

Sonya Sklaroff's Americana and Rural Landscape Paintings:

Finding Beauty in the Mundane

Sonya Sklaroff's depictions of the rural countryside are not typical landscape paintings. They do not represent the quintessential elements of an archetypal pastoral scene, nor do they evoke the placid tone of a classic bucolic landscape. Rather, the remarkable beauty, alluring strength, and character of Ms. Sklaroff's compositions arise from her surprising portrayal of the mundane aspects of rural settings.

She is most intrigued by the way man-made objects contrast with the natural world: the diagonal crisscrossing of wires from a crooked telephone pole set against the golden hue of a late afternoon sky. Her paintings of old country homes often reveal only partial glimpses of these houses, exposing portions of their rusty rooftops and stately windows. She features cars and trucks in these works, as well as fire pumps, stoplights, street signs, and interweaving power lines. In all of these paintings, the late afternoon and evening twilight play an important part in the mood that is created. Her subjects often exude a dignified yet eerie dramatic quality when portrayed in the glow of this golden light, taking on a life of their own.

While some traditional landscape painters prefer to avoid depicting industrial or other man-made features of the countryside that are not typically beautiful, Ms. Sklaroff chooses to focus on these everyday elements found in the landscape and to celebrate and embrace their extraordinary and often overlooked charm.