

Simon Dinnerstein (Staempfli): Dinnerstein is an excellent draftsman whose pencil cityscapes are cool and accurate; his interiors in charcoal are mournfully Gothic. Everything inside is dingy. Beneath his sink in Germany there were: five jars of different sizes filled with clear liquid; three quart-size Coke bottles with water for ironing; an old espresso coffee pot; pipes and taps; salad oil; and German equivalents of Drano, Tide, Ajax and Arm & Hammer baking soda. It was, further, multiplied by

reflections in the open chrome doors, and made yet sadder by a naked light bulb, a pockmarked wall and two forlorn pans. Nude portraits of the artist's pregnant wife and frontal portraits of gnarled, frowning old people, done from an elevated angle which diminishes the subject, are similarly detailed and grotesque.

The work seems, that is to say, programmatic. Only in one large oil triptych does this program receive exposition. The triptych is autobiographical, with the trinity of his wife, their child and the artist grouped around a work table. Massed on the peg board wall are photographs, children's drawings, quotes from books and letters, and numerous reproductions, including primitives, Bellini, Ingres and, above all, Van Eyck. But, since this is a painting of a wall, not an actual program, the reproductions are treated irreverently indeed; a reproduced Flemish woman wails her tears into an actual potted plant. The idea parallels Courbet's in *Interior of My Studio, a Real Allegory Summing Up Seven Years of My Life as an Artist*. For anyone who would urge Dinnerstein to idealize on philosophic grounds, he has pasted a quote: "And to the question which of our worlds will then be *the* world, there is no answer. For the answer would have to be given in language, and a language must be rooted in some collection of forms of life, and every particular form of life could be other than it is."

