

# HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE



## Marc Dennis: 10 Hyperrealistic Paintings That Will Forever Pervert Your View Of Art History

By Priscilla Frank | Posted: 11/03/13 EDT | Updated: 11/04/13 EST

When Gustav Courbet painted “The Origin Of The World” in 1866, he shocked the world with his realistic depiction of a nude woman’s lower half. Yet there is something additionally startling about watching a young woman admire the piece, the back of her head positioned right between the painting’s legs

Marc Dennis’ hyperrealistic paintings depict some of art history’s most provocative and iconic artworks in the process of being seen today. The juxtaposition of the artworks, made in another place and time, with the contemporary stylings of the viewers that study them, depicts a collision of disparate images that is often overlooked.



“Five years ago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art had a Courbet exhibition,” Dennis explained to the Huffington Post. “I love Courbet, but i’ve never seen his full body of work. There is a little side room where the Origin of the Universe was situated... It was like a peep show. I learned that the painting could only be viewed by pulling a curtain back. I thought, my god, what a brilliant idea. Have an exhibition that has a slightly perverse, voyeuristic tendency hidden behind a curtain.”

“Tight as I stepped back to get a better view of this painting, a woman stepped in front of the painting. And I thought, what an amazing view,” he added.

In his exhibition entitled “An Artist, A Curator And A Rabbi Walk Into A Bar” Dennis suggests that when perusing a museum or gallery, we should not focus our attention on the artworks in a vacuum, but explore how these images interact with the mingling passersby. Observing the people in front of the paintings, Dennis suggests, are as riveting an experience as analyzing the artworks on the walls.



“How can I introduce this idea of introducing the invisible foreground?” he recalled. “How can I include the viewer in the physical act of viewing?”

Dennis’ particular artistic choices also suggest a connection between the most racy artworks of their time with the gradual progression of the feminine image. These are the images, Dennis implies, that have contributed to the shape of contemporary femininity. Whether Dennis is devising a treatise on provocation, crafting an artistic version of a dirty joke, or simply riling up an old classic is up to you to determine.

Check out Dennis’ hyperrealistic art historical journey below and don’t be surprised if the abrupt journey between past and present is giving you vertigo, in the best way possible.

*Marc Dennis’ “An Artist, A Curator And A Rabbi Walk Into A Bar...” will show from November 8, 2013 - January 4, 2014 at Hasted Kraeutler Gallery in New York.*