



ARTHUR LERNER

Essay from Walter Wickiser Gallery catalog, 1993

## “Images of Quiet Intensity”

Arthur Lerner has been making paintings for over four decades that reflect an intensely personal poetic vision. His subjects have been the enduring ones beginning with the figure early in his career and later embracing still life and landscape exclusively. A simple still life of gourds and driftwood by Lerner can evoke a mood of mystery and quietude much the same way the Italian artist Giorgio Morandi (a personal favorite of the artist) transformed simple canisters and bottles into metaphysical objects. In similar fashion, the artist's landscapes transcend the commonplace becoming not only beautifully observed images of the natural world but also objects of contemplation and meditation. Regardless of the subject, over the years Lerner has developed a consistently personal style to match his vision. His unusual palette of extremely muted color is one of the hallmarks of Lerner's distinctive style. By combining rich earth tones with occasional touches of cadmiums, the artist creates a diaphanous image that is somewhere between mirage and dream. Moreover, Lerner's smoothly painted surfaces assuage the viewer transporting one into another world where the ordinary images of a rushing stream or primordial rock formation are transformed into alien landscapes of wonderment. Finally, Arthur Lerner's paintings reflect the personality and conviction of the artist himself: they are at once both subtle and soft-spoken and uniquely generous in their spirit and vision.

Corey Postiglione

Corey Postiglione is an artist, writer and Professor of Art and Art History at Columbia College, Chicago