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Press Release:

Haven

Gandy Brodie

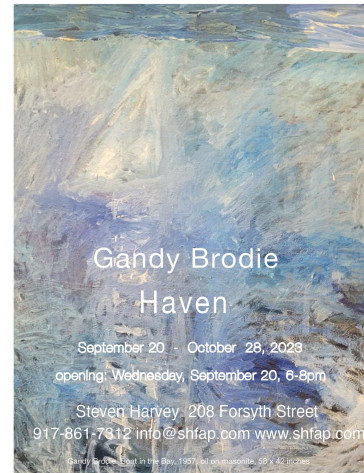
September 20 - October 28, 2023

Opening on Wednesday, 09/20, 6 - 8 pm

steven harvey fine art projects

208 Forsyth st 10002

Tuesday - Friday, 12 - 6 pm



If I want to feel haunted, there's the Lower East Side.

Declared “one of the best painters of his generation” by art critic Meyer Schapiro, Gandy Brodie (1924-1975) was a self-taught artist, who learned to paint through visits to study the work of Van Gogh and Paul Klee at the MOMA. Born on the Lower East Side of Manhattan to Romanian Jewish parents, Brodie danced with Martha Graham and was invested in the world of jazz and bebop as a friend of Billie Holliday’s. It has been speculated that he studied with Hans Hoffman, but it is likely they were friends - in 1950 Hoffman purchased a painting of a trumpet player from Brodie. Brodie was based in New York, but lived and worked in both Florence, Italy and Provincetown, MA where art historian Judith Wilson wrote that he met and influenced the work of Bob Thompson.

While he had strong ties to the Abstract Expressionist movement, Brodie fundamentally was a painter of objects. He created a dream-like style that conveyed his singular interpretation of the world around him in thick, built-up skeins of paint. Brodie chose not to participate in the shifting trends that dominated the New York art scene, instead carving out an independent path that strove to articulate the world “like a dream sequence” in which “one dream superimposes itself on another.” He painted the same motifs repeatedly, returning to the image of a rusted coffee can with flowers in an attempt to “paint one that's better than another... hoping to find the most beautiful suggestion of existence possible with all the possible interferences.”

One of Brodie’s most consistent subjects is the city itself; his paintings are a record of the urban change that occurred during his lifetime. Brodie describes his 1965 piece, *City Anguish*, featured in this exhibition, as “a painting that relies heavily on the imagery at the Williamsburg Bridge,” explaining how he used the shape of the bridge’s cross girders to “cross out all the memories of sorrow that the city is bound to create.” Brodie acknowledged the potential of this iconography

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as a blank space on which to project one's experience of the city, while it represents anguish and loss for him, it may instead evoke all the "fantastic variations and possibilities" of New York as a haven for others.

Gandy Brodie's work has been exhibited at Sidney Janis Gallery, Knoedler Gallery, Edward Thorp, Salander-O'Reilly, and in a monographic show at the Painting Center, with an associated catalog. In 2006 his work was included in Soutine and Modern Art at Cheim & Read. SHFAP has exhibited Brodie in one-person shows in 2008 and 2012, and in two-person shows in 2011 and 2021. Brodie was the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship, the National Council for the Arts award, a Longview Foundation Purchase Grant, an Ingram Merrill Foundation Award, and a Mark Twain Art award, in 1961 when he and his wife Jocelyn moved to Vermont they founded The Gandy Brodie School of Art in Newfane, Vermont.