



**Leon Kossoff**

*Paintings from the 50s and 60s*

February 17– March 28 2009

Mitchell-Innes & Nash Chelsea

DECEMBER 8, 2008 – NEW YORK: Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to announce an exhibition of early oil paintings by the British artist Leon Kossoff in its Chelsea gallery from February 17 to March 28, 2009. On view for the first time in the US, the 12 paintings in this exhibition are among the finest examples of Kossoff's work and provide a timely investigation into his role within the School of London of the 1950s and 60s. The paintings on view all date from 1957-1967, and include figure paintings and cityscapes.

As a key figure in the School of London, Leon Kossoff (b. 1926) has been described as one of the greatest British artists of the past four decades. He grew up in the East End of London and has lived in the city all his life. His work focuses on London's changing urban landscape and the human figure. Loyal to a limited number of models, Kossoff's portraits are mostly of members of his own family or very close friends. He is an artist who builds up thickly layered paintings that evoke a deep emotional response to the world as he experiences it.

The artist has written: "London, like the paint I use, seems to be in my bloodstream. It's always moving – the skies, the streets, the buildings. The people who walk past me when I draw have become part of my life.....The fabric of my work through the last forty years has been dependent on those people who have so patiently sat for me, each one uniquely transforming my space by their presence."

Kossoff's most recent US exhibitions were *Drawn to Painting: Leon Kossoff-Drawings and Prints after Nicholas Poussin* on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2001; *After Nicolas Poussin: New Etchings by Leon Kossoff* traveled to The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles in 2000; and, *Leon Kossoff: Recent Paintings and Drawings* at Mitchell-Innes & Nash. International exhibitions of note include *Leon Kossoff: Drawing from Painting* at the National Gallery, London (2007), *Leon Kossoff: Selected Paintings 1956 – 2000* at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebaek, Denmark (2002), *Drawn to Painting: Leon Kossoff-Drawings and Prints after Nicholas Poussin* at the National Gallery of Australia and Annandale Galleries, Sydney in 2002; a major retrospective at the Tate Gallery in London in 1996 and Kossoff's exhibition in the British Pavilion at the 1995 Venice Biennale.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the gallery will publish a fully illustrated catalogue.

**Image Caption:** *Father Seated in Armchair no. 2, 1960, Oil on board, 48 3/8 by 38 inches*

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