

Artist John Simpkins launches online exhibit of paintings

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John Simpkins spent 10 years living in an Oregon ghost town, and now anyone in the world can view his collection of 38 paintings created during his decade in Andrews, which is near Steens Mountain.

The online exhibition is titled "Elephant in the Room."

"The paintings are the culmination of a dedicated effort to explore and express," Simpkins said. "It was a decade spent looking deeply, listening and dreaming freely. Most of the paintings speak about the Earth and its many lifeforms."

Viewing is free. To tour his exhibit, go to www.johnsimpkins.com.

He said the online exhibit — using technologies created by Ikonospace of Holland and Kunstmatrix of Berlin — brings the viewer into a 3D virtual museum space "that conveys the size, vibrancy and detail of each painting in a life-size context."

Navigating from room to room, viewers can zoom in on the paintings for a closer look or zoom out to see the full scale of the large-format pieces.

"The paintings flowed onto the canvas 'intuitively' — I did not plan them," he said. "They manifested over time, some taking six months to complete while others came quickly."

In 2018, Simpkins exhibited a collection of these pieces at the High Desert Museum in Bend in a show titled "Desert Mystic: The Paintings of John Simpkins." His tenure living and painting in the desert was featured in an Emmy



www.facebook.com/jsimpkins

John Simpkins' online exhibit "Elephant in the Room" features work he created during 10 years living in the ghost town of Andrews, Oregon.

Award-winning documentary on OPB's "Oregon Art Beat" in 2015. Find that episode at <https://watch.opb.org/video/oregon-art-beat-painter-john-simpkins/>.

Simpkins said the landscape around Andrews reminded him of Tibet.

"Once I got there, I thought, 'Oh my gosh, this is what I wanted,'" he said.

After spending a decade in Andrews, Simpkins moved to Baker City in 2021. He lives and has a studio space in Churchill School.

He hopes to someday see the entire Andrews collection displayed together.

"It is my hope that this virtual exhibit will inspire an actual exhibition of these paintings in a museum or gallery," Simpkins said.

VIRTUAL ART SHOW

Take a tour of John Simpkins' virtual show "Elephant in the Room," at www.johnsimpkins.com.

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