000