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Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir's gentle giants

The sculptor's work should be experienced

By Kevin Freitas

"Fluid" by Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir

Steinunn Thórarinsdóttir's life-size figures can be compared and rated against many of her contemporaries: Michelangelo Pistoletto, Bruce Nauman, George Segal and Antony Gormley, to name a few. However, her passive figurines, seemingly accepting of their fate ('tis more noble to be cast in bronze or gold), emanate a less agonizing, less violent and almost *human* existence than any works by her peers.

Thórarinsdóttir's figurative works in iron and aluminum are on view at Scott White Contemporary Art (7655 Girard Ave. in La Jolla) through April 14. With their hands at their side, they appear to be engaged in some strange ritual or silent conversation. They're vulnerable but not weak. Weirdly, I think they *knew* I was there, and, no, I'm not writing a script for some third-rate zombie flick. I was truly moved by their presence. Their frozen yet peaceful composure instilled the same feeling of peace in me as I gingerly walked amongst these gentle giants.

And this is a key factor to Thórarinsdóttir's work—her sculptures blend into our lives. It is also the basis for many of the works she has situated in several public parks. Most recently, 26 figures were installed along Dag Hammarskjold Plaza in New York.

The lesson here is we can become passive, somnambulant in not "experiencing" others around us. Seize the moment to experience Thórarinsdóttir's sculptures now.

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