

# Keitelman Gallery

Evsa Model & Lisette Model

Face to Face

20.11.2015 – 6.02.2016

Opening 19.11.2015

6 pm to 9 pm

Opening 6 Pm – 9 pm thursday 19.11.2015

Tuesday - saturday 12 to 6pm

Contact: Valérie Palacios – Keitelman +32 477 77 53 61

The Keitelman Gallery presents a joint exhibition of two modern artists whose estates are represented by: Lisette Model et Evsa Model. The exhibition has an emotional resonance because the two artists were also a couple. But it is equally an aesthetically stunning exhibition as it reveals the extent to which the work of each artist so perfectly complements the other.

Evsa Model, born in Russia in 1899, emigrated to Paris in 1922, where he set up the gallery-bookshop L'Esthétique in 1926. The gallery became a meeting place for the Parisian avant-garde, from Michel Seuphor to André Kertész. He mounted an exhibition of works by Mondrian in 1927. He began to paint himself, though none of his canvases from that period are known to remain in existence. He met Lisette Seybert in Paris, whom he married in September 1937. The couple moved the following year to New York. Evsa Model started to paint again, inspired by this great modern, tentacular city, in the 1940s. His work began to be noticed in the mid forties, as a result of high profile exhibitions, such as at the Rose Fried Gallery in 1945 or at Sidney Janis' gallery in 1948. The latter, who had already included Model in his influential 1944 book *Abstract & Surrealist Art in America*, brought Evsa significant critical recognition. The MoMA purchased one of his work in 1943 and he was shown at the prestigious Arts Club de Chicago.

Lisette Model was born in 1901 in Vienna. Originally destined for a musical career, she studied with Arnold Schönberg and later with Marya Freund in Paris. For health reasons, she was forced to abandon music and took up photography, for which she evinced both passion and talent. After she moved to New York with her husband, Lisette Model began publishing her work in the press. She began a long collaboration with Harper's Bazaar that lasted from 1941 to 1955. In 1940 MoMA began purchasing her work and she was included in all photographic shows till 1964; she exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1943, and five years later the MoMA held a solo exhibition of her work. Between 1951 and 1982, she taught at the New School for Social Research. She was a major influence on a generation of photographers, notably Diane Arbus, who studied with her in 1957, Larry Fink, Lynn Davis Eva Rubinstein, etc.

The similarities and aesthetic exchange between the two artist-spouses are multiple, even though each worked in their own medium and individual style. In many respects the musical dimension of their works is what principally links them. It is easy to imagine jazz as a concrete musical form illustrated in their compositions where figurative and abstract art come together. It's the dynamism of the city and urban life, the ebb and flow of pedestrians, their clothes, which draw the viewer's attention. Through their eyes we see the majesty of New York, as well as its tragi-comic dimension. They often draw attention to the relationship between the enormous scale of the city and its relationship to the human beings who made it. The human dimension is a central element of the work of both artists.

Both Models were pioneers. Traces of artistic currents that were to come later can be glimpsed in their work: pop art combined with geometric abstraction in the work of Evsa Model, minimalism combined with a social awareness in the photographs of Lisette Model. The exhibition highlights the social and artistic context of their work as well as the fascinating game of mirrors played out between the photographs and paintings of both artists.