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Charles Keller

(b. 1914)

Color silkscreen: *Planners for Victory*

Charles Keller, a painter, sculptor, and printmaker, was born in Woodmere, New York, on October 4, 1914. In 1927 he moved to New York City and in 1936 received a bachelor of art degree from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. From 1938 to 1940 he studied at the Art Students League. Around this time, he became involved with several politically active (and sometimes radical) art organizations such as the Young American Artists Association, sponsored by the American Artists Congress and the United American Artists. This group was, at first, opposed to U.S. involvement in the war. Keller was also part of the Labor Arts Youth Club of the Young Communist League.

Later, Keller was an active member of the Workshop of Graphic Artists which supplied war posters for Civil Defense and trade union purposes. He became director of the Victory Workshop and, in that capacity, was asked to represent Artists for Victory in a scheme to develop an art center in Greenwich Village. In 1942, Keller chaired a session, "Problems of the Young Artist," at the A.C.A. Gallery-sponsored symposium held in conjunction with their "Artists in the War" exhibition.

Charles Keller is an artist who has brought a deep social consciousness to his art throughout his career. During the 1940s, he worked as an assistant to Harry Sternberg on Treasury Department murals in Doylestown, Pennsylvania; and Chicago, Illinois; in the special exhibits department of the Museum of Modern Art; and at the Navy Training Aids Development Center, New York City. He has taught at Vassar College, the Storm King Boys School in Cornwall, New York, and Dutchess Community College in Poughkeepsie and in the extension program of

Hofstra University in Hempstead, New Jersey.

In 1961 Charles Keller moved to Italy, where he lived and worked for about ten years, primarily in Rome. While there, he had one-man exhibitions in Rome, Alessandria, Turin, Milan, Sardinia, and Genoa. He has also had a solo show at the Drian Galleries in London in 1971 and four one-man exhibitions in New York City and New York State, one each in Hartford, Connecticut, and Princeton, New Jersey. A complete retrospective of his work was mounted at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University in 1976.

Sources

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