



Form Radiating Life: The Paintings of Charles Rosen

Brian H. Peterson

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Charles Rosen (1878-1950) began his career as a photographer in western Pennsylvania but fell in love with painting while still a teenager. This interest led him to enroll at the National Academy of Design in New York, as well as the New York School of Art, where he studied under William Merritt Chase and Frank Vincent DuMond. Rosen began to develop an interest in landscape painting, and in 1903 he and his wife moved to New Hope, Pennsylvania, where he quickly became an important member of the Pennsylvania Impressionist school, producing large snowscapes and spring scenes. His New Hope canvases utilize a simple but elegant compositional style sometimes reminiscent of Japanese prints, and his mature landscape work demonstrates an interest in the decorative patterning of nature.

Rosen eventually became dissatisfied with the landscape style, and under the influence of Modernist ideas his work changed radically. In 1920, he moved to Woodstock, New York, to teach at and later direct the Art Students League summer school. In Woodstock he developed close friendships with painters George Bellows and Eugene Speicher, and began to work in a semiabstract, formalist style using buildings and other man-made structures as subject matter. This style would characterize his work from that time forward.

Form Radiating Life is an examination of the life and work of Charles Rosen, studying both phases of his career and featuring paintings that demonstrate this unusual range of styles. Lavishly illustrated, it represents the oeuvre of an artist of prodigious talent and vision but also tremendous sensitivity.



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