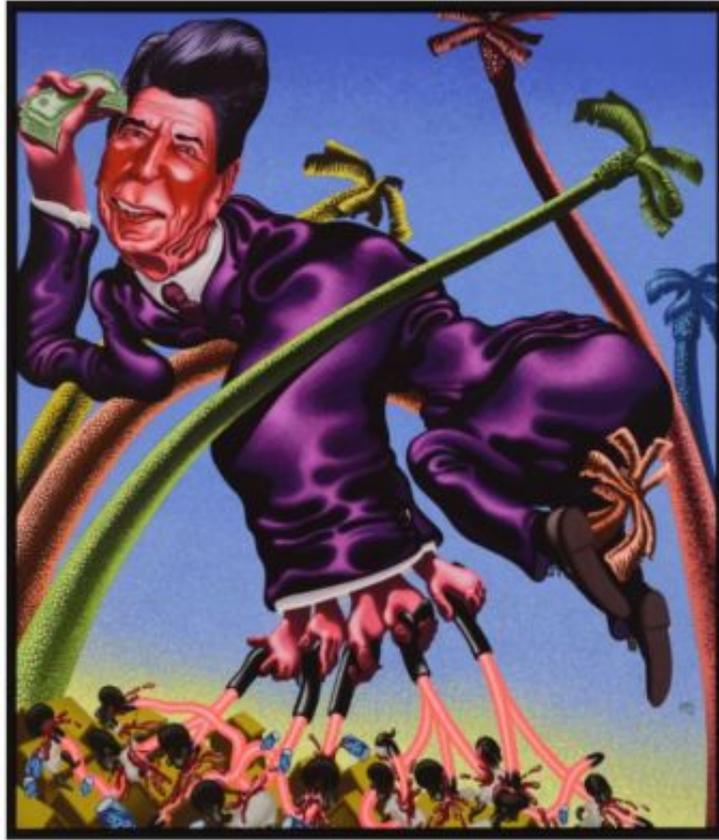


*Beginning in the early 1960s, Peter Saul began to incorporate imagery borrowed from a range of pop-cultural sources into his exuberant, brightly colored paintings, adopting a style that has proven to be far ahead of its time. His work developed independently from concurrent art historical movements like Pop art, with which it shares some superficially similar concerns. Instead of the cool detachment of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, however, Saul crafted his own unique blend of Surrealism, history painting, vernacular illustration, and the real-life shock and horror of current events.*

Marking the artist's first New York museum survey, this exhibition will bring together approximately sixty paintings from across his long career.



Cover image: Peter Saul, *Ronald Reagan in Grenada*, 1984. Acrylic on canvas, 82 1/2 x 71 in (209 x 180.3 cm). Hall Collection. Courtesy Hall Art Foundation. Photo: Jeffrey Nitzel

Saul's earliest paintings, which he created in Paris, demonstrate a loose, gestural style of abstraction, yet he began to incorporate text, recognizable characters, and consumer products into his works as early as 1960. Around this time, he plucked figures like Donald Duck and Superman from the pages of comic books and deposited them into chaotic scenes representative of the avarice and violence of America. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Saul created some of his most shocking and indelible works in response to the Vietnam War, with a series that captured the conflict's grotesque brutality, racism, and destruction. A later group of paintings, which examines the chaotic sociopolitical fabric of urban life in California, reflects the dissolution of 1960s counterculture and the corruption, racism, and greed of US politics.

Saul extended his interrogation of American history in his portraits of infamous criminals like John Wayne Gacy, archetypes like cowboys and businessmen, and US presidents such as Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush, and Donald Trump, whom Saul depicts with disdain and condemnation. He has also looked further back to reimagine supposedly triumphant scenes from America's past—including Columbus's arrival in America, Washington crossing the Delaware, and Custer's Last Stand—as moments of comical failure or disgrace. With a caustic sense of humor, Saul has continuously skewered America's leaders, rendering their stretched, distorted bodies in Day-Glo colors. His disparate influences range from *MAD* magazine comics to Surrealist fantasies and American social realist painting from the 1930s.

**Peter Saul** is an American painter. His work has connections with Pop Art, Surrealism, and Expressionism. His early use of pop culture cartoon references in the late 1950s and very early 1960s situates him as one of the fathers of the Pop Art movement. He realized about 800 paintings during his career.

