

Baer, George

American, 1893 - 1971

BIOGRAPHY

George Baer was born on July 7, 1893, in Chicago, where his father, Leopold Baer, owned a photoengraving business. Both George and his better-known brother Martin (1894–1961) were encouraged by their father to become artists. After graduating from the Art Institute of Chicago, they opened Holbein Studios, later renamed Anarchist Studios, which closed in 1921. The Baers studied at the National Academy in Munich, Germany, and then proceeded to Paris, where they associated with the international circle of artists collectively known as the School of Paris. The brothers achieved recognition in 1926, when a group of paintings they had executed in Morocco and Algeria were exhibited at Durand-Ruel Gallery, Paris, and the Art Institute of Chicago. They returned to North Africa and produced a second series of paintings that were exhibited at the Galerie Jeune Peinture, Paris, in 1928, and then toured the United States. The Baer brothers, who worked in very similar styles, were deeply influenced by the Austrian expressionist Oskar Kokoschka (Austrian, 1886 - 1980), and also drew inspiration from such old masters as Jacopo Tintoretto (Venetian, 1518 or 1519 - 1594), El Greco (Greek, 1541 - 1614), and Lucas Cranach the Elder (German, 1472 - 1553). They never repeated the critical acclaim with which their North African subjects were received in the late 1920s.

George Baer returned to his native country around 1932 and eventually settled in West Cornwall, Connecticut. He taught painting in a number of nearby towns in Connecticut before moving to Salisbury in 1946, where he taught at the Salisbury School for the next 21 years, opened an art school at the Scoville Memorial Library, and was active in the community's cultural affairs. Baer died in Salisbury on August 24, 1971, after a long illness.

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August 17, 2018

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To cite: Catherine Southwick, Robert Torchia, "George Baer," *American Paintings, 1900–1945*, NGA Online Editions, <https://purl.org/nga/collection/constituent/181> (accessed November 21, 2019).