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Browse: [Home](#) → [Featured](#) → ART IMITATES LIFE

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ART IMITATES LIFE

By [Mary C. Johnson](#)

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Capturing the New York City social dynamic can be both an entertaining and enigmatic task considering the vast multitudes of colorful personalities walking up and down the Island of Manhattan. To gain some insight into this vision, you'd have to understand your immediate neighbor. Are you on the train, bus, at work or at a coffee shop? Well, who's standing next to you, in front of you or behind you? Taking the spectators stance on human behavior for contemporary painter **Serge Strosberg** gives his work a simplistic brilliance that's not complicated by personal biases.

A self-described expressionist and humanist...and a passionate observer of life, Serge has been collecting images of the New York City night scene complete with socialites, exotically clothed "amazons" transsexuals and transvestites, Strosberg believes that he has found the energy and excitement that Europe had a century ago. Compared to young **Lucien Freud**, Strosberg is establishing a niche for his style of expressionistic painting which transforms his models into iconic interpretations of their ordinary selves.



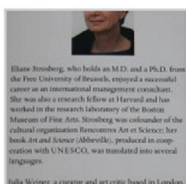
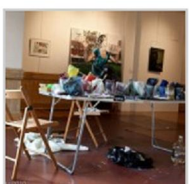
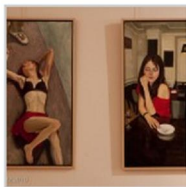
Strosberg's keen eye for beauty and recent focus for his New York Amazon's exhibit can be attributed to geography, since his loft is located in *SoHo* above H&M and across the street from Bloomingdales, or to the fact that he was a student of former Elle Artistic director **Peter Knapp**, one of the greatest fashion photographers of our time.

Going through Strosberg's gallery is like watching intimate biographies. All individuals involved have plenty to tell from their discrete positioning on the wall. One of my favorite pieces called, "*Queen of the Jungle*" which is a modern depiction of King Kong but instead of the classic blond with a soft spot for an overgrown wild thing, there's a platinum blond throwing her hands up to party. By juxtaposing the city skyline and an image of the gorilla at the corner of the canvas with the larger than life persona of this carefree party-girl, Strosberg almost deifies her into a mythical being.

"InVivo/InVtro" establishes a connection with life around us. The portrait takes a look at the importance of nature and our connection to it can be vital to our existence. The image is of a woman in a rooftop garden with grass at her feet and sporadically placed trees all around her. Her connection to the life around her is powerful because she's living in an urban oasis with buildings surrounding her and instead of becoming a stoic, rigid, robotic structure; she has become part of the natural beauty.



Combining oil and tempera which is the method used in the renaissance, Strosberg hand mixes his own pigments that he buys in Italy, according to the ancient technique. Sticking to the method of the masters before him and introducing a 20th century flare, makes his work modern, classic and refreshing. Strosberg has the ability to display the individual complexities of his subjects while magnifying their underlying personal thoughts and feelings. Like the glasswork in a Roman Cathedral, you're drawn into the image and it possess' a part of you that you never knew existed.



Elaine Strosberg, who holds an M.D. and a Ph.D. from the Free University of Berlin, entered a successful career as an international management consultant. She has also a research fellow at Harvard and has worked in the research laboratory of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Strosberg was cofounder of the cultural organization Renaissance Art et Science: her book, Art et Science (Abbreviated), produced in cooperation with UNESCO, was translated into several languages.

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