



CHARLES GARABEDIAN

SACRIFICE FOR THE FLEET

8 OCTOBER – 7 NOVEMBER 2015

Reception for the artist:
Thursday, 8 October, 6-8 pm

Sacrifice for the Fleet, 2014, acrylic on paper, 47 3/4 x 68 1/2 in. (121.3 x 174 cm)

Venice, CA -- L.A. Louver is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by 91-year-old Los Angeles-based artist Charles Garabedian. Titled *Sacrifice for the Fleet*, the show features 18 large-scale paintings and drawings produced over the past two years.

Garabedian turns to his favorite Greek plays and texts to conjure the imagery in this body of work. Inspired by Armenian manuscripts, Biblical stories, as well as literary characters by Homer, Sophocles and Euripides, with an unabashed use of color and iconoclast approach to figuration, Garabedian transfigures their legacy “through the bizarre mirror that Los Angeles holds up to the ancient world,” (Ed Schad)

In *Sacrifice for the Fleet* (2014), Garabedian portrays King Agamemnon at the onset of the Trojan War. Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter Iphigenia to the gods for the promise of favorable winds as ships launch into battle. His wife Clytemnestra averts her eyes from the horror, shielded by her lustrous draping hair. Wallpaper illustrating multi-colored ships provides the backdrop. The awkwardness of the figures, playful patterns and colorful hues transform the atrocity into a theatrical act.

In a similar fashion, *The Good Thief* (2015) features a crucifixion in which onlookers, dressed in festive attire, gaze upon the crucified character with curiosity, rather than distress. The man on the cross does not suffer from nails driven through his feet and hands, but rather depicted with arms and feet loosely tied with ropes that hold little tension. Measuring 130 x 67 ½ in. (330.2 x 171.5 cm), this is the largest work in the exhibition.

Most of the works are on paper, a material the artist embraces for its flexibility and fluidity. Garabedian often starts his works by drawing and painting on a large piece of paper. As his concepts outgrow the page, more sheets are added until the desired composition is achieved. According to Garabedian, “I find the paper more liberating, it’s not as formal a concept. I like to think of it as more of a physical experience. As soon as you put paint on canvas, it’s as if it has gone into another world.”

In counterpoint to the paintings, the exhibition offers the rare opportunity to view Garabedian’s charcoal drawings that trace the development of his ideas and concept. His markings are elegant, strong and self-assured. Erased and re-drawn in visible layers, the lines appear to be in a constant state of flux, as if willing themselves to form.

Charles Garabedian was born in Detroit in 1923, and moved to California at age nine. He served in the United States Air Force during World War II, and thereafter studied literature and philosophy at UC Santa Barbara, and history at the University of Southern California, earning his BA in 1950. Encouraged by his friend Ed Moses, Garabedian studied with Howard Warshaw, and at age 34 entered the University of California, Los Angeles. In 1961, he graduated with an MA in art, and stayed to teach at the university until 1973.



Study, 2014, charcoal on paper, 48 x 101 in. (121.9 x 256.5 cm)

Garabedian's work has been seen internationally, with inclusion in important museum exhibitions including the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial, 1975 and 1985; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA, 1976; the Venice Biennale, 1976 (also 1982, '84 and '85); "*Bad*" Painting, curated by Marcia Tucker, New Museum of Art, New York, NY, 1978; The High Museum Atlanta, GA, 1980; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1984; Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY, 1989; the Sezon Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan, 1991; the Corcoran Biennial, Washington, D.C., 1993; and in the Getty Museum initiative Pacific Standard Time exhibitions: *L.A. Raw: Abject Expressionism in Los Angeles, 1945-1980, from Rico LeBrun to Paul McCarthy*, Pasadena Museum of California Art, 2011, and *Under the Big Black Sun: California Art, 1974-81*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, 2011. He was also included in *Drawing in L.A.: The 1960s and 70s*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, 2015. Garabedian received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1977, a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 1979, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters award in 2000.

Garabedian has also been honored with several solo museum exhibitions: The La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art presented a survey of Garabedian's work in 1981; and in 1983, the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, Massachusetts held a mid-career retrospective. In 2003/2004, a survey exhibition of works on paper was presented at the Luckman Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles (traveled). A retrospective of his works, curated by Julie Joyce, was presented by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, CA in early 2011.

L.A. Louver has represented Charles Garabedian since 1979. *Sacrifice for the Fleet* is Garabedian's 17th solo exhibition in the gallery.

A fully illustrated catalogue, with foreword by Peter Goulds and text by Ed Schad, has been published on the occasion of the exhibition.

Concurrently on view at L.A. Louver: 8 October – 7 November 2015

Second floor – Tom Wudl: *Beginningless Inexhaustible Empty* / New paintings, drawings and prints

Skyroom – Deborah Butterfield / New bronze sculpture

For more information and visuals, please contact Christina Carlos, L.A. Louver, 45 North Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, USA

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Gallery hours: Tues - Sat / 10am - 6pm; Validated parking available

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