

Victoria Miro

ALICE NEEL

BIOGRAPHY

//1900 January 28. Born in Merion Square, Pennsylvania. Moved to Colwyn when she was about three months old. //1918 Graduates from high school and works as a secretary while taking evening classes in art.

//1921 Enrolls in the Philadelphia School of Design for Women (now Moore College of Art and Design). //1924 Summer, attends the Chester Springs summer school of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Meets Cuban artist Carlos Enríquez. //1925 Graduates from the Philadelphia School of Design for Women. Marries Enríquez //1926 travels with him to Havana, Cuba. Holds her first solo exhibition there. December 26, daughter Santillana Enríquez born. //1927 May, returns to the United States with Santillana. First visits her family in Colwyn; in the autumn, moves with Enríquez and Santillana to New York. December, Santillana dies of diphtheria. //1928 November 24, daughter Isabella, called Isabetta, born.

//1930 May 1, Enríquez leaves for Cuba, taking Isabetta with him. He and Neel planned to go to Paris later in the year. Instead Enríquez goes to Paris without him. Neel has an intensely productive summer of painting which ends in a nervous breakdown on August 15. Hospitalized at the Orthopedic Hospital, Philadelphia. //1931 Winter, Enríquez returns to the USA and visits Neel a few times. Neel attempts suicide and is sent to the Wilmington Hospital. Briefly returns to the Orthopedic Hospital and then to the suicide ward of the Philadelphia General Hospital. Enríquez returns to Paris never to see Neel again. Neel spends summer at Dr. Ludlum's Sanatorium, where she recovers sufficiently to be sent home. September, goes home to Colwyn, then visits Nadya Olyanova in Stockton, New Jersey. Meets Kenneth Doolittle, a sailor. //1932 Moves with Kenneth Doolittle to Greenwich Village, New York City. Participates in Washington Square Outdoor Art Show where she meets John Rothschild, who runs an alternative travel business, *The Open Road*. Rothschild is a man of independent means //1933 December, enrolls on the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP). Included in exhibition at the Mellon Galleries, Philadelphia. //1934 Summer, Isabetta comes to stay with her in Belmar, New Jersey. Neel paints her nude portrait. Winter, in a rage, Kenneth Doolittle destroys many of Neel's paintings and works on paper. Neel moves out to stay with Rothschild. //1935 With the help of Rothschild Neel acquires a cottage in Spring Lake, New Jersey where she will spend part of each summer for the rest of her life. September, joins the rolls of the WPA/Federal Art Project, Easel Division. Moved to West 17th Street, New York. Meets José Santiago, a Puerto Rican musician who moves in with her. //1936 Exhibits in a show of works by artist members of the American Artists' Congress at the ACA Gallery, New York //1937 July, hospitalized for a miscarriage in her sixth month of pregnancy. September, moves to 129 MacDougal Street, Greenwich Village. //1938 Moves to Spanish Harlem, East 107 Street. Exhibits 16 paintings in her first solo exhibition in New York at Contemporary Arts //1939 Summer, Isabetta travels from Havana to visit Neel at Spring Lake. September 14, Richard Neel born. December, Santiago leaves.

//1940 Winter, meets Sam Brody, Russian photographer and filmmaker. //1941 September 3, Hartley Stockton Neel born. Neel takes up a teaching appointment at Winifred Wheeler Day Nursery. //1942 November, moves to East 108 Street where she will live and work for the next 20 years. //1943 Congress terminates the WPA and Neel begins to collect public assistance which she will continue to do until the mid 1950s. //1944 March, solo exhibition at Pinacotheca Gallery, New York. //1946 May, Father dies. //1949 illustrations published in the left wing journal *Masses and Mainstream* and thereafter intermittently.

//1950 December, solo exhibition at ACA Gallery, New York. //1951 Solo exhibition at New Playwrights Theater, New York. //1953 Mother moves in with Neel and her two sons. Richard enters boarding school on a full scholarship. //1954 Mother dies. Second exhibition at ACA Gallery. //1955 Hartley Neel enters boarding school on full scholarship. Neel interviewed by FBI agents owing to her periodic involvement with the Communist Party. //1958 Sam Brody moves out of the apartment but will remain in her Neel's life off and on throughout the 1960s. //1959 Appears in Alfred Leslie and Robert Frank's film, *Pull My Daisy*. Buys a larger house in Spring Lake, New Jersey.

//1960 Paints portrait of Frank O'Hara, poet and curator at Museum of Modern Art. This is reproduced in *Art News*. //1961 Richard graduates from Columbia College. //1962 Included in group exhibition *Figures* held at Kornblee Gallery, New York.

September, moves to 300 West 107th Street. Awarded the Longview Foundation Purchase award, given to under-recognised artists. Jurors are Harold Rosenberg and Thomas Hess. October, first major feature article on Neel appears in *Art News* written by critic Hubert Crehan. //1963 October, first Graham Gallery exhibition. Richard Neel and Nancy Greene marry. //1964 Richard graduates from Columbia Law School. //1965 January solo exhibition at Hopkins Center at Dartmouth College. Summer, travels to Europe with Hartley. //1966 January, second solo show at Graham Gallery. //1967 Granddaughter Olivia born to Nancy and Richard. June, solo exhibition at Maxwell Galleries, San Francisco. //1968 January, solo exhibition at Graham Gallery. Joins the protest at the omission of women and African American artists from the Whitney Museum's exhibition *The 1930s: Painting and Sculpture in America*. //1969 January, joins demonstrations against the Metropolitan Museum's exhibition *Harlem on my Mind*. April, travels to the Soviet Union with John Rothschild. May, receives an Arts and Letters award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York. Summer, travels to Mexico with Richard and Nancy. Late summer and Autumn Neel goes to live with her son Hartley and his future wife Virginia (Ginny) Taylor in their apartment in San Francisco for two months. Paints several important portraits there including that of Linus Pauling, Nobel Prize winner.

//1970 Hartley, by now a medical doctor, and Virginia Taylor marry. John Rothschild moves into Neel's New York apartment and will stay there until he dies in 1977. August, first of Neel's *Time* magazine covers published. //1971 January, holds a solo exhibition at her *alma mater* Moore College of Art and Design (formerly the Philadelphia School of Design for Women). February, awarded the Benjamin Altman Figure Prize. Nancy and Richard's twins, Alexandra and Antonia, born. May, joins the demonstration against the Whitney Museum's exhibition *Contemporary Black Artists in America*. June awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts by Moore College of Art and Design. Her doctoral address is published in the journal *Women and Art*. September, joins the protest against the Museum of Modern Art organised by the Black Emergency Cultural Coalition and Artists and Writers Protest against the War in Vietnam. //1972 Included in the Whitney Museum of American Art Annual. Travels to Greece and Africa with Hartley and Rothschild. // Exhibits *Joe Gould* (1933) and a nude portrait of John Perreault in *The Male Nude* organised by Perreault at the School of Visual Arts Gallery, New York. Hartley and Ginny Neel move to Stowe, Vermont where Neel will spend several weeks a year for the rest of her life. //1974 Major retrospective of Neel's portraits held at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Nancy and Richard's fourth daughter Victoria is born. //1975 Ginny and Hartley's daughter, Elizabeth, born. September, solo show at Georgia Museum of Art, Athens, Georgia. John Rothschild dies. //1976 Elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters and receives International Women's Year Award. December, Neel is included in the groundbreaking exhibition *Women Artists 1550-1950* organised by Linda Nochlin and Ann Sutherland Harris at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Both had previously sat for portraits. //1978 Ginny and Hartley's son, Andrew, born. //1979 Receives a National Women's Caucus for Art award for outstanding achievement in art, presented by President, Jimmy Carter. Major retrospective exhibition held in Connecticut at the University of Bridgeport and the Silvermine Guild of Artists.

//1981 Major solo exhibition held at the Artists' Union, Moscow. Travels to Moscow with her extended family to attend the opening //1983 Receives the Benjamin Altman Figure Prize for a second time. Patricia Hills' monograph is published by Abrams //1984 February, solo show at Robert Miller Gallery, New York. Appears on Johnny Carson show and again later in the year. October 13. Dies from cancer in New York City.

Selected posthumous Solo Exhibitions

- 2010 *Alice Neel*, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Texas 21 March – 13 June 13, 2010, travelling to the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 9 July – 19 September 2010 and the Moderna Museet, Malmö, 10 October 2010 – 2 January 2011
- 2008 *Collector of Souls*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2007 *Alice Neel: A Cycle of Life*, Victoria Miro, London
- 2000 *Alice Neel*, organised by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, travelling to the Whitney Museum of American Art New York, 29 June to 17 September
- 2000 Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts, 6 October to 31 December 2001
Philadelphia Museum of Art, 18 February to 15 April
- 2001 Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, 10 June to 2 September
- 2001 Denver Museum of Art, 6 October to 30 December
- 2004 *Alice Neel: A Chronicle of New York 1950-1976*, Victoria Miro Gallery, London, 1 June – 31 July
- 2005 *Alice Neel's Women*, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C. 28 October 2005 – 15 January
- 2007 *Alice Neel: The Cycle of Life*, Victoria Miro Gallery, London 23rd May – 21st July

Selected posthumous Group Exhibitions

- 1993 *The Portrait Now*, National Portrait Gallery, London, 19 November to 6 February 1994
1995 *Femininmasculin: le se de l'art*, Centre Georges Pompidou, 24 October 1995 to 12 February 1996
1997 *Views from Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art 3: American Realities*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 10 July to 5 October
2007 Whack! Art and the Feminist Revolution, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles, 4 March - 16

Selected Public Collections

Art Institute of Chicago; Baltimore Museum of Art; Bates College, Maine; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Colgate University, New York; Columbus Museum; Dartmouth College, New Hampshire; Denver Art Museum; Greenville County Museum of Art; Honolulu Academy of Arts; J. B. Speed Art Museum; Milwaukee Art Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Tate Gallery, London; University of Nebraska; University of Texas and University of Wisconsin.

Selected Bibliography

- 2007 *Alice Neel: The Cycle of Life*, London: Victoria Miro Gallery
2004 Jeremy Lewison, 'Alice Neel: A Chronicle of Her Times' in *Alice Neel A Chronicle of New York 1950-1976*, London: Victoria Miro Gallery
2002 Carr, Carolyn, *Alice Neel: Women. Mirror of Identity*, New York, Rizzoli Temkin, Ann, ed. *Alice Neel*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art
1998 Allara, Pamela. *Pictures of People: Alice Neel's American Portrait Gallery*. Hanover: University Press of New England
1996 Chadwick, Whitney. *Women, Art, and Society*. London: Thames and Hudson
1991 Belcher, Gerald and Margaret. *Collecting Souls, Gathering Dust: The Struggles of Two American Artists*. New York: Paragon House
1985 Castle, Ted, interview with Alice Neel. *Alice Neel Paintings since 1970* Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
1983 Hills, Patricia. *Alice Neel*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
1983 Sutherland Harris, Ann, text of lecture by Alice Neel, *Alice Neel: Painting 1933 – 1982*. Los Angeles: Art Gallery, Loyola Marymount University
1979 Munro, Eleanor. *Originals: American Women Artists*. New York: Simon & Schuster

For full biographical and bibliographic details see Temkin, Ann, ed. *Alice Neel*. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2000.