

VINCENT ARCILESI RETROSPECTIVE

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017 FROM 6 – 9PM
ON VIEW: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27 – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29 | 12PM – 6PM



Francesca Arcilesi and Norma Homberg, in collaboration with Vincent Arcilesi, are pleased to present **Vincent Arcilesi's Retrospective**. The opening reception will be held on **Thursday, October 26th from 6-9PM at The Highline Loft at 508 West 26th Street, Loft # 5G** in Manhattan, NY. The exhibition features a unique array of work including mural-esque large scale figurative paintings, medium size figurative and landscape paintings, drawings, lithographs, and one watercolor. The show begins with the artist's first ever oil on canvas entitled *Scenes from the Life of Christ*. This work was created at age fifteen at the Missouri Baptist Children's Home, where Arcilesi and his brother, Richard, were placed at ages two and four after their mother died and their father, Vincenzo Proia Arcilesi went blind. Connecting the influences of his religious upbringing to his mid-career and contemporary work, the show then segues into figurative and landscape painting, reflecting his profound investigation

of the body and themes of the sublime within nature. The works on view undoubtedly call attention to Arcilesi's technique and the valorousness of his subject matter.



Arcilesi's *Artist and Models*, 1972 (above left), depicts arrangements of models and Arcilesi facing his wife, cradling his one year old son, Piero in his studio in Chicago. Arcilesi explores visual patterns and movement that the light creates on the still bodies. The tableau of figures evoke feelings of elation, sensuality and sadness, as the models are seemingly part of the family unit. The reclining figure is suggested by Theodore Gericault's figures of *Raft of the Medusa*, 1818. Instead, Arcilesi emphasizes the sensuality of the pose rather than its brutality. The woman seductively reclining, hair fanned across the floor, cascades dramatically across the canvas. Pushed to the foreground, a larger-than-life female model stands boldly astride. Arcilesi captures nuanced emotions with realism, leaving the viewer with resonating ambiguity. Arcilesi's models are often drawn with inspiration from the divine. Shown left is Arcilesi's classical drawing, *Study for Venus in Villa Medici*, 2009, which depicts the model in a Botticelli-like pose, exploring and emphasizing her sensual statuesque beauty.

Summer Day in Agrigento, 1994 (right) completes the show as Arcilesi presents his beloved mother Lucia Anderson Burnett, as he remembers her before her early death at age thirty-six. Rendered in a dream-like sequence, beautifully adorned in a wedding dress, she is enigmatically placed amongst the verdant Sicilian landscape. Keeping with his theme, lovers canoodle in the foreground as a Gauguinesque figure offers a flower as the sky recedes back to the classical Greek Temple in Agrigento, Sicily.



Arcilesi attended Furman University in Greenville, SC. Receiving a BFA in Design at the University of Oklahoma, he eventually moved to Chicago to achieve a BFA and MFA in Drawing and Painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, which is where he met his wife Nan Chapin Arcilesi. Arcilesi has exhibited in NYC and internationally extensively since 1966, within solo shows and museum shows including The Whitney Biennial, the Brooklyn Museum, the Butler Institute of American Art (Youngstown, Ohio), the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Verona, Italy. His work is included in a number of books and publications and he is also represented in collections both public and private, including the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington DC, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL and The Art Institute of Chicago, IL. He retired in 2015 as full professor at FIT, where he taught life drawing and painting.

Arcilesi is nothing less than a humble master, translating the beautiful spirits that emanate from nature through his paintings, feeding the souls of humanity and celebrating existence. The artist's travels and muses have inspired his truly prolific paintings, *which reach out and touch the viewer through elegant provocation*. Edward Lucie-Smith fittingly describes Arcilesi as a fiercely independent artist in his book *American Realism*. "*Seduction of the viewer has always been foremost in the art of Vincent Arcilesi*." - Ed McCormack, *Gallery & Studio Magazine*.

A special remembrance to Sherli Evans who has written and edited Vincent Arcilesi's work until her death in August 17, 2016.

For more information and visuals, please contact Norma Homberg or Francesca Arcilesi:

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