

color skies of sunset and sunrise offer considerable drama without going over the top. In *Sarageto XII* (2006), a central group of thunderclouds appears to be split by lightning; *Sarageto Sunset XXV* (2006) frames a watery orange sun in muddy green and lilac beneath streaks of yellow and robin's-egg blue. And in *Sunrise Roccaripena #4* (2004), a dense, vividly hued tree trunk pushes up at far right to compete with the celestial extravaganza.

Perhaps best known as dean of the New York Studio School (famous for its annual drawing marathons) and for his carefully constructed large-scale figure paintings, Nickson showed a more flamboyant side here. These works were executed on the spot, in a matter of a few hours. But Nickson's watercolors demonstrate the hard-earned knowledge of a lifetime.

—Ann Landi

Elling Reitan

A. Jain Marunouchi

Raised on Icelandic sagas and Norse mythology, Norwegian artist Elling Reitan created a universe of fairy tales in the 18 sensuous paintings on view here. Combining figurative and abstract elements, he invents images that convey his



Elling Reitan, *Blue Moon*, 2002, oil on canvas, 20" x 20".

A. Jain Marunouchi.

dreams and fears. In this sense he can be viewed as a descendant of Munch.

Using a rich and vibrant palette, Reitan crafts his layered scenes, incorporating distorted human figures that are

sometimes disproportionately tiny or large, and always lost in unforgiving space. Nature in his world is often ominous and overwhelming. In the painting *Blue Moon* (2002), for example, the moon hovers in an orange sky over two pairs of tiny stick figures, which look lost on an empty green and yellow plain, their shadows trailing off as parallel lines.

The Lost Painter (1998) is especially beautiful and mysterious, depicting the painter sitting blanketed in a vast blue robe. The small figures that cover the garment seem to exist in a different realm. The artist ponders his palette, while nearby a semi-nude woman walks toward the horizon as a white horse with magnificent blue wings looks on. Smoke billows from a far-off mountain or factory.

This scene is set in a frame of yellow, green, blue, and orange leaves. While slow to yield their secrets, these pictures suggest intriguing possibilities.

—Valerie Gladstone

Javier Marín

Nohra Haimé

Firmly rooted in Mexico's rich figurative-art tradition, sculptor Javier Marín thinks and often works big. He brings an instinctive understanding of proportion, scale, and drama to his expertly crafted creations in clay, colored resin, or bronze. In a society and a culture like Mexico's, just about

everything grows from a mixture of sources. The diverse affinities in Marín's work include the massive stone sculptures of Mesoamerican civilizations (the Olmecs' giant heads, the Aztecs' deity

carvings), ancient Greco-Roman statues, and even Pop-art confections of recent times.

Here Marín showed his "Bearded



Javier Marín, *Cabeza de hombre barbudo VI (Bearded Man's Head VI)*, 2005, bronze, 55" x 28" x 28". Nohra Haimé.

Man's Head" series (2005), a group of seven large, bald, male heads made of bronze; each was held up on a tubular pedestal. With downcast or closed eyes, large lips, and cascading beards whose tufts of hard-bronze hair look as fluffy as whipped cream, Marín's sculptures serve as reminders that the human body, and especially the face, is a living, mutable record of the passage of time, giving visible expression to that confluence of aspiration, fear, stamina, and uncertainty that constitutes each person.

Letters inscribed on the foreheads of the sculptures spell out, in a single Spanish verb, "You will kill." Similar letters on the backs of the heads spell out "You will live." Marín also showed "Three Wigs" (2009), a series of three small bronze sculptures depicting the kind of decorative headgear that was once an essential part of any well-dressed nobleman's, courtier's, or king's costume. Vaguely surreal, with no heads to support them, Marín's wigs call attention to the combined sense of history and humanism that has long been a hallmark of this skillful artist's work.

—Edward M. Gómez