

SUZANNE PERLMAN | A PAINTER OF THREE CONTINENTS

Painting from Curaçao, New York and London spanning 80 years



26 June – 1 July 2019

Opening Reception: 26 June 6:30-9:00pm

Venue: Saatchi Gallery, Duke of York's HQ, King's Rd, London SW3 4RY

Admission: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fairforsaatchi-ffs-preview-tickets-62603315201?aff=ebapi>

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The visionary expressionist work of **Suzanne Perlman** (b. 1922, Budapest) is celebrated in this exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery. The exhibition traces the trajectory of Perlman's 80-year career across three continents and reveals the experimentation, scope, and impact of her impressive oeuvre. At the age of 96, she is now receiving the recognition she has long deserved and has recently had a painting acquired by the Rijks Museum and received a Financial Times Critic's Choice for her 2018 exhibition at the Dutch Centre in London.

This exhibition will showcase around 15 key works including those that have rarely or never been shown before, shining the spotlight on Perlman's multi-faceted work from three main periods of her artistic career: paintings from Curaçao; those created in the United States; and works painted in London.

The works on show emphasise Perlman's perception of women as erotic and powerful beings, her psychological and introspective portraits and her melding of the figurative and the abstract.

Perlman was born to a family of art and antique dealers and grew up surrounded by art and artists. After marrying her Dutch husband Henri in 1939, Suzanne moved to Rotterdam. However, her time there was cut short as the Second World War engulfed Europe. She and her husband narrowly escaped Nazi persecution leaving on a boat from Bordeaux on the very day the French army capitulated to the invading Germans. The couple arrived on the Caribbean island of Curaçao in the Netherlands Antilles a month later, and lived there for the next four decades where Suzanne began her artistic career. She was drawn to painting the ordinary people of the island and produced many tender, unsentimental portraits of figures – works infused with dignity and an inner radiance. Suzanne was awarded the Officer of the Royal Order of Oranje Nassau (Dutch equivalent of a Damehood) in recognition of her artistic work in Curacao.

From the late 1950's, Suzanne and her husband began to split their time between Curacao and New York. There she began her studies at the Arts Students League and was immersed in the New York abstract expressionist scene, working alongside some of the leading painters of the time. Perlman experimented with new styles and also painted a series of monumental yet gracefully intimate portraits of female nudes. Her oeuvre developed further in the 1960's when Perlman was selected to work under Oskar Kokoschka, who became a mentor to her and had a seminal impact on her career.

After the death of her husband, Suzanne moved to London. She says 'I began to paint immediately. As an outsider, there was quite an amazing quality in what I saw – I had to communicate this sense of wonder'. Painting for Suzanne was a spiritual exercise, rather than a commercial one, and her vast series of powerful, expressionist London works were painted largely in obscurity until very recently as her work has been collected by many private and public collections around Europe, Asia and America.

For Suzanne, painting is about feeling and soul. 'The dynamism of the inimitable brushstroke is your unique voice, your signature. This is a human voice of silent contemplation really, imbued with a sense of tragedy'. Perlman's works captures the ephemeral; moments and feelings – the complexities of life, instants of joy and the serenity of a landscape.

The exhibition will be held from the 26 June to 1 July.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Suzanne Perlman studied at Arts Student League, New York; San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico and at St Martin's School of Art in London.

Solo exhibitions include The Municipal Museum of Gouda, Netherlands, The Municipal Museum of Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, Boundary Gallery, London, The Ben Uri Gallery, London, The Jewish Museum of Venice, Andrea Tardini Gallery, Venice, Italy & most recently, The Dutch Cultural Centre, London.

Permanent collections include The Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands Royal Collection, The Municipal Museum of Gouda, Netherlands, The Palace of Westminster, The Museum of London, The Jewish Museums of London, Budapest, Venice, Amsterdam & Curacao, El Museo del Barrio, New York, Municipal Museum of Curaçao.

Prizes include Officer of the Royal Order of Oranje-Nassau, The Rebeca Sieff Prize and Patron of the Wizo International and Hebrew University, Israel, the 1971 Prix de la France Afrique of the Grand Palais of Paris and the Freedom of the City of London.

Image credit: Suzanne Perlman, *The Thames and London Eye*, 2012, oil on board, 107 x 122.3 cm, Courtesy the Artist

For further press information and images please visit: www.suzanneperlman.co.uk

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