

LUIS DE JESUS LOS ANGELES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

UNLOCKING THE MIND:

Nathan Gluck's Early Surrealist Collages

September 14 – October 26, 2024

Reception: Saturday, September 21, 4–7 p.m.

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Luis De Jesus Los Angeles is very pleased to announce ***UNLOCKING THE MIND: Nathan Gluck's Early Surrealist Collages***, an exhibition celebrating the centennial anniversary of Surrealism, to be presented in Gallery 3 from September 14 through October 26, 2024. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, September 21, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm.

UNLOCKING THE MIND: Nathan Gluck's Early Surrealist Collages brings together a selection of early career artworks by Nathan Gluck (1918-2008) spanning approximately ten years, from the late 1930s through the late 1940s. The works on view reflect the young artist's deep appreciation of modern surrealist masters like Max Ernst, Man Ray, and Domenico de Chirico, and include experiments with narrative prose and original poetry. His collages function as markers of his life while growing up in a post-depression household between the First and Second World Wars.

In the 1920s, Surrealism was well established in Europe and in the 1930's, the American public was able to familiarize itself with the movement as surrealists' works were being exhibited in New York City museums and galleries like MoMA and Julien Levy Gallery, and articles and texts on the subject were being published and made available in New York bookshops like George Wittenborn & Company, Weyhe Gallery and Bookstore, and Brentano's — all of which Gluck frequented. During World War II many of the European Surrealist artists would flee to the United States where they would continue to practice. This movement influenced many artists of the time, including Joseph Cornell, Man Ray, Dorothea Tanning, Arshile Gorky, Robert Motherwell, and Mark Rothko, among others.

The earliest of Gluck's collages are photograms, including a collaged photogram that he created in 1938 while attending the Pratt Institute. A second group, completed in 1941, are influenced by works in Paul Klee's 1929 book, *La Femme 100 têtes (The Hundred Headless Woman)*, which Gluck acquired while attending the Art Students League. A third group, completed during WWII and shortly thereafter, feature landscape settings influenced by Giorgio de Chirico. One collage combines cut-outs from a steel engraving depicting a Victorian woman with her back to the viewer and a mostly desolate landscape painted in gouache. In the margins Gluck added a personal annotation stating that it was created during the radio broadcast announcing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Another work created in 1942, from which the title of this exhibition is taken, depicts the venous structure of a male head, superimposed with a collaged lock and key, looking at a 19th century agricultural irrigation machine over which letters of the alphabet are pasted in a manner akin to Joseph Cornell's book cover design for Julian Levy's 1936 book, *SURREALISM*.

After serving in Europe and the Pacific Theater during World War II, Gluck returned to New York City where he went on to become a successful commercial artist and, most notably, Andy Warhol's studio assistant from 1953 through 1965, covering the pre-Pop and early Pop period. Gluck continued to work privately on his fine art throughout his lifetime and upon retirement in 1995, at the age of 77, embarked on an extraordinary body of work—collages still rooted in Surrealism, which became his focus until his death in 2008. In these late works, Gluck was able to synthesize his many disparate interests and passions into a single voice—from art, literature, music, theater and opera to language, history, anthropology, food and

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travel. *UNLOCKING THE MIND: Nathan Gluck's Early Surrealist Collages*, invites us to reexamine Nathan Gluck's early collage works and their contexts. Like many young artists at the time, Surrealism would influence their practices and create a foundation for future artworks.

Nathan Gluck was born on June 24, 1918 in Perth Amboy, New Jersey. His mother was part of the Margareten-Horowitz clan, famous for their Passover products. His father was a real estate agent and the family enjoyed an upper middle-class lifestyle until the Great Depression hit, at which time they nearly lost everything and resorted to bottling and selling seltzer water out of their basement. In the late 1930s, Gluck attended Cooper Union in Manhattan and the Pratt Institute, in Brooklyn, NY; in 1941, he studied under Vaclyv Vytlačil at the Art Students League. Gluck began his career as a designer with the L. Bamberger department store in New Jersey, which included designing a poster that is now in the Museum of Modern Art Poster Collection. Upon his return to New York after World War II he continued his successful career as an illustrator, designer and art director. He was an art director and illustrator at the George N. Kahn Agency, New York, and briefly at the Rockmore Company, an advertising agency where Andy Warhol freelanced, beginning that professional relationship. In 1952, he was selected by the ICA Boston to head a design studio at Cheney Silks designing fabric for men's neckwear. In 1954, he designed the cover for Fortune Magazine for the visionary art director, former Futurist designer and noted children's author and illustrator, Leo Leoni. He also designed windows for Gene Moore at Bonwit Teller and Tiffany & Co., and created dozens of original Christmas cards for The Museum of Modern Art, Tiffany & Co., Bergdorf Goodman, Georg Jensen, Cartier, Brentano's, and Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, among others.

During his life, Gluck came to know many noted artists and art world luminaries whom he admired, including Joan Miro, Marcel Duchamp, Pierre Matisse, Ray Johnson, George Wittenborn, Paul Rand, Philip Johnson, as well as numerous other greats from the design world. After Warhol died, the Warhol Foundation turned to Gluck, with his first-hand knowledge and expertise, to help authenticate Warhol's pre-Pop works, which he continued to do until shortly before he passed away. In the last decade of his life Gluck realized several solo exhibitions, including "Ephemeral Musings" (2017) at the Reinhold Brown Gallery in New York; "Nathan Gluck: Collages" (2001) at The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh; and, "Limited Time Offer" (2008) at the Athenaeum of Music and Arts Library, in La Jolla, CA. Nathan Gluck died on September 27, 2008. Nathan Gluck's works are included in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA; Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO; Athenaeum of Music & Arts Library, La Jolla, CA; and numerous private collections worldwide.

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About Nathan Gluck

For a complete artist's bio and timeline please click on this [link](#).

For further information, including images and previews, please call 213-395-0762, or email: galleries@luisdejesus.com.

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