



Alice Neel: Drawings and Watercolors 1927-1978

Jeremy Lewison, Claire Messud

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Drawing was a fundamental, stand-alone component of New York artist Alice Neel's practice, persistently pursued alongside the figurative 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. 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 penetrative, forthright and at times humorous touch, her work subtly engages 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 reflect her deep sensitivity to these subjects.

Alice Neel: Drawings and Watercolors 1927-1978 presents an illuminating overview of the variety of themes and styles employed by the artist across five decades. The book contains over 60 color plates organized thematically and includes works selected from throughout her career. In addition, it features essays by the independent curator and writer Jeremy Lewison and the award-winning novelist Claire Messud, as well as a selected chronological biography and illustrated list of works.



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