

March 22nd, 2018

Friedel Dzubas: Gestural Abstraction



Over the Hill, 1957, Oil on canvas, 69 5/8 x 106 1/4 inches

“Dzubas’s exemplary emphasis on motility, on activation, achieved by means of his painterly touch—“the malerisch deep inside him,” in the words of Clement Greenberg—is everywhere apparent.”

–Excerpt from the essay on Friedel Dzubas: Gestural Abstraction by Patricia L Lewy, PhD

Loretta Howard Gallery is pleased to present Friedel Dzubas: Gestural Abstraction opening Thursday, March 22nd, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm, running through Saturday, April 21st, 2018. The exhibition focuses on eight pivotal early works spanning the 1950’s and early 1960’s. A common thread among these oil paintings is Dzubas’s expressive brushstrokes, which remain prominent throughout the artist’s career; an undeniable characteristic of his signature style. As Lewy explains:

“These works from the 1950s, in which Dzubas released his virtuosity in overt gestural abstraction, extended into his future production. The dramatic gestural expression through which he activated his painted surfaces over the next several decades begins with this masterful group of paintings. Dzubas would never completely eliminate such bravura brushwork, which would come to define his future paintings to extraordinary effect.”

This exhibition is being held in conjunction with the forthcoming release of the first scholarly monograph on the artist, edited and authored by Patricia L Lewy, PhD. The monograph is being published by Skira Editore, Milan and includes a short preface by Michael Fried.

Friedel Dzubas (b.1915-1994) was for all intents and purposes an autodidact beginning his prolific five-decade career as an apprentice to a wall decoration’s firm in his native Germany before fleeing his homeland in 1939 due to Nazi persecution.

Once in New York City, Dzubas made a name for himself in the New York art scene befriending New York School artists, visiting their studios and club at 39 East Eighth Street. By 1948 Dzubas had participated in his first group exhibition, "Six Young Artist," at the Weyhe Gallery and had met editor of the *Partisan Review*, American critic Clement Greenberg. Greenberg had become an advisor and friend to Dzubas, introducing him to Jackson Pollock and many other significant artists of the time. Through these relationships Dzubas began to gain notoriety and respect amongst his peers. Throughout the 1950's Dzubas established himself as a Second Generation Abstract Expressionist, exhibiting in group shows and galleries such as "Ninth Street: Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture," the Whitney and Corcoran Annuals, the Stable Gallery, the Tibor de Nagy Gallery (his first one-person exhibition was given there in 1952), and the Leo Castelli Gallery in group shows in 1957 and 1958, as well as a one-person exhibition in 1958.

Dzubas was awarded three Guggenheim Fellowships in the years 1966, 1967, and 1968. Additionally, Dzubas became a member of the National Council on the Arts in 1968. Teaching extensively, from the 1940's through the early 1990s, Dzubas influenced students from a range of universities throughout the United States, including the University of Florida, Cornell University, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Dzubas's works are held in numerous public and private collections such as the Whitney Museum of American Art, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Guggenheim Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Parrish Art Museum, National Gallery of Art, Museum of Fine Arts-Houston, Museum of Fine Arts-Boston, Princeton University Art Museum, Bank of America Corporate Art Collection, and BNP Paribas Foundation-Geneva, and Yale University Art Gallery.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition with an essay by Patricia L Lewy, Ph.D. For additional information and press inquiries, please contact Christiana Ine-Kimba Boyle at 212-695-0164 or Christiana@lorettahoward.com.