

# ARTnews

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By Claire Selvin

## Parrish Art Museum Acquires 64 Works by Famed Cartoonist Saul Steinberg



Saul Steinberg, *Untitled*, 1980, colored pencil, pastel, pencil, crayon, and rubber stamp on paper (Strathmore) folded in half. © 2019 SAUL STEINBERG FOUNDATION/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS)/GIFT OF SAUL STEINBERG FOUNDATION

Saul Steinberg, who blurred the line between fine and commercial art with his drawings, once said, “I don’t quite belong to the art, cartoon, or magazine world, so the art world doesn’t quite know where to place me.” He probably could not have imagined that a group of museums would ultimately prove him wrong. Work by the late artist, whose work appeared in the *New Yorker* for six decades beginning in 1941, has since found its way into the collections of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Menil Collection in Houston, the Morgan Library and Museum in New York, and other international institutions.

Now the Saul Steinberg Foundation has given 64 of Steinberg’s drawings to the holdings the Parrish Art Museum in Water Mill, New York, on Long Island’s East End. (Steinberg was a longtime resident of Springs, East Hampton.) “Saul Steinberg is someone who is a major figure not only for the East End of Long Island but is also a national treasure,” Terrie Sultan, director of the Parrish, told *ARTnews*. “One of the things we really hope to do at the Parrish is to collect in depth [the works of] many artists who are part of the national story of visual art, especially if they have relationship to East End of Long Island.”

Works in the acquisition, which includes pieces rendered in watercolor, pen and ink, pencil, crayon, and other media, span 45 years of the artist’s career, dating from 1945 to 1990. Also featured in the donation are rarely seen works, like wooden assemblages, wallpaper, and fabric.

“It’s a much denser in composition than the works on paper,” Sultan said of Steinberg’s wallpaper designs. “It’s interesting to see artist’s hand in a completely different point of view.”

The museum is currently exhibiting 49 works from the gift in a presentation titled “Saul Steinberg: Modernist Without Portfolio.” Pieces in the show range from abstract portraits to architectural drawings and lively depictions of animals.

“There’s a lot going on in the mind of an artist like Saul Steinberg, and his ability to express that through his work really gives people a lot to see and experience,” Sultan said. “Having the opportunity to show some 50 works by one artist over the course of a long career is an experience that the museum is really pleased to be able to provide.”

View a selection of works from the acquisition in the slideshow below.

