

THE DRAWING ROOM 55 Main Street East Hampton New York 11937 T 631 324 5016

PRESS RELEASE

## SAUL STEINBERG

Material of Interest

Paintings Drawings Prints and Objects

April 1 – May 21, 2023

Open Friday through Monday 11-5 and mid-week by appointment

In collaboration with the Saul Steinberg Foundation

On view through May 21, 2023, The Drawing Room is pleased to present the gallery's third Saul Steinberg (1914-1999) exhibition in East Hampton, where the artist lived and worked for nearly half a century. Important ink and watercolor drawings completed during his extraordinary career at *The New Yorker* are central to the installation, which also highlights oil paintings, watercolors, prints and objects used on his *Drawing Table* reliefs. The focus is on Steinberg's original approaches to conventional art mediums and conceptual practices such as Trompe L'Oeil, assemblage and "found" objects.



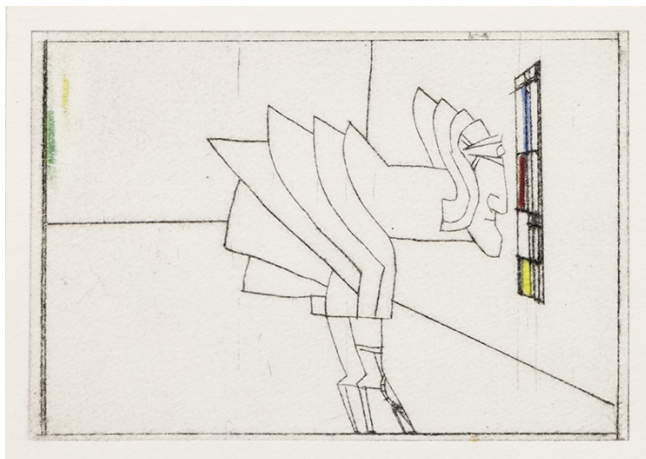
Untitled, 1945, zincograph on green paper, 20 ¾ x 26 ½ inches

Many of the drawings have important exhibition histories. The earliest is a green tinted zincograph, the profile of a woman with a notable nose and a feathered hat, *Untitled* 1945. A closely related impression on blue paper was included in *Fourteen Americans*, an exhibition curated by Dorothy Miller at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946. An eccentric ornamental watercolor, *Turkish 2*, 1951, was shown in the joint Sidney Janis - Betty Parsons exhibition in 1952. The lively drawing of the anthropomorphic cat shouting *Now!* c. 1960-65 was in the 2021 *Triennale* in Milano. The hallucinatory *Untitled*, 1964 – a map of a twisted U.S.A. labeled with the acronyms of America's corporations, institutions and products, is featured in Joel Smith's catalog, *Saul Steinberg Illuminations*, which accompanied a show that traveled to four venues in the United States.



*Turkish 2*, 1951, ink, and watercolor on paper, 17 5/8 x 23 5/8 inches

Passionate about drawing as a child in Romania, Steinberg went on to architecture school in Milan, where he honed his skills and became intrigued by representation and, in particular, perspective as a phenomenon to explore in drawing. Included in the show are the rare trapezoidal drawings, a form of Trompe L'Oeil, on panels of wood. Drawing a cityscape or landscape as one experiences it from an angle rather than straight on, Steinberg explores how we choose to see the world. His slanted imitation of a Mondrian painting as seen by an art viewer is an enigma of perception.



Untitled, 1970-90, etching, colored pencil on wove paper, 5 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches



Untitled, c. 1971, screenprint in colors on wood, 24 x 2 5/8 inches

In his serene oil paintings and sumptuous watercolor landscapes and seascapes from the 1970s, Steinberg approached those conventional artistic traditions with refreshing irony. The human figure appears in the form of a rubber stamp of a man with a top hat roaming the earth. The tiny existential human re-appears wandering across the thin, stretched colored pencil landscapes on wood slats. One might interpret the ever present stamped "everyman" as the artist, or the immigrant, or the viewer? In 1971 he explained to an interviewer "with my stamps, I create series, as if my characters emerged from a computer, identical to each other, regimented the way they appear in our rigid society; in this way, I destroy conventions more effectively than with drawing and painting."



Untitled, 1970-80, oil and rubber stamp on canvas, 19 1/8 x 27 3/8 inches

Steinberg's drawings and prints of women artists at work are featured in serious and humorous compositions. In the etching *Provincetown* two ladies are dressed up in high heels painting "en plein air" at their easels in the dunes. *Untitled*, 1949 appears to be a drawing from life of a lady immersed in her own drawing with compositions strewn on the floor.



Untitled, 1949, ink on paper, 14 5/8 x 23 1/4 inches

Engaged by carving, whittling, drawing on wood and etching on metal plates, Steinberg made the objects on view which include life size ledger books, carved and colored treasure boxes with hinged tops, ring binder note pads, a pencil box, Art Deco ornaments, bureaucratic stamps with fake insignias, tin clocks, still lifes etched on metal, and a music box. These objects were his "at hand" inventory as he composed three dimensional Drawing Table Reliefs on wood panels.



The relief panel titled, *The Cabinet*, 1970, was shown in The Whitney Museum's 1978 retrospective, curated by Harold Rosenberg. Steinberg replicated one side of a trunk similar to steerage class crates packed with the few possessions immigrants could bring on their passages from Europe to America. Official stamps and signatures are scrawled all over the surface suggesting many ports of entry. With its worn surface and many official stamps, *The Cabinet* invokes the determination of the immigrant's journey. Steinberg's name appears in metal type as the owner of the trunk.



*Cabinet*, 1970, canvas with in, metal drawer handle, porcelain knob, metal plaque, rubber stamps, pencil and gouache on incised wood, 15 1/2 x 20 1/8 x 1 1/4 inches

For further information and reproduction quality images contact Candace Whitman at 631 324.5016 or [info@drawingroom-gallery.com](mailto:info@drawingroom-gallery.com)

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