

# LUHRING AUGUSTINE CHELSEA

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## Leon Kossoff

Luhring Augustine Chelsea

April 17– June 20, 2026

Opening reception: Thursday, April 16, 6-8pm

Luhring Augustine, in partnership with the Leon Kossoff Estate, is delighted to present an exhibition of works by the celebrated British artist, opening in our Chelsea location on April 16, 2026. Bringing together paintings from across Kossoff's career, the exhibition will offer one of the most substantial presentations of the artist's work to be held in New York in recent decades. In conjunction with the exhibition, Luhring Augustine will publish a fully illustrated catalogue featuring a specially commissioned essay by the acclaimed critic, Hilton Als.

A leading figure of postwar British art, Leon Kossoff (1926–2019) developed a practice that was grounded in close observation and a repeated engagement with his subjects through drawing and painting. Working primarily from life, he produced portraits of family, friends, and sitters from his immediate circle alongside views of North and East London – rail stations, schools, streets, and sites of daily life. Characterized by their material density and structural rigor, his paintings, no matter how big or small, are acts of sustained spontaneity. As he described it:

"My studio is like a field, a field in a house. Muddy hillocks of paint-sodden newspapers cover the floor burying scraped-off images. Derelict boards stand in all corners, remnants of recent activity... My dialogue is with these discarded images left on the floor... Drawing is a springing to life in the presence of the friend in the studio or in the sunlit summer streets of London... painting is a deepening of this process."<sup>1</sup>

This presentation will showcase major works by the artist, including *Demolition of YMCA Building No. 2, Spring* (1971), a powerful example of Kossoff's continuous engagement with London's changing urban fabric. Other featured landscapes such as *Red Brick School Building, Winter* (1982) and *Outside Kilburn Underground, Indian Summer: For Rosalind* (1978), depict transport hubs and neighborhoods near his studio and demonstrate the artist's long-term focus on the rhythms of the city and the transformation of familiar places over time. Kossoff's dedication to portraiture is also explored extensively in this exhibition, exemplified in works such as *Nude on a Red Bed, November – December* (1972), *Self-portrait No. 5* (1981), and *Portrait of Father No. 3* (1972). These paintings, rooted in continual observation over many years of family members and close sitters, as well as his own visage, underscore Kossoff's unwavering commitment to painting as a means of recording lived experience. Together with Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud and Frank Auerbach, Leon Kossoff is regarded as one of the principal painters of the 'School of London' – a group of artists who, in contrast to the dominant interests during that period in minimalism, conceptualism, performance and installation art, shared a passionate belief in the enduring ability of painting to reflect on some of the most profound experiences of contemporary life.

Widely regarded as one of the most important British painters of the postwar period, Kossoff studied painting at both St Martin's School of Art and the Royal College of Art. In 1995, the artist represented Great Britain at the XLVI Venice Biennale and has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford; Tate Gallery, London; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek; Museum of Art, Lucerne; and the National Gallery, London, among others. His works are included in prestigious collections worldwide including Tate Gallery, London; British Museum, London; National Portrait Gallery, London; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Yale Center for British Art, New Haven; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; and Art Institute of Chicago, among many others. A catalogue raisonné of the artist's work was published in 2021.

For further information about the artist, please contact Leah Horowitz at [leah@luhringaugustine.com](mailto:leah@luhringaugustine.com).

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<sup>1</sup> Leon Kossoff, as quoted in Andrea Rose, "Studios, Materials and Technique," in *Leon Kossoff: Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings* (London: Modern Art Press, 2021), 46.