

# Charles Garabedian

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## 1923 – 2016

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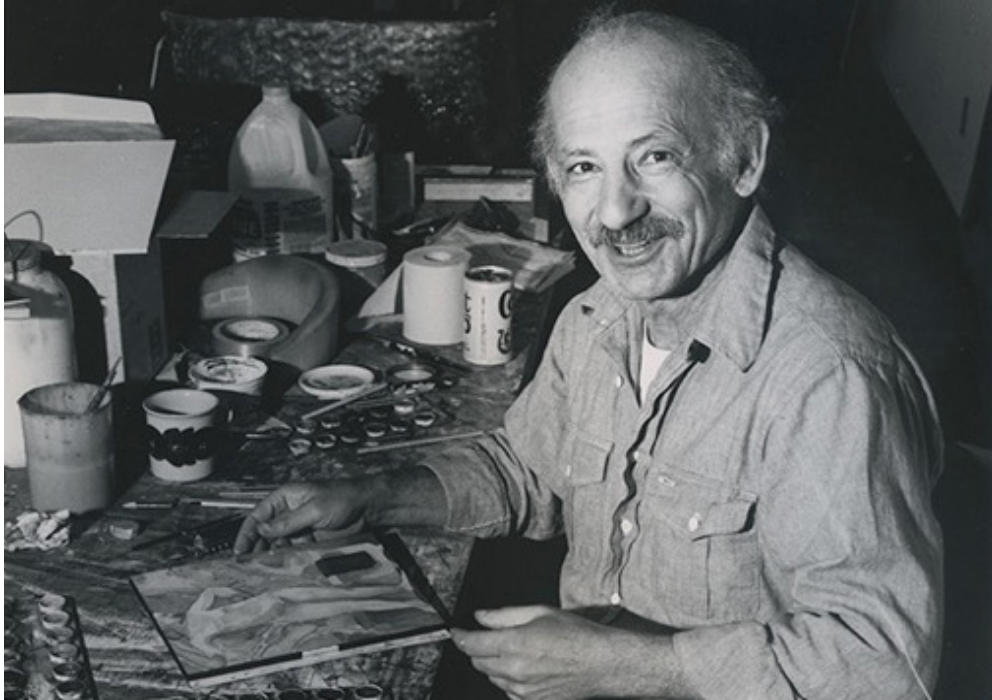


Photo by Tom Vinetz

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We are sad to convey the news that artist Charles Garabedian died on February 11, 2016, at the age of 92. The cause of death was prostate cancer.

A lover of literature, opera, jazz, horse racing, golf, poker, cigars, Scotch, and daily visits to Peet's Coffee and Tea in Santa Monica, Garabedian was beloved both as an artist and a teacher. Described by critic Christopher Knight as "among the best painters Los Angeles has produced," Garabedian, or "Chas" as he was known by his friends, created narrative paintings that often featured awkwardly posed figures that spoke to the human condition. Embracing grand themes, he created paintings that were idiosyncratic and compelling.

Garabedian came to painting at the age of 32, and was almost 40 before he had his first solo exhibition. This followed service as a Staff Sergeant and gunner during World War II, when he flew 30 missions in Europe. He subsequently worked for the tire company B.F. Goodrich, assembling cars for Chrysler, and as a clerk for the railroad. Garabedian studied history at USC, and encouraged by his friend Ed Moses, he took art classes with Howard Warshaw, which led him to UCLA. At UCLA, Garabedian studied with William Brice. After graduating with a MA in 1961, he went on to teach at UCLA, the College of Creative Studies at UC Santa Barbara, and other established art institutions throughout the 1960s, '70s, and '80s.

In 1962, Garabedian began showing with Ceejee Gallery in Los Angeles, alongside good friends Louis Lunetta and Ed Carrillo, whom he credited as his greatest influences. He had his first solo museum exhibition in 1966 at the La Jolla Museum of Art, and his first retrospective at California State University Northridge in 1974. In

1978, Marcia Tucker included Garabedian's work in the exhibition, *"Bad" Painting* at the New Museum in New York. Numerous solo and group gallery and museum shows that followed culminated in a survey exhibition curated by Julie Joyce at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in 2011, which drew widespread critical acclaim. In 1979, Garabedian joined L.A. Louver. Over 36 years of representing Garabedian, L.A. Louver mounted 17 solo exhibitions, including most recently "Sacrifice for the Fleet" in October-November 2015. Garabedian also shows with Betty Cuninghame in New York and Gallery Paule Anglim in San Francisco. His work is included in the collections of Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; San Francisco Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Whitney Museum of American Art; and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, among other museums.

The youngest of three children, Garabedian was born in Detroit in 1923 to parents who had fled the Armenian genocide. Following his mother's death in 1925, and his father's subsequent injury, Garabedian spent part of his childhood in an orphanage. At age 9, his family moved to California. After his service during World War II, Garabedian settled back in California, and in 1963 married Gwen. Garabedian is survived by his wife, two daughters Claire and Sophia, son-in-law Jonathan, and three grandchildren, Lulu, Dinah, and Rex.

A painter's painter, the slight, quiet, gentle Chas, who was both serious and quick to smile, rigorous in his art practice and generous in spirit, had wide reaching influence on the art world of Los Angeles. His presence will be greatly missed.



Photos by Stathis Orphanos