

For immediate release

## ALICE NEEL

### Drawings and Watercolors 1927–1978

February 19 – April 18, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, February 19, 6–8 PM

Press preview with Jeremy Lewison, advisor to The Estate of Alice Neel: 5 PM



*Alice and José, 1938*  
Pastel on paper  
11 ¾ x 9 inches (29.8 x 22.9 cm)

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of drawings and watercolors by Alice Neel (1900–1984). On view at 537 West 20th Street in New York, the works are selected from throughout her career and span five decades. A fully illustrated catalogue by David Zwirner Books, featuring essays by the independent curator and writer Jeremy Lewison and the award-winning novelist Claire Messud, is published to coincide with the show.

Drawing was a fundamental, stand-alone component of Neel's practice, persistently pursued alongside painting, for which she is primarily known. As a medium, it enabled her to capture the immediacy of her visual experience—whether in front of her sitters or on the city streets—while also affording her a greater sense of experimentation and informality. As an exercise, it frequently made its way into her canvases in the form of outlines and delicately sketched backgrounds.

Neel chose the subjects for both her paintings and drawings from her family, friends, and a broad variety of fellow New Yorkers: writers, poets, artists, students, textile salesmen, cabaret singers, and homeless bohemians. Through her penetrating, forthright, and at times humorous touch, her work subtly engaged with political and social issues, including gender, racial inequality, and labor struggles. Not initially intended for public view, her drawings reveal a more private and intimate nature than her paintings and

as such reflect her deep sensitivity to these subjects. Yet they are far from sentimental and she readily stripped her sitters of their masks, foregrounding rather the incongruous, the awkward, and, at times, the comical—Neel was a self-proclaimed admirer of Honoré Daumier. As Jeremy Lewison notes in his essay for the accompanying catalogue, "Unlike many of her social realist contemporaries...Neel skillfully avoided lachrymose sentiment and political hysteria....She could always find a way to get under the skin, to penetrate through to the psychological strengths and frailties of her sitters. Neel took an interest in the human condition and was as much a recorder of the contemporary American people as the celebrated photographers of the era, Walker Evans, Berenice Abbott, Dorothea Lange, Robert Frank, and Helen Levitt."<sup>1</sup>

The exhibition provides an illuminating overview of the variety of themes and styles employed by Neel over the course of her career. While many of her earliest works on paper, along with paintings, were destroyed in rage by a former lover in 1934, those that survived testify to the influence of German artists of the period. A set of monochromatic illustrations to *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky from the late 1930s incorporate a greater sense of narrative than many of Neel's other compositions and show the actors at various key stages of the existential drama; her own life is referenced in often richly

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colored, quotidian scenes depicting herself in the company of her lovers. The single portrait occurs more frequently from the 1940s and from hence on regularly include her children Richard and Hartley, and their subsequent families. In the 1960s and 1970s, her line appears more precise and detailed and the palette more monochrome. Yet Neel's profound commitment to her subjects and to her art remains consistent over the decades, and although the appearance of many of her sitters change over the years, there is a timeless quality to the works. As Claire Messud notes in her reflections on the artist in the exhibition catalogue, "The complex emotions Neel evokes in her art are nothing less than the contradictions of life itself."<sup>2</sup>

**Alice Neel** was born in 1900 in Merion Square, Pennsylvania, and died in 1984 in New York. In 1921, she enrolled in the fine art program at the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (now Moore College of Art and Design) and graduated in 1925.

Since 2008, The Estate of Alice Neel has been represented by David Zwirner, where her work was presented in 2009 in a critically acclaimed, two-venue solo exhibition, *Alice Neel: Selected Works* and *Alice Neel: Nudes of the 1930s* (on view at Zwirner & Wirth, New York). In 2012, *Alice Neel: Late Portraits & Still Lifes* marked the second gallery solo show at David Zwirner, New York.

Although she showed sporadically early in her career, from the 1960s onwards her work was exhibited widely in the United States. In 1971, a comprehensive solo exhibition of Neel's paintings was held at her alma mater Moore College of Art and Design, Philadelphia. In 1974, she had her first retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. It was shortly followed by a large-scale presentation of eighty-three paintings in 1975 at the Georgia Museum of Art, The University of Georgia, Athens. In 1978, the Graham Gallery, New York organized the first retrospective dedicated to the artist's works on paper. In 1979, a survey of her paintings was co-hosted by the University of Bridgeport and The Silvermine Guild of Artists in Connecticut.

To celebrate the centenary of the artist's birth, the Philadelphia Museum of Art organized a solo exhibition of Neel's work, which debuted in 2000 at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, before traveling to the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, amongst other venues. In 2010, *Alice Neel: Painted Truths*, which thematically surveyed over sixty paintings spanning fifty-five years, received wide critical acclaim. It was organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in Texas and traveled to the Whitechapel Gallery, London and Moderna Museet Malmö, Sweden. In 2013, a major presentation of the artist's watercolors and drawings, *Alice Neel: Intimate Relations*, was on view at Nordiska Akvarellmuseet in Skärhamn, Sweden.

Work by the artist is represented in permanent collections that include The Art Institute of Chicago; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Tate, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

<sup>1</sup> Jeremy Lewison, "Intimate Relations: The Drawings of Alice Neel," in *Alice Neel: Drawings and Watercolors 1927–1978*. Exh. cat. (New York: David Zwirner Books, 2015), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Claire Messud, "'To Be the Painting and the Painter': Reflections on Alice Neel," in *Ibid.*, p. 92.

**For all press inquiries and to RSVP to the February 19 press preview, contact**  
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**Alice Neel: Drawings and Watercolors 1927-1978**  
**537 West 20th Street, 2nd Floor**  
**February 19 - April 18, 2015**

Reception



**Alice Neel**  
*Richard*, 1971  
Ink and gouache on paper  
Framed: 35 3/8 x 27 3/4 x 1 5/8 inches  
89.9 x 70.5 x 4.1 cm  
Paper: 27 1/4 x 19 3/4 inches  
69.2 x 50.2 cm  
Signed recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0363

North Gallery



**Alice Neel**  
*The Grandchild*, 1927  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 17 1/2 x 15 3/8 x 1 3/8 inches  
44.5 x 38.7 x 3.5 cm  
Paper: 10 1/4 x 8 3/8 inches  
26 x 21.3 cm  
Signed and dated recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0335



**Alice Neel**  
*Carlos*, c. 1927  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 19 1/4 x 14 1/4 x 1 3/8 inches  
48.9 x 36.2 x 3.5 cm  
Paper: 12 x 7 1/4 inches  
30.5 x 18.4 cm  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0138



**Alice Neel**  
*Evening in Riverside Park, 1927*  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 16 5/8 x 18 1/2 x 1 3/8 inches  
42.2 x 47 x 3.5 cm  
Paper: 9 3/8 x 11 1/2 inches  
23.8 x 29.2 cm  
Signed recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0333



**Alice Neel**  
*Bathing in a Furnished Room, 1927*  
Watercolor and pastel on paper  
Framed: 19 1/4 x 16 x 1 3/8 inches  
48.9 x 40.6 x 3.5 cm  
Paper: 12 x 9 inches  
30.5 x 22.9 cm  
Signed recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0334



**Alice Neel**  
*Beach at Belmar, New Jersey, 1928*  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 16 5/8 x 21 1/4 x 5/8 inches  
42.2 x 54 x 1.6 cm  
Paper: 9 7/8 x 15 inches  
25.1 x 38.1 cm  
Signed and dated recto  
Private Collection  
NEEAL0337



**Alice Neel**  
*The Intellectual, 1929*  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 19 x 23 x 7/8 inches  
48.3 x 58.4 x 2.2 cm  
Paper: 10 3/4 x 14 3/4 inches  
27.3 x 37.5 cm  
Signed lower left recto  
Collection of Marcia Rafelman  
NEEAL0122



**Alice Neel**

*The Stenographer*, 1930

Pencil on paper

Framed: 19 1/4 x 16 1/8 x 1 1/2 inches

48.9 x 41 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 11 7/8 x 9 inches

30.2 x 22.9 cm

Signed and dated recto

NEEAL0395



**Alice Neel**

*Albert and Nellie*, 1928

Watercolor on paper

Framed: 19 1/8 x 16 x 1 3/8 inches

48.6 x 40.6 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 11 5/8 x 8 7/8 inches

29.5 x 22.5 cm

NEEAL0338



**Alice Neel**

*Men from Bleeker Street*, 1933

Pencil on paper

Framed: 21 1/4 x 17 x 1 1/2 inches

54 x 43.2 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 14 x 10 inches

35.6 x 25.4 cm

Signed and dated recto

NEEAL0387



**Alice Neel**

*Mother and Daughters*, 1927

Watercolor on paper

Framed: 19 x 16 x 1 3/8 inches

48.3 x 40.6 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 11 3/4 x 9 inches

29.8 x 22.9 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0336



**Alice Neel**

*Kenneth Doolittle*, 1931

Watercolor and pencil on paper

Framed: 22 3/4 x 16 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches

57.8 x 42.5 x 3.8 cm

Image: 14 x 10 inches

35.6 x 25.4 cm

Signed and dated recto

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Richard Neel, New York, NY, 1979

NEEAL0332



**Alice Neel**

*Alienation*, 1935

Watercolor on paper

Framed: 17 3/4 x 15 7/8 x 1 3/8 inches

45.1 x 40.3 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 10 1/2 x 9 inches

26.7 x 22.9 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0021



**Alice Neel**

*Untitled (Alice Neel and John Rothschild in the Bathroom)*, 1935

Watercolor and pencil on paper

Framed: 19 3/8 x 16 x 1 3/8 inches

49.2 x 40.6 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 11 7/8 x 8 7/8 inches

30.2 x 22.5 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0019



**Alice Neel**

*José*, 1936

Pencil on brown paper

Framed: 20 x 17 3/4 x 1 3/8 inches

50.8 x 45.1 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 12 3/4 x 10 3/4 inches

32.4 x 27.3 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0342



**Alice Neel**

*Kenneth Doolittle (seated), 1933*

Pencil on paper

Framed: 19 3/4 x 16 1/2 x 1 3/8 inches

50.2 x 41.9 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 12 3/8 x 9 3/8 inches

31.4 x 23.8 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0341



**Alice Neel**

*Christopher Lazare, 1932*

Watercolor and collage on paper

Framed: 19 3/4 x 16 3/8 x 1 3/8 inches

50.2 x 41.6 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 12 3/8 x 9 1/4 inches

31.4 x 23.5 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0340



**Alice Neel**

*Alice and José, 1938*

Pastel on paper

Framed: 19 x 15 7/8 x 1 3/8 inches

48.3 x 40.3 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 11 3/4 x 9 inches

29.8 x 22.9 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0139



**Alice Neel**

*Alice and José, 1936*

Watercolor on paper

Framed: 19 1/4 x 15 7/8 x 1 3/8 inches

48.9 x 40.3 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 12 x 8 7/8 inches

30.5 x 22.5 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0020

Main Gallery



**Alice Neel**

*Woman on a Train*, ca. 1940

Watercolor on paper

Framed: 23 1/4 x 19 1/4 x 5/8 inches

59.1 x 48.9 x 1.6 cm

Paper: 9 3/4 x 9 3/4 inches

24.8 x 24.8 cm

Signed lower left recto

Collection of Marcia Rafelman

NEEAL0287



**Alice Neel**

*Woman*, 1936

Watercolor, pencil, and charcoal on paper

Framed: 22 3/8 x 17 1/8 x 1 1/2 inches

56.8 x 43.5 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 15 x 10 inches

38.1 x 25.4 cm

NEEAL0394



**Alice Neel**

*Sleeping Boy*, 1936

Pencil on paper

Framed: 16 1/4 x 18 1/2 x 1 1/8 inches

41.3 x 47 x 2.9 cm

Image: 8 1/2 x 11 inches

21.6 x 27.9 cm

Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München

NEEAL0344



**Alice Neel**

*Child*, c. 1936

Pencil on paper

Framed: 19 1/8 x 15 7/8 x 1 1/2 inches

48.6 x 40.3 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 11 3/4 x 8 7/8 inches

29.8 x 22.5 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0397





**Alice Neel**

*Support the Union*, 1937

Color crayon on paper

Framed: 16 3/4 x 19 3/8 x 1 1/4 inches

42.5 x 49.2 x 3.2 cm

Paper: 8 7/8 x 11 3/4 inches

22.5 x 29.8 cm

Courtesy The Museum of Everything

NEEAL0218



**Alice Neel**

*Illustrations to The Brothers Karamazov by Fyodor*

*Dostoyevsky*

*Untitled (Karamazov, His Three Sons and the Servant*  
*Gregory)*

*Untitled (The Death of Father Zossima)*

*Untitled (Grushenka and Mitya at the Drunken Party)*

*Untitled (The Doctor's Visit to Ilyusha)*

*Untitled (The Suicide of Smerdyakov)*

*Untitled (Katerina's Testimony)*

*Untitled (Ivan)*

*Untitled (Ivan's Dream)*, c. 1938

Ink on paper

8 works, each

Framed: 22 1/4 x 17 x 1 1/2 inches

56.5 x 43.2 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 14 1/4 x 10 inches

36.2 x 25.4 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0346



**Alice Neel**

*Spanish Mother and Child*, 1942

Ink on paper

Framed: 20 5/8 x 15 1/8 x 1 1/2 inches

52.4 x 38.4 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 13 x 8 inches

33 x 20.3 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0391



**Alice Neel**  
*Hartley*, 1943  
Ink on paper  
Framed: 15 7/8 x 12 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches  
40.3 x 31.8 x 3.8 cm  
Paper: 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches  
21.6 x 14 cm  
Signed recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0381



**Alice Neel**  
*Richard*, 1943  
Ink on paper  
Framed: 15 7/8 x 12 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches  
40.3 x 31.8 x 3.8 cm  
Paper: 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches  
21.6 x 14 cm  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0380



**Alice Neel**  
*Georgie*, 1950  
Ink on paper  
Framed: 18 3/4 x 15 7/8 x 1 1/2 inches  
47.6 x 40.3 x 3.8 cm  
Paper: 11 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches  
29.2 x 21.6 cm  
Signed recto  
The Estate of Alice Neel  
NEEAL0064



**Alice Neel**  
*Two Girls in Spanish Harlem (Carmen and Hilda)*, 1941  
Watercolor on paper  
Framed: 32 7/8 x 27 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches  
83.5 x 69.2 x 3.8 cm  
Image: 20 7/8 x 15 1/2 inches  
53 x 39.4 cm  
Art & Artifacts Division, Schomburg Center for Research  
in Black Culture, New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox  
and Tilden Foundations  
NEEAL0373



**Alice Neel**

*Sam*, 1941

Pencil on paper

Framed: 13 1/8 x 13 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches

33.3 x 34.3 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 5 1/4 x 5 7/8 inches

13.3 x 14.9 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0399



**Alice Neel**

*Untitled (Bowery)*, 1936

Ink on paper

Framed: 18 1/8 x 20 3/4 x 1 1/2 inches

46 x 52.7 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 10 7/8 x 13 3/4 inches

27.6 x 34.9 cm

Signed recto

NEEAL0396



**Alice Neel**

*A Quiet Summer's Day*, c. 1963

Ink and gouache on paper

Framed: 21 1/8 x 18 x 1 1/2 inches

53.7 x 45.7 x 3.8 cm

Paper: 13 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches

34.9 x 27.6 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0388



**Alice Neel**

*City Hospital*, 1954

Ink and gouache on paper

Framed: 37 1/2 x 29 7/8 x 1 5/8 inches

95.3 x 75.9 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 29 3/8 x 22 inches

74.6 x 55.9 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0349



**Alice Neel**

*Sam*, 1958

Ink on paper

Framed: 21 1/4 x 18 x 1 3/8 inches

54 x 45.7 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 13 5/8 x 10 1/2 inches

34.6 x 26.7 cm

Signed and dated recto

NEEAL0222



**Alice Neel**

*Richard*, 1959

Ink and gouache on paper

Framed: 37 1/2 x 30 x 1 5/8 inches

95.3 x 76.2 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 29 1/2 x 22 1/8 inches

74.9 x 56.2 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0223



**Alice Neel**

*Sam*, 1958

Ink on paper

Framed: 37 1/2 x 30 x 1 5/8 inches

95.3 x 76.2 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 29 3/8 x 22 1/8 inches

74.6 x 56.2 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0355



**Alice Neel**

*Self-Portrait Skull*, 1958

Ink on paper

Framed: 19 x 15 3/4 x 1 3/8 inches

48.3 x 40 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 11 3/4 x 8 3/4 inches

29.8 x 22.2 cm

Signed recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0356



**Alice Neel**

*Aaron Kramer*, 1958

Ink on paper

Framed: 21 1/8 x 18 x 1 3/8 inches

53.7 x 45.7 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 13 7/8 x 11 inches

35.2 x 27.9 cm

Signed recto

NEEAL0353



**Alice Neel**

*Death of Mother Bloor*, 1951

Pencil on paper

Framed: 17 3/8 x 20 1/2 x 1 3/8 inches

44.1 x 52.1 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 9 3/4 x 13 3/8 inches

24.8 x 34 cm

Signed recto

NEEAL0351



**Alice Neel**

*John Reclining*, 1967

Ink on paper

Framed: 18 1/8 x 20 7/8 x 1 3/8 inches

46 x 53 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 10 3/8 x 13 5/8 inches

26.4 x 34.6 cm

NEEAL0360



**Alice Neel**

*Olivia and Elizabeth*, 1978

Ink on paper

Framed: 37 x 30 3/4 x 1 5/8 inches

94 x 78.1 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 29 x 23 inches

73.7 x 58.4 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0230



**Alice Neel**

*Hartley and Ginny, 1970*

Acrylic on cardboard

Framed: 36 x 29 3/4 x 1 5/8 inches

91.4 x 75.6 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 28 1/4 x 22 inches

71.8 x 55.9 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0066



**Alice Neel**

*Hartley and Ginny, 1970*

Ink and pencil on paper

Framed: 36 1/2 x 30 x 1 5/8 inches

92.7 x 76.2 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 28 3/8 x 22 1/8 inches

72.1 x 56.2 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0362



**Alice Neel**

*Ginny, 1975*

Gouache on paper

Framed: 47 3/4 x 32 7/8 x 1 5/8 inches

121.3 x 83.5 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 39 3/4 x 25 inches

101 x 63.5 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0366



**Alice Neel**

*The Family, 1978*

Pencil on paper

Framed: 24 1/4 x 21 x 1 3/8 inches

61.6 x 53.3 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 17 x 13 7/8 inches

43.2 x 35.2 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0121



**Alice Neel**

*Stephen Brown, 1973*

Pen and ink on paper

Framed: 38 x 30 1/4 x 1 5/8 inches

96.5 x 76.8 x 4.1 cm

Paper: 30 x 22 3/8 inches

76.2 x 56.8 cm

Signed and dated recto

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0364



**Alice Neel**

*Mary Garrard, 1977*

Ink and pencil on paper

Framed: 38 1/4 x 30 3/8 x 1 3/4 inches

97.2 x 77.2 x 4.4 cm

Paper: 30 1/8 x 22 1/2 inches

76.5 x 57.2 cm

Signed and dated recto

NEEAL0367



**Alice Neel**

*Ginny, 1977*

Colored ink on paper

Framed: 21 1/4 x 23 7/8 x 1 3/8 inches

54 x 60.6 x 3.5 cm

Paper: 14 x 16 7/8 inches

35.6 x 42.9 cm

The Estate of Alice Neel

NEEAL0324