

AMAR GALLERY

LAWRENCE CALCAGNO: REDUX

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Amar Gallery, London
26 Sept - 1 Dec, 2024

Amar Gallery is proud to announce our exhibition *Lawrence Calcagno: Redux*, featuring paintings & works on paper by **LGBT+ artist** Lawrence Calcagno. The exhibition is transatlantic with 203 Fine Art exhibiting works in their Taos, New Mexico space and Amar Gallery exhibiting works in London. This is the **first time many of these works have been exhibited in London**. Calcagno's life is nothing short of remarkable and this exhibition aims to bring a master of art back to the forefront of art history. **In 1941 at the beginning of World War II Calcagno joined the United States Army Air Corps, where he served for three years.** During his service he was recognised as an artist. His drawing titled: "Watch in the Night" won first prize in the national Army art contest in the Southwest Regional competition.

Benefiting from the G.I. Bill in 1947 Lawrence Calcagno enrolled at the California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, California. His teachers were **Mark Rothko** and **Clyfford Still** along with instructors, **Edward Corbett** and **Richard Diebenkorn**.

In 1950 he left California School of Fine Arts for Europe. He went to Paris, France to study at L'Academie de la Grande Chaumiere. **Beauford Delaney** and Lawrence Calcagno and unlikely pair, **the two became friends and lovers** in Paris in the early 1950s and remained close over the next twenty years. At the time of their union, **both interracial and homosexual relations were illegal** throughout most of the United States. Through Delaney, Calcagno became friends with writers such as **James Baldwin** and **Ralph Ellison**.

Calcagno was friends with the African American artist **Jack Whitten**. In 1964 Calcagno supported Whitten alongside artists **Romare Bearden**, **Jacob Lawrence** and **Wayne Thiebaud** to secure Whitten a grant for minority artists from the John Hay Whitney Fellowship. Supporting artists of colour was important to Calcagno. In 1965 Calcagno became Andrew Mellon Professor in Painting at Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he stayed until 1968. Calcagno was a fellow at the McDowell and Yaddo artist colonies in 1960s.

As *Time Magazine* wrote in 1955 “Calcagno remains emphatically from San Francisco is demonstrated by his semiabstract paintings, saturated with rich California earth tones and the shifting, fog-ridden horizons of the Pacific Coast.” In 2024 *Hyperallergic Magazine* wrote “Although frequently introduced as a student of Mark Rothko and Clyfford Still, abstract expressionist painter Lawrence Calcagno was his own master.”

LAWRENCE CALCAGNO SELECTED COLLECTIONS & MUSEUMS

Smithsonian Institution
Whitney Museum of American Art
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Brooklyn Museum of Art
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Westmoreland Museum of American Art

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