

VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

IN MEMORIAM: RICHARD MAYHEW (1924-2024)



(New York, NY) – It is with profound sadness that **Venus Over Manhattan** announces the passing of gallery artist **Richard Mayhew**, a visionary artist whose luminous landscapes have left an indelible mark on the art world. Mayhew passed away peacefully in his home in California at the age of 100.

Born in 1924 in Amityville, New York, Mayhew's artistic journey spanned more than seven decades, during which he became one of the most distinctive voices in American art. Renowned for his evocative "mindscapes" and "moodscapes," Mayhew's improvisational and vibrant works conveyed the emotional essence of the landscape, transcending traditional boundaries of representation. His paintings, characterized by a mastery of color and an expressive, near-abstract style, reflect a deep connection to his African American and Native American heritage.

Mayhew was the last surviving member of the Spiral Group, a collective of African American artists including Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis, and Emma Amos, formed in 1963 to discuss their role in the civil rights movement and the evolving landscape of American art and culture. Throughout his life, Mayhew's work continued to explore the intersections of nature, culture, memory, and identity, pushing the category of landscape painting into new, uncharted territory.

During his lifetime, Mayhew mounted solo exhibitions at esteemed institutions, including the Studio Museum in Harlem, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Heckscher Museum

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of Art, the Museum of the African Diaspora, and the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, as well as the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art, among others. His work featured prominently in major group exhibitions such as "Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power" at the Brooklyn Museum, "Spiral: Perspectives on an African-American Art Collective" at the Studio Museum in Harlem, and "Two Centuries of Black American Art," curated by Dr. David C. Driskell, which opened at LACMA and traveled to several other major museums across the country.

Mayhew received numerous accolades, including the Brandywine Lifetime Achievement Award, the Grumbacher Gold Medal, the Bronze Butler Institute Award of Merit, and the Henry Ward Ranger Purchase Award. He was also honored with the Hassam, Speicher, Betts, and Symonds Fund Purchase Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Ford Foundation Purchase Award, an Ingram Merrill Foundation Grant, a John Hay Whitney Fellowship, and a MacDowell Residency Fellowship. In 1971, Mayhew was elected as a full member to the National Academy of Design, becoming one of the youngest members ever inducted.

His early career was marked by accolades, including solo exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum and the Store Front Museum. Mayhew was deeply involved in the art community, teaching at institutions such as the Art Students League, the Pratt Institute, and Penn State University, where he was a tenured professor until his retirement in 1991.

Richard Mayhew's work is held in the permanent collections of over 90 public museums and institutions. Currently, his work is featured in the inaugural presentation of the Postwar Galleries at the Palmer Museum of Art at Penn State University. Starting October 4th, his painting "Before the Storm" will be exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum as part of the museum's landmark transformation of its American Art Wing, celebrating the museum's 200th anniversary.

Richard Mayhew's legacy extends beyond his art; he was a beloved teacher, mentor, and friend to many. His work continues to inspire and resonate with audiences worldwide, offering a unique and deeply personal vision of the American landscape that will endure for generations to come.

Mayhew is survived by his children, Ina and Scott, and his wife, Rosemary. His contributions to art and his profound impact on the cultural landscape will never be forgotten.

A previously planned exhibition, dedicated to Richard Mayhew's watercolors, will open to the public at Venus Over Manhattan on Thursday, November 7th. A public celebration of his life and work will be announced in the coming weeks.

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About Venus Over Manhattan

Venus Over Manhattan is dedicated to illuminating the work of a diverse range of historical and contemporary artists through dynamic rotating exhibitions and scholarly publications. Since it was founded by Adam Lindemann in 2012, the gallery has been responsible for revitalizing and establishing commercial, scholarly, and public interest for artists such as Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, and Joan Brown. Venus Over Manhattan operates from two locations on Great Jones Street and its distinct exhibitions program, which has recently featured works by Claude Lawrence, Peter Saul, Richard Mayhew, Chéri Samba, Keiichi Tanaami, and Joan Brown, attracts a broad spectrum of collectors, curators, writers, and arts enthusiasts. As art world trends continue to shift, Venus Over Manhattan remains steadfast in its focus on the discovery of artists across generations, geographies, and cultures and to expanding the depth of artists celebrated across global institutions, by audiences, and within the art market.

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Image credits

Portrait of Richard Mayhew in his studio. Courtesy the Estate of Richard Mayhew and Venus Over Manhattan, New York.

Gallery Hours

Tuesday – Saturday
11:00 am – 6:00 pm

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