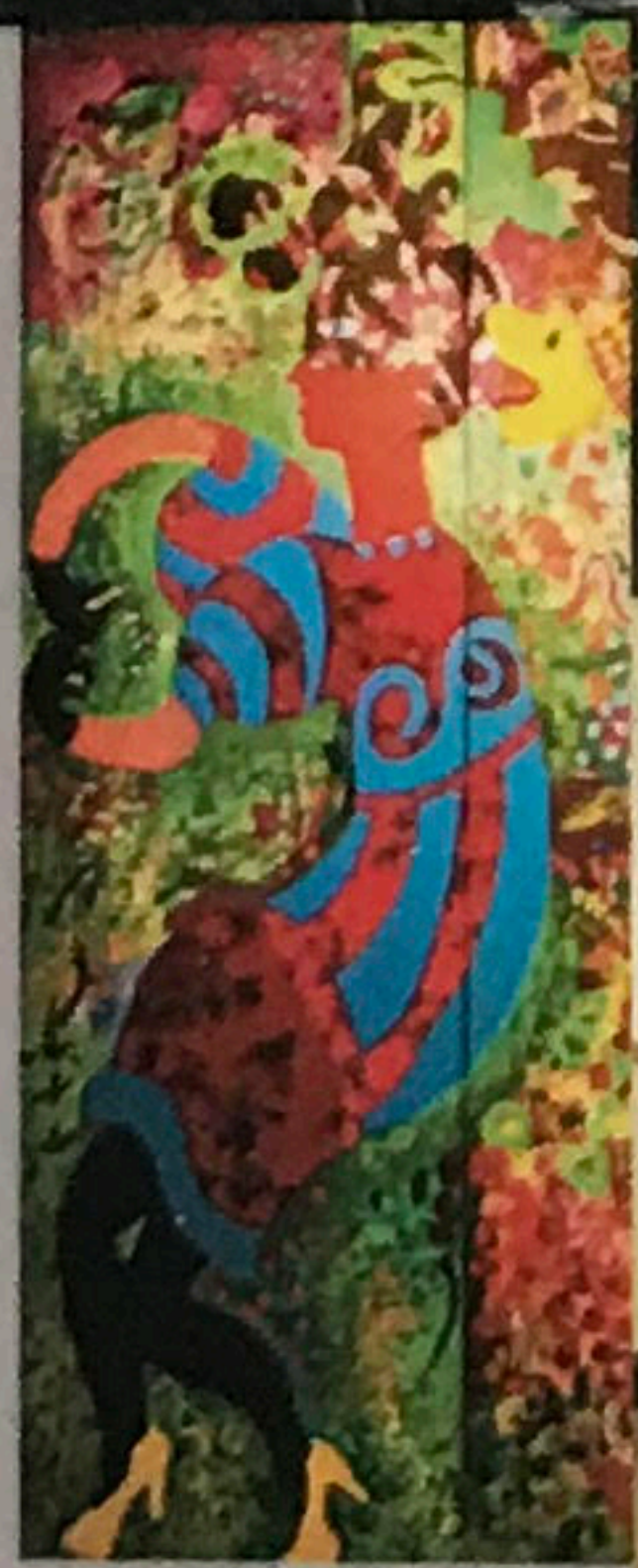


NOT the MET



Exploring the
Smaller Museums
of Manhattan



By Janel Halpern
& Harvey Appelbaum



German Consulate New York



Location and Transit

871 United Nations Plaza

(212) 610-9700

germany.info

Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, S

Bus: M15, M50

Hours and Admission

Mon.-Fri.

9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Sat.-Sun.

Closed

Free

If you are in the area of the United Nations—and most visitors to New York go to these notable buildings on the far east side of Midtown—it might be enjoyable to include a visit to the Consulate General of Germany a few blocks away. The only thing needed for entry is an entrance scan of yourself and your belongings.

When we were there, we saw a number of astonishing works of art. The centerpiece was a very large triptych by Simon Dinnerstein, measuring fourteen feet in width and seven feet in height. Begun in 1971, when the artist participated in a Fulbright Grant in Germany, he finished the masterpiece in 1974 in his Brooklyn studio. Dinnerstein has described *The Fulbright Triptych* as “the best possible of me times a hundred.” Roberta Smith, writing in the *New York Times*, noted, “The work has the majestic symmetry and stillness of a religious altarpiece, and the intimate allure of a well-kept artist’s studio. The object of worship is primarily art: old and new, high and low, in various mediums and styles.” The triptych consists of two portraits on each end, one of the artist and the other of his wife. On the wife’s lap is a baby, who did not exist when the painting was begun in Germany. A table in the center painting is laden with a variety of the artist’s tools. On all of the plain pine walls are pinned postcards and

cut-outs of the works of many different artists, and through two windows, one can see the small German village where the artist lived. Smith wrote that this was a painting that should not be missed.

Though *The Fulbright Triptych* was the most famous art work on hand, there were others that merited a visitor's interest. In the gallery upstairs, entered by a circular staircase or an elevator, was the exhibit *90 Days of Berlin* by Zigi Ben-Haim. Ben-Haim, an American Israeli artist, was invited to Berlin in 2004 as part of an Arts and Media program. It was his first trip to Berlin, and he painted a picture each day of his visit, forming a diary of his impressions of the city. In addition to the small "diary entries," there were two large oil paintings of Berlin as seen through the artist's eyes. In one, a blue animal kicked a soccer ball outside an important building out of which grew a very large rose. In the other, a small blue man rushed toward a very large banana, a common theme in his pieces.

Also on the first floor, we saw two very large, dark oil paintings and a series of three small, carved, wooden sculptures. Unfortunately, these works were accompanied by explanations in German that were not translated into English.

There is a small café, but it is unclear whether it is available to visitors.

