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NEW YORK – “2015:1947” AT EQUITY GALLERY THROUGH NOVEMBER 28TH, 2015

November 23rd, 2015



2015:1947 (Installation View), all photos via Equity Gallery

Founded in 1947 by a group of over 160 prominent American artists, among them [Thomas Hart Benton](#), [Philip Guston](#), [Edward Hopper](#), [Louise Nevelson](#) and [Jacob Lawrence](#), Artists Equity was formed to advocate for artists' rights and provide collective resources for economic, legal and health benefits. Following WWII and the end of the WPA Federal Art Projects, amid a political climate growing more conservative and reactionary, artist [Yasuo Kuniyoshi](#) began to discuss with other American artists, primarily in New York and Woodstock, the idea of a collective advocacy organization.

Kuniyoshi wanted to establish an organization that set no aesthetic or ideological standard, but rather focused on economic issues pertinent to artists, such as health insurance, copyright and royalties, as well as emergency welfare funds. The initial board included five women and a number of black, Hispanic and Asian American artists, founding an organization that worked as a support system for artists facing discrimination. Throughout the years, notable members have included [Alex Katz](#), [Sol Lewitt](#), and [Alice Neel](#). Started as a national organization, the New York chapter, always the largest and most influential, split off on its own in 1965.

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2015:1947 (Installation View)

In 1991, New York Artists Equity Association opened a gallery on Broome Street in SoHo, which operated until 2011. The gallery served to connect artists with dealers, collectors and the public, providing a discussion space as well. This space, Equity Gallery, has found a new home, opening once again on Broome Street, although this time in the Lower East Side. For its inaugural exhibition, *2015:1947*, Artists Equity asked eight artists to present work inspired by or corresponding to the work of a founding artist.



Karen Lee, *Drawn On* (2015)



Herman Maril, *Form and Flow* (1958)

Karen Lee's *Drawn On* is a tromp l'oeil cyanotype drape on draped muslin. Lee chose a particular painting, Herman Maril's *Form and Flow* (1958), a spare and almost abstract somber seascape with draped rope and fabric, as her inspiration. Somewhat of an outlier regarding Maril's work, Lee was drawn to this painting because it "seemed like it could be a blueprint for [her own work] to a continually canny degree."
