

## **Biala: Works from the Estate and the Harvey and Phyllis Lichtenstein Collection**

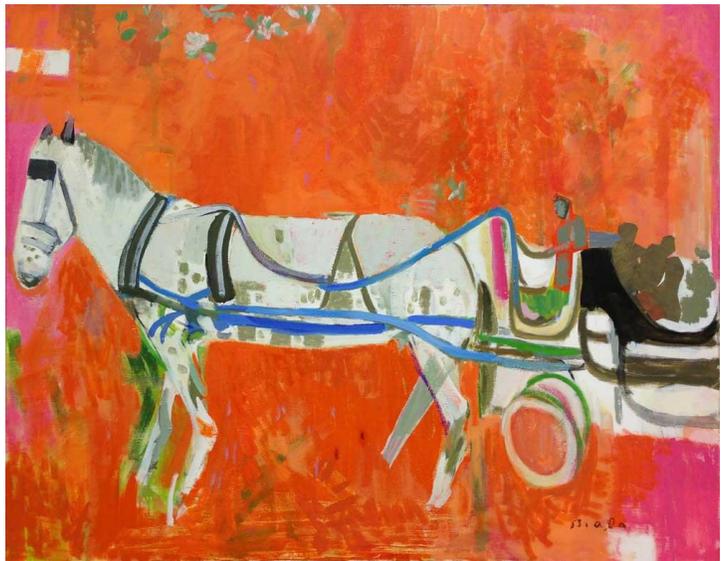
January 6 – February 11, 2018

15 Rivington Street

Opening Reception:

Saturday, January 6 from 4-6pm

**New York, NY, December 21, 2017** —Tibor de Nagy presents its fifth exhibition of paintings by Biala (1903 – 2000), featuring over twenty works from the 1960s through the 1990s including selected works from the Harvey and Phyllis Lichtenstein Collection. Harvey Lichtenstein was a preeminent supporter of new talent and the President of the Brooklyn Academy of Music from 1967-1999.



*BIALA, Horse and Carriage, c.1983, oil and collage on canvas, 45 x 58 inches*

Biala's contribution to modernism has been noted by critics who championed her assimilation of the School of Paris and the New York School of Abstract Expressionism. Her eight decade career began in the early 1920s when she hitch-hiked with her brother Jack Tworkov to study art in Provincetown. A fateful Paris encounter with English novelist Ford Madox Ford led to a ten-year relationship with the writer and life-long relationship with France. Upon her return to New York in 1939 following Ford's death, Biala was in the thick of a milieu of the New York School, befriending painter Willem de Kooning, and critic Harold Rosenberg among many others. Biala thrived on her transatlantic life maintaining a studio in America while returning time after time to her beloved Paris.

Biala's approach was a synthesis which danced on the lines between representation and abstraction materializing in a uniquely personal style. Intimate interiors, subtle still-lives, portraits, and long views of the many landscapes of her various travels acted as her creative point of departure. These initial subjects' characterized components of Modernist French styles such as Intimism and were translated through the gestural strokes of Abstract Expressionism which epitomized her mature aesthetic.

In addition to celebrating her undefinable painterly uniqueness, this exhibition will highlight the extraordinary relationship Biala had with the director of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Harvey Lichtenstein and his wife Phyllis. Biala and Harvey were related through marriage (Biala's sister-in-law was Harvey's first cousin). The Lichtenstein Collection includes emblematic examples from important themes of Biala's career, as well as a cohesive representation of the significant places the artist featured in her paintings: France, Italy, and especially Spain.

### **About Biala**

Born 1903 as Schenehaia Tworkovska in Biała Podlaska, Poland, Biala immigrated in 1913 to the United States with her mother and her older brother Jack Tworkov, who will become a noted Abstract Expressionist. She began studying art with Edwin Dickinson at the National Academy of Design, and later, at the Art Students League. During the artist's first visit to France in 1930 she met and became the companion of the novelist Ford Madox Ford until his death in 1939. During World War II she returned to New York and immersed herself in the art scene and in 1942 married the Alsatian-born painter Daniel Brustlein. They returned to live and work in Paris in 1947. Despite her love for Paris and New York she never felt bound by ties of nationality stating once: "I always had the feeling that I belong where my easel is."

Biala's paintings have been the subject of numerous gallery exhibitions in New York and Paris, and were included in major museum exhibitions including five Whitney Annuals. She had seven solo shows with the legendary Stable Gallery, and during her time in New York was at the center of a group of Abstract Expressionists, including Willem de Kooning and her brother Jack Tworkov. Her work is in many public collections in the United States and Europe including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Phillips Collection, Washington, DC; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris.

#### **About Harvey and Phyllis Lichtenstein**

As one of the foremost theatrical producers of his time, Harvey Lichtenstein's first BAM season included Alban Berg's atonal opera *Lulu*; performances by a number of modern-dance troupes — Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham and Alwin Nikolais, among others; and the Living Theater's evening of political protest, *Paradise Now*. He went on to start the Next Wave Festival where he presented important artists such as Robert Wilson and Pina Bausch. This exhibition aims to not only highlight the collection, but celebrate the Lichtenstein's' eye for talent and close relationships with visual artists.

Harvey and Phyllis not only loved the theater, but also the visual arts and amassed a small but important collection that solely included Daniel Brustlein (1904-1996), Jack Tworkov (1900-1982), and Biala (1903-2000). One historic note, for her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday Biala had one wish and it was to spend it in Seville, her favorite city in Spain. Family and friends gathered to join her there including Harvey and Phyllis. The group took a horse and carriage ride around the plaza at La Giralda. So memorable was the experience for Biala, she preserved it in the painting *Horse and Carriage* which would become part of the Harvey and Phyllis Lichtenstein Collection and is featured in this exhibition.

#### **About Tibor de Nagy**

Tibor de Nagy continues its significant role in contemporary American Art since its founding in 1950. In June 2017, the gallery moved to the Lower East Side, joining Betty Cuninghams Gallery in a shared space at 15 and 11 Rivington Streets.

Tibor de Nagy Gallery presents exhibitions of such contemporary artists as Sarah McEneaney, Trevor Winkfield and Jen Mazza, as well artists from the Post War second generation New York School. Its long history includes the first exhibitions of Carl Andre, Helen Frankenthaler, Jane Freilicher, Red Grooms, Grace Hartigan, Alfred Leslie, Fairfield Porter, and Larry Rivers. The gallery's program continues its mission to present a broad overview of contemporary art of singular vision including recent exhibitions of Hannah Wilke, Francis Picabia, and Jess. This unique history has also fostered collaborations between poets and artists. The gallery was the first publisher of the poems of John Ashbery, Frank O'Hara, Kenneth Koch, and James Schuyler.

#### **Listings Information:**

Tibor de Nagy Gallery is located at 15 Rivington Street on the Lower East Side  
Tel: 212 262 5050. | Web: [www.tibordenagy.com](http://www.tibordenagy.com) | Email: [info@tibordenagy.com](mailto:info@tibordenagy.com)  
Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Saturday 11am – 6pm, Sunday 12pm – 6pm

#### **Related events:**

*Biala: The Woman Painter Among Men* | a special evening with curator Jason Andrew  
January 11, 6:30pm | Art Students League, 215 West 57<sup>th</sup> Street, NYC, RSVP: <https://goo.gl/i8gauZ>

#### **Social Media:**

Join the conversation on social media by mentioning Tibor de Nagy and using the hashtags #TibordeNagy and #JaniceBiala when posting.

Facebook: [Tibor de Nagy Gallery](#) | Instagram: [@tibordenagygallery](#) | Twitter: [@tibordenagy](#)