

VENUS

MANHATTAN

Frumkin's Funk at Frieze Masters

October 3 - 7, 2018
Regent's Park, London
Booth C13

Venus Over Manhattan

980 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10075

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



(London, UK) – For the 2018 edition of Frieze Masters in London, Venus Over Manhattan is pleased to present **Frumkin's Funk**, an exhibition of important and historic work by artists from the Bay Area of California. In 1965, after having served for seven years as curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, Peter Selz moved to California to become the founding director of the University Art Museum at the University of California, Berkeley. One of the first exhibitions that Selz organized at the museum was titled "Funk," which opened to the public in April of 1967. Selz's aim was to classify a distinct body of work by artists based in the greater area of San Francisco. These artists, insulated from the slick markets of New York and Europe, triumphed in making work that was uniquely their own. Respected dealer Allan Frumkin had already taken note,

hand-selecting the best artists from the group and staging exhibitions in his New York and Chicago galleries. Venus' presentation at Frieze Masters will feature major works by **Jeremy Anderson, Robert Arneson, Joan Brown, Roy De Forest, Robert Hudson, Ken Price, Peter Saul, and William T. Wiley** - artists who appeared in both Selz's and Frumkin's versions of Funk. The presentation will be on view from October 3rd through 7th, 2018 in Regent's Park, London, UK.

Discouraged by the formality of other artistic communities, many young artists fled to California's Bay Area in the 1950s, looking to participate in its thriving Beat scene, a cultural context that seamlessly blended artists, writers, performers, and poets. Ephemeral exhibitions and gatherings were frequently staged by loose collectives, and groups like the Rat Bastard Protective Association were known for setting up temporary exhibitions in abandoned homes that would come down just as quickly as they had gone up. Allen Ginsberg famously recited his era-defining poem *Howl* for the first time at an exhibition organized by artists from within the Funk community. Far removed from the creative attitudes of the New York and European art worlds, these artists embraced their freedom and developed narratives and modes that were uniquely theirs.

Funk artists developed a method of artmaking that shirked the developments of Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism in favor of personal expression, narrative content, and exaggerated figuration. As Selz remarked in the catalogue essay for the 1967 exhibition, "Funk art, so prevalent in the San Francisco-Bay Area, is largely a matter of attitude [...] Funk art is hot rather than cool; it is committed rather than disengaged; it is bizarre rather than formal; it is sensuous; and [...] irreverent in attitude."¹ Unlike other movements going on simultaneously in New York, such as Pop, which Selz refers to as "passive, apathetic, and accepting, the Funk artist belongs to a new generation which is confident, potent, and often defiant."² While some artists included in the show resisted Selz's categorization of Funk, his exhibition marked the distinct moment in which the movement and region's art community was finally defined.

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Though Funk was expansive by nature, *Frumkin's Funk* assembles the best examples of a larger movement, limiting itself to artists who were featured in Selz's "Funk" exhibition, and who also showed at the Frumkin Gallery. Among the works on view will be Robert Arneson's *Woman in Gold*, a romantic and deeply personal ceramic portrait of Sandra Shannonhouse, one of only two works that depicts the artist's wife; Ken Price's *Untitled (Three-Legged Cup)*, an early ceramic cup that belonged to Price's close friend and major influence, H.C. Westermann; Robert Hudson's *After Image*, a large-format work on canvas that featured prominently in the artist's first career survey, staged at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Joan Brown's *The Last Day of Summer*, a generously scaled self-portrait that imagines the artist dancing with Michelangelo's *David*; and Peter Saul's *Golden Gate*, a critical painting from 1966 that documents the artist's transition from oil to acrylic paint, and marks his return to the West Coast; as well as many other works.

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1. Selz, Peter. "Notes on Funk." *Funk* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1967), p. 3.
 2. *Ibid.*

ABOUT VENUS OVER MANHATTAN

Founded in 2012 by Adam Lindemann, Venus Over Manhattan is dedicated to curated exhibitions both historic and contemporary, which cast a unique and iconoclastic view on the work of established artists whose works have been somewhat overlooked. The gallery continues to collaborate with prominent artists, foundations, and galleries.

For further information about the exhibition and availability, please contact the gallery at info@venusovermanhattan.com

For all press inquiries related to the exhibition, please email press@venusovermanhattan.com