

# Susan Rothenberg

At the start of her career, in the early 1970s, Rothenberg resolved “to paint an image of something you could recognize and feel something about.” She settled on the horse, a subject she felt detached from personally but believed she could use to “negate painting as much as possible, in terms of illusionism and shadow and composition.” In what would become her signature palette of dirty whites and muted reds, Rothenberg bisected, isolated, and flattened her equine subjects.

By the early 1980s, she moved from horses to the human body—at times in motion, at times in pieces. “After years of trying to make things static, I was involved in making them move,” she reflected. The six monumental paintings of dancers she made for a private commission were inspired by her involvement with avant-garde dance in New York. In 1990, Rothenberg shifted course once again when she moved to New Mexico, where she depicted subjects drawn from her daily life, from objects in her studio to desert wildlife.

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