

the American Abstract Artists. Annual group shows included invited guests: Richard Anuskiewicz; Tom Doyle; Eva Hesse; Will Insley; Sol LeWitt; Lucio Pozzi; Robert Ryman; Robert Smithson; Richard Tuttle; Ruth Vollmer and Merrill Wagner and many others. Some were prompted to become longtime AAA members. Rabkin also worked with the Archives of American Art/Smithsonian Institution to collect the essential written records of the AAA and memorabilia of its founding members. This effort did much to cement the place of the AAA in American art history because its records were so freely available to scholars. Rabkin also invited critics and artists from many countries to visit with and speak to the AAA membership. He and Dorothea lent warmth and focus to many events held in Rabkin's handsome, airy studio.

Over fourteen years as AAA president and many more decades of membership, Leo Rabkin has urged the group to preserve its atmosphere of "lasting revolution." As an artist, respecting fellow artists, he led the AAA to a period of renewal and expansion. It is entirely appropriate that Leo Rabkin's role in the group's history be celebrated with this exhibition.

Susan C. Larsen, Ph.D.

I want to thank Leo Rabkin for his years of service to American Abstract Artists. It is in the spirit of his leadership and his ever probing body of work that the members of AAA continue to promote and to manifest abstract thought in a widening array of material, spatial and temporal forms.

I'd also like to thank Susan Larsen for her essay and her scholarship that has helped to raise public awareness of AAA and its role in the development of abstract art.

In addition, I thank Emily Berger for doing the lion's share of the organizational work; Sharon Brant for her design of the brochure; Richard Timperio and Sideshow for hosting the exhibition; Berry Campbell Gallery, D. Wigmore Fine Art, the Estate of Beatrice Riese, and Julian Jackson and Rene Lynch for their loans of work by past and founding members; our invited guests from our local community and from our sister organization in Paris, Le Salon des Réalités Nouvelles; and all of our members for their support of this tribute to our dear friend, Leo Rabkin.

Daniel G. Hill, President

Alice Adams
Steven Alexander
Siri Berg
Emily Berger
Susan Bonfils
Power Boothe
Naomi Boretz
Sharon Brant
Henry Brown
Marvin Brown
James O. Clark
Mark Dagley
Matthew Deleget
Tom Doyle
Tom Evans
Gabriele Evertz
Vito Giacalone
Balcomb Greene, founding member
Gertrude Greene, founding member
Gail Gregg
James Gross
Mara Held
Pinkney Herbert, invited guest
Daniel G. Hill
Gilbert Hsiao
Phillis Ideal
Julian Jackson
Ward Jackson, past member
James Juszczuk
Cecily Kahn
Marthe Keller
Iona Kleinhaut
Victor Kord
Irene Lawrence
Mon Levinson, past member
Jane Logemann
Vincent Longo
David Mackenzie
Stephen Maine
Katinka Mann

Nancy Manter
Joanne Mattera
Creighton Michael
Manfred Mohr
Judith Murray
Margaret Neill, invited guest
John Obuck
Jim Osman
John Phillips
Corey Postiglione
Lucio Pozzi
Raquel Rabinovich
Leo Rabkin, honoree
Beatrice Riese, past member
Ce Roser
Irene Rousseau
David Row
Ed Ruda, past member
Anne Russinof
Cordy Ryman
Lorenza Sannai
Mary Schilero
James Seawright with
Mimi Garrard
Claire Seidl
Edward Shalala
Susan Smith
Richard Timperio
Li Trincere
Kim Uchiyama
Lynn Umlauf
Clover Vail
Vera Vasek
Don Voisine
Merrill Wagner
Stephen Westfall
Jeanne Wilkinson
Mark Williams
Thornton Willis
Nola Zirin

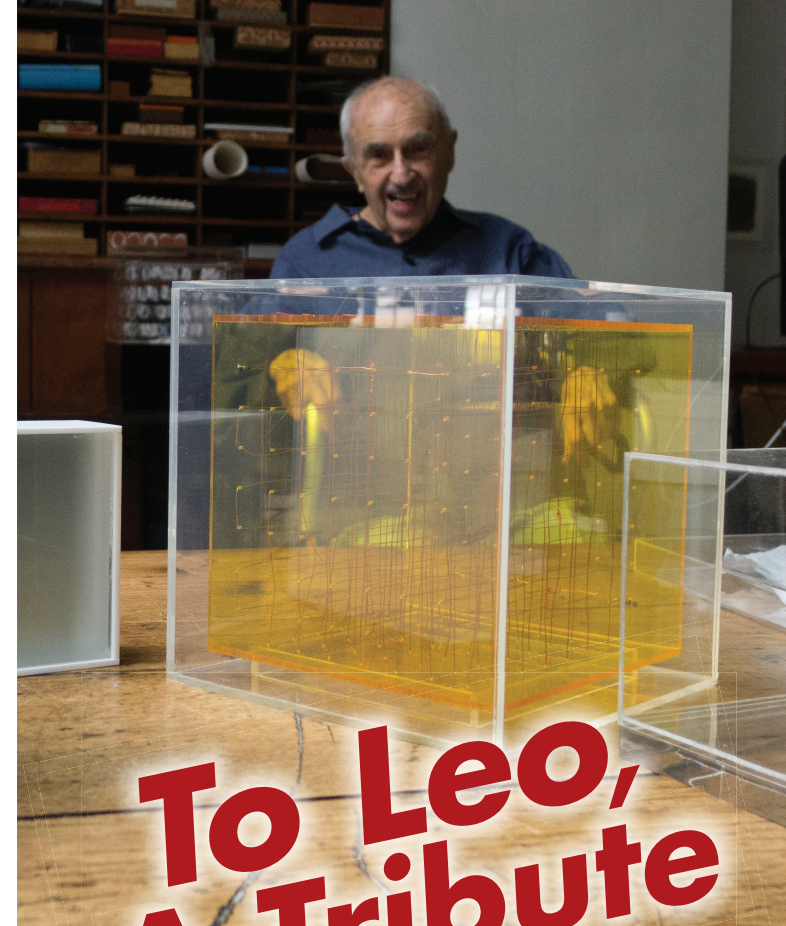
Le Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, invited guests
Olivier di Pizio, president
Erik Levesque, committee member
Bogumila Strojna, committee member
Richard van der Aa, committee member

Artist's Talk by Leo Rabkin

Saturday, June 21, 2pm
at

Sideshow

319 Bedford Ave • Williamsburg, NY 11211

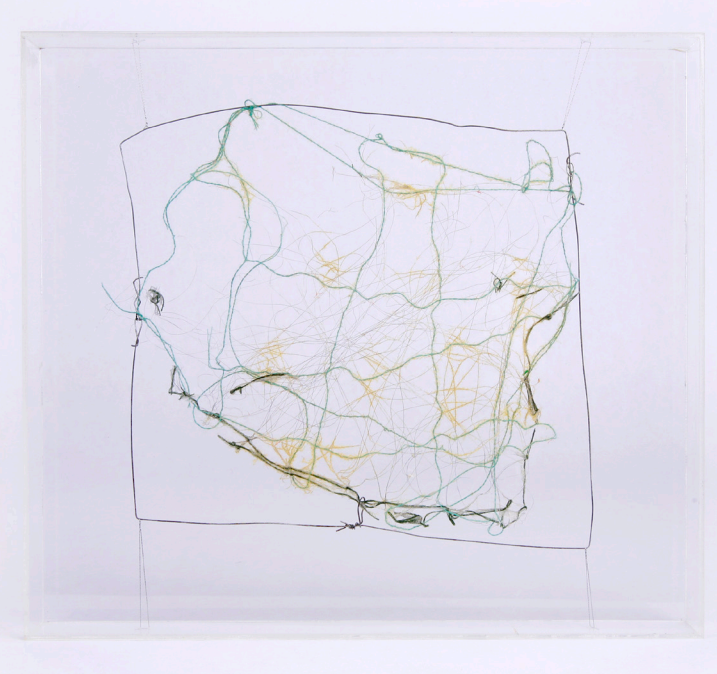


To Leo, A Tribute from the American Abstract Artists

June 14 - July 13, 2014
Opening Reception:
Saturday, June 14, 6-9pm

Sideshow

319 Bedford Avenue • Williamsburg, NY 11211
12-6 Thurs.-Sun.
sideshowgallery@earthlink.net
www.sideshowgallery.com
718 486 8180



Flocked Wire in Green and Yellow, 2012, 8½ x 9½ x 7/8 inches
wire, flocking and acrylic

Leo Rabkin

Fifty years ago, Leo Rabkin began his first term as president of the American Abstract Artists. In 1964, the organization had a noble history but after almost thirty years of activity it was at a turning point. Founded in 1936, the AAA had brought together a generation of progressive modernists whose work incorporated elements of Cubism, DeStijl, Constructivism and abstract Surrealism. Early exhibitions and theoretical publications of the AAA set the standard and agenda for America's eventual embrace of modern art and design.

With the rise of Abstract Expressionism and its validation by postwar art critics, museum curators and a segment of the public, the early role and contributions of the AAA fell into eclipse for a time. However, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, a rising generation of American and international minimalists was exploring abstraction in a new vein. In his role as AAA president, Leo Rabkin set out to forge a permanent link between the early pioneers of American modernism and their counterparts among the younger abstract artists in New York City. He did this with good will, an extended hand of friendship and critical acumen acquired in his years as an artist exhibiting with prominent galleries in New York. He gained insight from his personal friendships with a wide range of important artists and

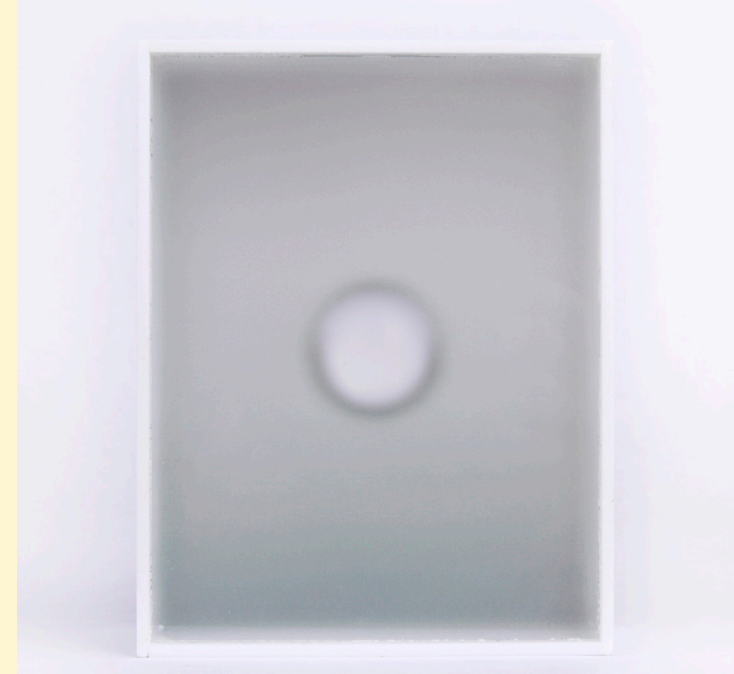


Calligraphy Box, 1969, 13½ x 10½ x 10½ inches, acrylic, paper, beads, light

critics who included John I.H. Baur, Isabel Bishop, Eva Hesse, Una Johnson, Lucy Lippard, Richard Lindner, Louise Nevelson, Philip Pearlstein, Ad Reinhardt and many others.

Leo Rabkin came to New York in 1945 from his native Cincinnati. A violin prodigy, he possessed an education rich in the study of music, psychology and visual art. Born in 1919, he served in the U.S. Army during WWII and upon arriving in the city, earned a master's degree in education and guidance counseling at New York University. This led to a position as a teacher and vocational counselor devoted to the needs of disturbed adolescents. He also studied painting with William Baziot, Robert Inglehart and Hale Woodruff. Rabkin met and married Dorothea Herz in 1958. Theirs was an enduring marriage with much collaboration, travel and collecting until her death in 2008. Together they created an historic and groundbreaking collection of American folk and outsider art, much of it now donated to major art museums.

Leo Rabkin joined the American Abstract Artists in the late 1950s. He was drawn to the group because of his own work. It is a complex interweaving of abstraction and materiality. Early exposure to the rigors of classical music, Rabkin feels, helped him to think "abstractly." Influenced by the emotional power



Shadowbox, 1992, 5½ x 4¼ x 17/8 inches, acrylic

of Abstract Expressionism, the color and passion of Emile Nolde and the unpredictable constructions of Kurt Schwitters, the art of Leo Rabkin embraces two and three dimensions, non-objectivity, found materials and tenderly embellished zones of devoted handwork. His watercolors are luminous and unusual as Rabkin's hand-ground pigments filter and reflect light.

His most recent solo shows (2012 and 2014) at the Luise Ross Gallery are the latest in a long line of one-artist exhibitions at venues as diverse as the Richard Feigen Gallery, the Storm King Art Center, The Allentown Art Museum, the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, the Jock Truman Gallery, the Marilyn Pearl Gallery and others. His mature work features pristine plexiglass boxes filled with an array of shiny and heavily textured objects. Other boxes are filled with diverse and unexpected elements, each ensemble a theatrical event in a modest package. Rabkin insists upon calling his works "nugatory divagations," aimless wanderings of the spirit amounting to little or nothing at all. Over six decades of steady activity, the results of his fruitful wanderings have ended up in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art among others.

Rabkin set an ambitious agenda for the renewal of