

# War & Peace

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery opens its 25<sup>th</sup> season with the monumental and socially charged paintings of American surrealist Irving Norman

**September 6-October 25**

**Michael Rosenfeld Gallery**

100 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue @ 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10011

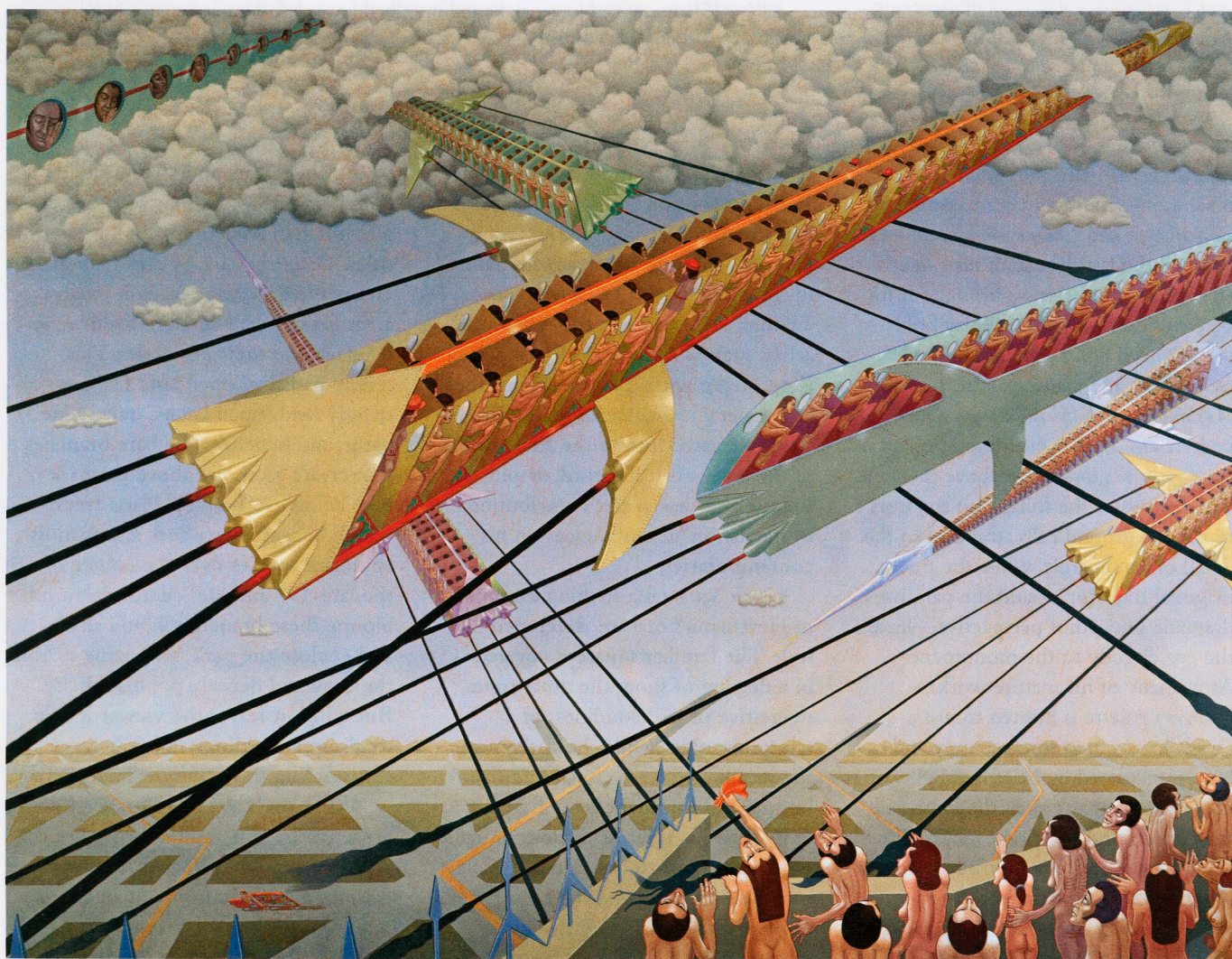
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**M**ichael Rosenfeld Gallery in New York City opens its 25<sup>th</sup> season with *Irving Norman: War & Peace, Monumental Paintings, 1969-1986*. This is the gallery's second solo exhibition for Irving Norman (1906-1989), a Bay Area artist known for his carefully

detailed representational imagery and strong social messages.

Norman immigrated to the United States in 1923, living first in New York's Lower East Side and then moving to Los Angeles. After surviving time served in the Spanish Civil War, Norman returned to



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *Airport*, 1972. Oil on canvas, 92 x 119¼ in., signed. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *Officer's Club*, 1986. Oil on canvas, 73<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 89<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.  
 Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *The Academy*, 1975-76. Oil on canvas, 110 x 90 in.,  
 signed. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.

California in 1939, where he began to express through drawing and painting the atrocities he had witnessed during the war. He then moved to San Francisco and enrolled in classes at the California School of Fine Arts and by 1942 had his first solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art. He also took classes in New York with Reginald Marsh at the Art Students League before settling permanently near Half Moon Bay.

The gallery notes, "Norman's experience as a Polish-Jewish immigrant helped to shape his understanding of American society, and he often seemed to observe life in the United States with the shrewd and detached eye of an outsider. Over the course of his long career, Norman became best known for his highly detailed paintings, which offered powerful critiques of inhumanity and social injustice. Norman believed that by pointing out the cruelty, economic oppression, racism, and brutality enacted by both individuals and governments, viewers of his work might be moved to change society or at least to consider their own role in larger systems of power."

Norman's choice to buck popular artistic trends, paired with 20 years of surveillance by the FBI because of his youthful political affiliations, attributes to the fact that his work today remains relatively unknown. And while many of his epic-scale paintings render at times the horrific conditions of urban American life, there is an underlying sense of hope in his work.

In a letter dated January 30, 1989, Norman wrote, "I have always believed in the human capacity to persevere and overcome the most incredible circumstances."

There will be an opening reception for the show September 6 from 5 to 7 p.m. with approximately 15 to 18 major paintings on view, including *Monumental*, 1969; *Airport*, 1972; *Supreme Justice*, 1974; *The Academy*, 1975-76; *Officer's Club*, 1986; and *To Be Remembered*, 1974. The exhibition hangs through October 25 and will be accompanied by an exhibition catalog with a contribution by Graham Nash. ■