

For Immediate Release
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Martha Erlebacher Retrospective Debuts at New York Academy of Art

Most Complete Retrospective of Artist's 45 Year Career

November 5, 2013 - November 24, 2013

Opening Reception - November 5, 2013 from 6-8pm

(New York, NY-October 18, 2013) The first posthumous retrospective of work by artist Martha Erlebacher (1937–2013)—the renowned representational and figurative painter from the 1960's through 2013—will debut at the **New York Academy of Art** from **November 5 through November 24, 2013** with a commemorative reception from **6-8pm** at **111 Franklin Street** in **New York City**. The ***Martha Erlebacher Retrospective*** is the largest assembly of the artist's work to-date bringing together over thirty works including never-before-seen paintings from the artist's private collection. The exhibition will offer a complete survey of the artist's work and highlight for the first time the full trajectory of Erlebacher's remarkable forty-five year career.

During the course of her lifetime, Martha Mayer Erlebacher became a contemporary master of representational art and a formidable educator. Until now, the totality of her work hasn't been fully explored. Including poignant nudes, intriguing still-lives and her critical reflections of the art world evidenced through her Avant Duck Series, the *Martha Erlebacher Retrospective* will create a vivid portrait of the artist. Adding to this tribute is its setting at the New York Academy of Art where Erlebacher was named Faculty Chair in 1999 and spent fourteen years teaching.

"Martha Erlebacher was a force of nature," says Peter Drake, New York Academy of Art's Dean of Academic Affairs. "She was driven to perfection in her work and her teaching. Many are the grown man who quivered at the thought of her razor-sharp criticism, but so too are there legions of students who adored her and benefitted enormously from her exacting standards. She was a supreme craftsman as a painter and a deeply knowledgeable anatomist who made it her mission to revive and preserve a classical understanding of the human form."

Born in 1937, Erlebacher lived and worked in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania until her passing this year at the age of 75. Erlebacher's dedication to representational and figurative art was a direct departure from her training in Abstract Expressionism, a school that she and husband Walter broke from in the 1960's. Erlebacher's figurative paintings and still-life images reflected her mastery of the human form, historical painting techniques and her own take on modernism. She examined social themes of contemporary culture through metaphor and symbolic references and often explored dualities of classical and organic, spiritual and pagan, that brought the past into the present. As a leading educator, Erlebacher taught anatomical studies, painting and drawing at prestigious art institutions in Philadelphia and New York impacting generations of future artists.

Erlebacher's work has been shown in museums across the country including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art. Throughout her career, Erlebacher was included in 22 prominent private collections and received 14 prestigious awards including a Senior Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1982. Most recently, Erlebacher's last work, a daring self-portrait made in her most vulnerable state received top honors at the 2013 Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition and is currently on view at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C.

Martha Erlebacher Retrospective is organized in partnership with the Erlebacher family and Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia.

About the New York Academy of Art

The New York Academy of Art is a not-for-profit graduate school that combines intensive technical training with active critical discourse. In the belief that rigorously trained artists are best able to realize their artistic vision, Academy students learn to master traditional methods and techniques and are encouraged to use these skills to make vital contemporary art.

Gallery Information

The New York Academy of Art's Wilkinson Gallery is at 111 Franklin Street between West Broadway and Church in Tribeca. Transportation options: A, C, E train to Canal Street; 1 train to Franklin Street. The gallery is free and open to the public from 2:00-8:00pm or by appointment. It is closed Wednesdays and holidays. For further inquiries please contact Elizabeth Hobson, (212) 844-5966 or ehobson@nyaa.edu.

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Hi-resolution jpegs of the selected works and the artist's bio are available upon request.

Image- Martha Erlebacher, *Form & Void*, 2005, oil on canvas