

**June Leaf:
Early Prints, Drawings, and Sculptures
May 7 - June 27, 2026**

The George Adams Gallery is pleased to present *June Leaf: Early Prints, Drawings, and Sculptures*, an exhibition bringing together a focused group of works that illuminate the early career of June Leaf (1929–2024), one of Chicago’s most distinctive and independent artistic figures. The show will be open to the public starting May 7, 2026.

Born and raised in Chicago, Leaf found an early champion in dealer Allan Frumkin, whose gallery opened there in 1952. She briefly studied at the New Bauhaus—the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology—in 1947, before leaving for Paris the following year. Returning to Chicago after three months, she fell in with a circle of artists that included Seymour Rosofsky, Cosmo Campoli, and Leon Golub; the latter two would soon find representation with Frumkin. Leaf’s work caught Frumkin’s eye as well. When she returned to Paris on a Fulbright Fellowship in 1958, Frumkin commissioned the series of lithographs—renderings of the trees outside the lithography studio—included in this exhibition.

The exhibition features two editions of “*Branch with Leaves: Study of the Bushes on Rue General Appert*” (nos. 1 and 2), accompanied by numerous working proofs, several uneditioned lithographs, and two studies—a charcoal and a watercolor—all made in 1958. Taken together, these works reveal both Leaf’s command of realist rendering and her willingness to push and reimagine an image: in the final state, for instance, she colored the leaves a striking blue.

Complementing the prints and related drawings are “Inwood Park” (1966–67), a hand-colored lithograph; “Circus Performers” (1968); and two wall-mounted oil on board sculptures. These sculptures appeared in Leaf’s first solo exhibition at the Frumkin Gallery in Chicago in 1965, and again in her landmark 1968 show “Street Dreams” at the Frumkin Gallery in New York. While her early career work, as seen in the lithography prints in the exhibition, is marked by a distinct graphic style and subject matter inspired by the theater scene of New York City, Leaf’s later work turned to an increasingly introspective and self-reflexive material. As Lucy Lippard noted in her review of the 1968 Frumkin exhibition, “Leaf exists to confuse the generalizers. Sawdust is strewn between dirt and tinsel. Leaf’s preserve is the commonplace extraordinary, joyful perversions, and unlikely loves. She makes sensuous toys for the child side and the dark side of everyone.”

June Leaf: Early Prints, Drawings, and Sculptures will be on view from May 7 to June 27. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For further information, please contact the gallery at info@georgeadamsgallery.com.