

Artworks from Elsa Peretti's Private Collection featured in the exhibition "Saul Steinberg, Artist" at Fundación Juan March, Madrid

"Saul Steinberg, Artist" is the title of the exhibition organized by the Fundación Juan March in Madrid until January 12, 2025. With almost 400 works from European and American institutions and various private collections, including three works from the private collection of Elsa Peretti, the exhibition is the first full retrospective dedicated to the artist in Spain. It explores the different facets of Steinberg, who is considered one of the most important and outstanding creators of the mid-20th century.

Saul Steinberg (1914-1999) was born in Romania, but after a troubled youth he moved to Milan to study architecture at the Regio Politecnico. During those years, to compensate for the limited financial support he received from his parents, Steinberg began working as a cartoonist for Bertoldo, a twice-weekly humor newspaper and soon became one of the publication's most popular and recognizable artists. In the 1940s, following the introduction of anti-Semitic laws Steinberg was forced to leave Italy and settle in the United States, where he began collaborating with The New Yorker magazine. This collaboration lasted nearly six decades, bringing Steinberg's work into American homes, shaking up the mindset of American society. He defined himself as "a writer who draws", but his artistic production goes much further: his creative and virtuous play with images extended to other less popular media that were key in his production, such as painting, graphic art, collage, photomontage, and even "drawing" in three dimensions. The architecture of New York, or his keen eye for observation are some recurring symbols and themes in Saul Steinberg's work. In 1946, his work was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York alongside artists such as Isamu Noguchi and Robert Motherwell. "I don't

quite belong to the art world, neither to the world of cartoons, nor the world of magazines, so the art world doesn't quite know where to place me," Steinberg wrote at the time. His work has been featured in the media and in leading museums of contemporary art.

The exhibition "Saul Steinberg, Artist" includes drawings, murals, collages, paintings, engravings, photographs, artist's books or magazines, as many media as Steinberg chose to develop his oeuvre. The exhibition includes three works on loan from **the Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation (NaEPF)**, which is responsible for the preservation of Elsa Peretti's Private Collection. Elsa Peretti began to admire Steinberg's groundbreaking humoristic work in the 1970s when they were both part of the same cultural scene in New York City. The first work acquired by Elsa Peretti dates back to 1966 and is a drawing, ink on paper, titled "The Mormon Travel", while the oil painting "Untitled (The Angelus)", inspired by the homonymous artwork by Jean-François Millet, is from 1970. The third work presented in the exhibition is a large sculpture from 1972 part of the Table Series – upright compositions filled with carved and painted trompe-l'oeil wood objects representing the implements of his trade, the things around his studio and even reiterations of his own work, past and present. The series was firstly presented at Betty Parsons and Sidney Janis galleries in New York in 1973 and described to his friend Aldo Buzzi with thrilled words: "...the new things—the tables—were well displayed and I'm still pleased with them. These are new things for me and bring me closer to the rather animal world of painters. In working on them there's only pleasure, the mind is at rest, it's the happiness of a horse...."

This new passion for wood—what fragrance!—it makes me work and even dream that I'm working." The 1972's Table was very dear to Elsa Peretti who placed it in a special spot, the dining room of Sala Grande in Sant Martí Vell among Hiro photographs and the big millstone converted into the dining table.

With this exhibition, the Fundación Juan March becomes the leading institution for the study of Saul Steinberg in Spain, having accepted the donation of 115 works and documents from The Saul Steinberg Foundation in New York.