

CONNER·ROSENKRANZ

19th & 20th Century American Sculpture

LLC



Charles Biederman (1906-2004)

Charles Biederman was born in 1906 in Cleveland, Ohio, to Czech immigrants. Often, he visited the city's Museum of Art and by age 16 Biederman was developing superb artistic skills and becoming increasingly convinced that he should devote his life to a career as an artist. His primary instruction was at the school of the Art Institute of Chicago which he attended between 1926 and 1929. There he admired the work of Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, and other leading European impressionist and cubist artists. With a strong foundation in scholarship and rapidly emerging as one of America's most talented artists painting in a cubist and abstract style, Biederman moved to New York in 1934.

In New York, Biederman became involved with the artists and dealers who "mattered" in the advancement of contemporary art in America. In January of 1936, his work was first included in the Albright Art Gallery presentation in Buffalo, New York, of "The Art of Today." By this time he was also acquainted with Albert Eugene Gallatin, the influential purveyor of contemporary art who fostered the careers of any number of young American artists needing an exhibition space and a champion to promote their work on a broader stage. Gallatin selected Biederman as one of the artists in that year's exhibition, "Five Contemporary American Concretionists: Biederman, Calder, Ferren, Morris, Shaw," which traveled on to Paris and London and was marked by the promoter's purchase of a painting, thereby further bolstering Biederman's financial ability to study in Paris. In this same year, Biederman enjoyed his first one-man exhibition at the prestigious Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.

The artist's work from 1935 through 1938 parallels the achievements of the American Abstract Artists group. Biederman, ever the individualist, eschewed the group's invitation to exhibit with them in their annual exhibitions.

His unique personality and rigorous intellectual development precluded him from joining forces with the other American artists of the day. These same traits, however, also proved invaluable in his signature biomorphic abstractions, which stand today as some of the most compelling developments in American art of the period.



UNTITLED, 1937, 1937, ink on paper
25 ½ x 19 ¾ inches
Signed: C. Biederman 2/37 Paris (l.r.)

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