

ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS

Highlighting the works of painters David Dibble, Geoffrey Gersten, Barbara Berry, and Susan Eddings Pérez; and natural assemblage artist Lisa Bennett

WRITTEN BY Norman Kolpas



David Dibble spent his early years on the land his parents and grandparents worked in northern Utah near the Great Salt Lake, surrounded by the fields, livestock, weathered buildings, and well-worn machinery he now celebrates in atmospheric oil paintings. “It’s no surprise to me that I’m a painter of agricultural scenes,” he says, “because I grew up peering into barns and other spaces that were vast, mysterious, and powerful in ways that I didn’t fully understand. I want other people to feel that interac-

tion with nature that you get specifically on a farm.”

Whenever his chores allowed him time, Dibble drew subjects ranging from what he saw at ground level to the jets that flew overhead to and from nearby Hill Air Force Base. Most of all, though, “I was just walking around by



My November Guest

Oil on Linen Panel | 36 x 27 inches | 2022

myself in nature, sitting and observing and having experiences in powerful ways.”

Not surprisingly, as a student Dibble particularly loved his art classes, especially one semester when his junior high instructor taught linear perspective. Come senior year in high school, he interviewed for and was selected as the official student body artist, rendering everything from event posters to school logos.

When the time finally came for him to declare his major in college, Dibble felt torn that he “was not doing something responsible and adult, like studying law or medicine.” But his mom took him aside, he recalls, and said, “You’ve been given this gift of art, and you deserve to see where it goes.” He eventually graduated with a degree in illustration from Brigham Young University (BYU) and



Nevada Gothic

Oil on Linen Panel | 40 x 40 inches | 2022

went on to earn an MFA at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

Dibble met his wife Liz in California, and together they moved to New York, where she attended grad school for dance while he worked in nearby Greenwich, Connecticut, for Blue Sky Studios, part of 20th Century Fox, as an animation color artist creating digital backgrounds. He found the job surprisingly nurturing for his talent. “I was surrounded by really good artists, being constantly challenged and getting feedback.” He also began plein-air painting once a week during lunch.

In 2014, following the births of the first two of his three children, Dibble accepted a full-time position teaching illustration at BYU. Back home, close to the

land he loved, he painted more and more, gradually being juried into shows, winning awards from Oil Painters of America, and securing gallery exhibitions. In 2020, he left teaching to paint full time, a move that has opened up for him a whole new phase of aesthetic exploration, resulting in works such as *Entropy*, a haunting depiction of a decaying barn he spied on a visit to Elko, Nevada. “Teaching,” he says, “shaped me to be the artist I now am. I feel I can let go of some of the rules, and I’m excited to start asking more questions through my art.”

Dibble is represented by Mockingbird Gallery in Bend, Oregon; Anthony’s Fine Art in Salt Lake City, Utah; Meyer Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Astoria Fine Art in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Entropy

Oil on Linen Panel | 41 x 50 inches | 20

