

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLES SELIGER

(1926-2009)

A Memorial Exhibition

A Retrospective of Paintings

January 9 - February 27, 2010

Opening Reception:

Saturday, January 9, 2010 / 4:00-6:00

"My paintings always begin with free improvisation. Then I become fascinated with how I can explore my first creative impulse and develop imagery, through the paint itself, associating shapes and experiences to enrich my work. I am not able to sketch out a painting in advance or to determine where I am headed. . . I begin with an unself-conscious approach, a subconscious, non-rational approach to the painting. But later, I feel that I use all of my knowledge, instinct, and technique to make the painting work, delineating the latent forms and images that I both feel and see."

— Charles Seliger

(New York City, December 19, 2009) – For its inaugural exhibition of 2010, **Michael Rosenfeld Gallery** is pleased to present a retrospective honoring the life and work of Charles Seliger. Scheduled to be on view from January 9 to February 27, **Charles Seliger (1926-2009): A Memorial Exhibition, A Retrospective of Paintings** features approximately thirty-five paintings covering the full span of Seliger's career.

For the first time since Michael Rosenfeld Gallery became Seliger's exclusive representative in 1990, rarely seen works from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s will be on view alongside those from more recent decades. Presenting artworks from each decade of Seliger's career, the retrospective offers a unique opportunity to trace his development as a painter. The exhibition's focus on progression and change in Seliger's oeuvre is a fitting tribute to an artist for whom process, transformation, and the notion of becoming were central to both his subject matter and his approach to creating art.

Seliger was equally celebrated for his meticulously detailed abstractions as well as for the techniques he invented and used to cover the surfaces of his Masonite panels—building up layers of acrylic paint, often sanding or scraping each layer to create texture, and then delineating the forms embedded in the layers of pigment with a fine



The Trapeze, 1945, oil on canvas, 36" x 28", signed and dated

brush or pen. This labor-intensive technique results in ethereal paintings that give expression to aspects of nature hidden from or invisible to the unaided eye. In his work, texture is as important as line; materials coagulate, freezing time and arresting the fleeting processes of nature long enough for us to apprehend their significance. Like the abstract expressionists with whom he was closely associated, Seliger valued the tangible properties of his materials as much as he did the overall composition; his paintings are about the processes of nature, and they are about the processes of art; the work's meaning is in the symbiosis between the two.

Although he never completed high school or received formal art training, Seliger immersed himself in the history of art and experimented with different painting styles including pointillism, cubism, and surrealism. In 1943, he befriended Jimmy Ernst and was quickly drawn into the circle of avant-garde artists championed by Howard Putzel and Peggy Guggenheim. Two years later, at the age of nineteen, Seliger was included in Putzel's groundbreaking exhibition *A Problem for Critics* at 67 Gallery, and he also had his first solo show at Guggenheim's legendary gallery, Art of This Century. In 1949, the De Young in San Francisco gave Seliger his first solo exhibition at a major museum.

MICHAEL ROSENFELD GALLERY LLC

24 WEST 57TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10019
TEL 212-247-0082 FAX 212-247-0402
INFO@MICHAELROSENFELDART.COM
WWW.MICHAELROSENFELDART.COM

ART DEALERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA MEMBER