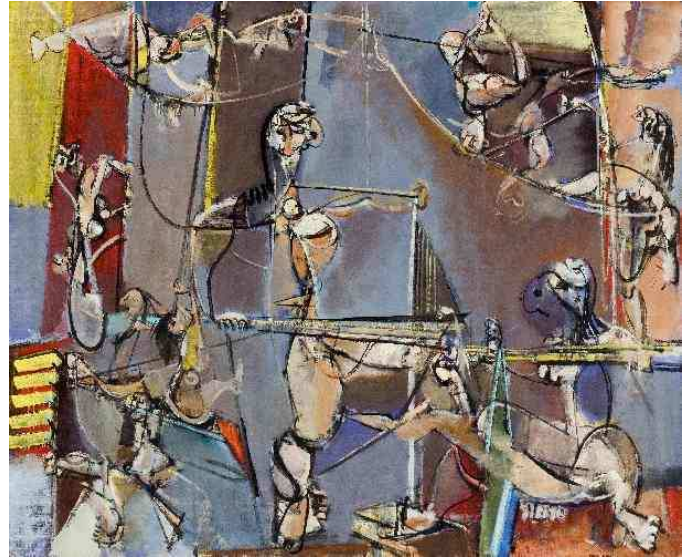


# GERALD <sup>GP</sup> PETERS GALLERY®

## Max Weber: Paintings from the 1930s, 40s and 50s (November 13 through December 19, 2008)

Max Weber was at the forefront of abstraction as one of its most versatile, inventive, and exceptional trail blazers in America. A consummate Expressionist who touched on virtually every phase of modernism, Weber served as a crucial link between the first wave of American modernism and the action painters associated with the New York School at mid-century.

On view at the Gerald Peters Gallery New York from November 13 through December 19, 2008, *Max Weber: Paintings from the 1930s, 40s and 50s* features over 40 paintings and works on paper selected from the Weber Estate. Revealing the immense virtuosity of the artist's mature style, selections include Weber's signature still lifes; evocative interiors, landscapes, and nudes, along with his more somber religious and socially-conscious paintings from the war years. Many of these remarkable works on view have not been exhibited in decades, including several of which were part of Weber's landmark 1949 retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art.



At a time when scholars and collectors are re-evaluating the early works of Gorky, Lichtenstein, and Pollock in terms of their relationship to the artists of the 1910s and 1920s, the exhibition seeks to illustrate how Weber also bridges past, pre-conceived pre-war/post-war divisions, by tracing how the artist's early influences are married to his later responses to the art world, war, and society as a whole.

According to Gallery Director and Exhibition Curator Lily Downing Burke, "Given that each decade within Weber's prolific career was extremely significant, exploring the unique character and skill of his later works warranted further examination. For it is in this later period that Weber achieves a consistent style particularly in terms of line and form. Rather than developing into full-blown abstraction, the works on view reveal a synthesis into something more static, more formal, and more pensive. The power of Expressionism as the permanent thread in Weber's art is fully crystallized during this period in terms of action and gestures."

By the 1930s, in response to the growing crisis in world affairs, social themes began to appear in Weber's work as did an intensification of Jewish subjects. During the decades that followed, Weber began to develop a distinctive new style, termed "linear expressionism" by scholar Percy North and characterized by the use of "active and aggressive swirling patterns" that would later emerge as a signature feature of American modern art in the 1950s and 60s. More interested in capturing the intensity of emotion than conventional beauty, works on view such as *Family Reunion*, 1944, reveal Weber's skillful distortion of form, color, and space in order to achieve the highest pitch of emotional and spiritual expression. This intuitive ability to set a scene that touches on emotion is also evident in many of the still lifes and figures on view, such as *Acrobats*, 1946, (pictured above) and *The Muses*, 1944.

Press Contact: Cecilia Bonn, Cecilia Bonn Marketing & Communications, (212) 734-9754, Cbonn@nyc.rr.com.

(Cont.)

*Born in Bialystok, Russia, in 1881, Max Weber immigrated to America with his family in 1891, settled in Brooklyn, and later studied art at the Pratt Institute under the tutelage of painter Arthur Wesley Dow. Weber left the U.S. in 1905 for Paris, where he studied with Henri Matisse and witnessed the development of Fauvism and Cubism. In 1907, both Braque and Picasso were exploring new visual possibilities that would become the basis for Cubism. Two years later, Weber would return to New York from his studies in Paris to introduce Cubism to America. He also experimented with Fauvism, Dynamism, Expressionism, and Futurism, as well as with revolutionary techniques, which he learned during his time in Paris. In 1909, he began showing at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery, and was the first American modernist painter to merit a museum solo exhibition at the Newark Museum in 1913. During the 1920s, his work reflected the influences of European artists like Paul Cézanne, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and Henri Rousseau and, while exhibiting and working across the country, he also taught art periodically at the Art Students League.*

*In 1930, he was granted a retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art during its inaugural year. After 1930, Weber developed an identifiable style described as lyrical and expressionistic. His paintings depicted romanticized landscapes, peaceful domestic scenes, and religious themes. Weber's work during the 1930s also focused on social issues that reflected his left-wing political beliefs. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Weber exhibited extensively at the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art; the Walker Art Center, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, as well as received numerous medals, commendations, and critical acclaim.*

Image credit:

Max Weber, *Acrobats*, 1946, oil on board, 48 x 57 5/8 inches. ©2008 Estate of Max Weber, courtesy Gerald Peters Gallery.

###

Gerald Peters Gallery was founded in Santa Fe in 1972 and opened a gallery in New York in 1992. Since its inception, the New York gallery has focused on premier exhibitions of works by American Masters including such shows as *Robert Henri: The Painted Spirit*; *Georgia O'Keeffe*; *Leon Kroll Rediscovered*; *Albert Bierstadt's West*; *American Modernism: The Françoise and Harcey Rambach Collection*; *Ernest Lauson*; *William Glackens*; *John Sloan: An American View*, and *Marguerite Zorach: A Life in Art*, along with numerous contemporary art exhibitions. The gallery represents many prominent artists' estates including serving as the exclusive representative for the Estate of Max Weber.