

Charles Garabedian

Recent Paintings

8 April through 8 May 2010

Opening reception for the artist: Thursday, 8 April, 6-8 p.m.

Venice, CA – L.A. Louver is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent paintings by Los Angeles-based artist Charles Garabedian. The exhibition includes a dozen works on both canvas and paper the artist has created over the past year.

Diversity of form and image is the hallmark of Garabedian's idiosyncratic paintings. Mythology and reality intermingle, time collapses, and surreal imagery is born. His lively compositions, both raw and whimsical, belie the serious content of the conveyed narrative.

Painting in vibrant colors in acrylic on canvas or paper, Garabedian continues to mine literary and mythological sources for his inspiration. *Adam and Eve*, 2009, portrays Eve defenseless and open, with arms raised above her head, while Adam has an exasperated pose. The stance of the two figures is in oppositional balance, with a central tree dividing the composition and acting with pivotal force. Powerful women are depicted in several of the works, including a weight-lifting, contemporary Amazonian Queen in *Hippolyta*, 2009; the totemic naked figure of *Salome I*, 2009; and a female couple in *Amazon Queens*, 2009.

The titles Garabedian gives to his paintings offer entry into the work. *Juggler*, 2009, depicts a walking, shirtless man in red shorts; a cityscape is portrayed in the distance. Five right-angled forms surround the figure, which echo the painted arms of the man, but remain disembodied and handless. One of two paintings on canvas, *Huis Clos*, 2009, draws its title from Jean-Paul Sartre's 1944 existential play also known as "Behind Closed Doors" or "No Exit." *Huis Clos* depicts a field of disparate architecture: colorful, abandoned buildings that comprise an anomalous urban landscape devoid of human form. The largest painting in the exhibition *Die Tote Stadt* (The Dead City), 2009, harkens to the opera of the same title by Erich Wolfgang Korngold. *Die Tote Stadt* presents us with an accumulation of imagery in foreshortened space: a panoply of architecture derived from different cultures and ages, trucks and cars (one on fire), and an image of three dancing figures through a window that references Matisse's great 1910 painting *La Danse*.

In his indefinable and singular manner, Garabedian addresses the human condition with lightness of touch and in disarming fashion: Whether it is the horrors of war underpinning the isolation of *Starless Night*, 2009, which foregrounds two soldiers with a city burning in the distance, or the sensuality of the simply rendered couple in *The Touch*, 2009.



Charles Garabedian

Adam and Eve, 2009

acrylic on paper

71 x 47 3/4 in. (180.3 x 121.3 cm)

The Artist

Charles Garabedian was born in Detroit in 1923, and moved to California at age nine. During World War II, he was a gunner in the United States Air Force and served as staff sergeant. Following the war, Garabedian studied literature and philosophy at University of California at Santa Barbara on the GI Bill. He went on to study history at the University of Southern California, and earned his BA in 1950. Thereafter, Garabedian pursued several occupations, including working for Union Pacific Railroad. While working for the railroad, he met artist Ed Moses, who introduced him to painting and drawing, and which led him, at age 34, to enter the University of California at Los Angeles to study art. He received an MFA in 1961.

Garabedian has 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, East L.A. and traveled to the Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Logan, Utah.

Garabedian's work has also been seen internationally, with his inclusion in important group museum exhibitions including the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial in 1975 and 1985; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1976; the Venice Biennale in 1976 (also 1982, '84 and '85); The High Museum Atlanta, 1980; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1984; Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, 1989; the Sezon Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan in 1991 and the Corcoran Biennial in 1993. 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.



Charles Garabedian
Huis Clos, 2009
acrylic on canvas
39 x 80 in. (99.1 x 203.2 cm)

We are pleased to announce a survey of Charles Garabedian's work at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) 22 January - 17 April 2011. Curated by Julie Joyce, Curator of Contemporary Art at SBMA, the exhibition will be accompanied by a full-illustrated color catalogue with text by Michael Duncan, Julie Joyce and Christopher Miles, and with an introduction by SBMA Director Larry Feinberg.

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Concurrent to **Charles Garabedian: Recent Paintings**, 8 April through 8 May 2010 at L.A. Louver: Second floor gallery: **David Hockney: more drawing in a printing machine**, 8 April through 8 May 2010, Skyroom: Rogue Wave Projects presents **Olga Koumoundouros: Hard Times: owed to Studs Terkel and all of that**, 8 April through 26 June 2010.

Further information and visuals please contact:

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