PETER MAX, ICONIC AMERICAN ARTIST WHOSE VIBRANT VISION HELPED DEFINE A GENERATION, DIES AT 88

Announcement Made by His Son, Adam Max, and Park West Gallery

SOUTHFIELD, MI, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Adam Max, son of legendary American artist Peter Max, together with Park West Gallery, announces with profound sadness the passing today of Peter Max at the age of 88.

One of the most recognizable and influential artists of his generation, Peter Max created a visual language of brilliant color, cosmic imagery, optimism, patriotism, peace and love that became inseparable from the cultural landscape of America.

Born in Berlin, Germany, on October 19, 1937, Max's extraordinary life journey took him from Berlin to Shanghai and ultimately New York, where his art would reach a global audience. His family fled Nazi Germany when he was an infant, and the young Max spent formative years in Shanghai before eventually arriving in the United States in 1953. He later studied at New York's Art Students League, receiving classical training under realist Frank J. Reilly.

By the late 1960s, Max had become a cultural phenomenon. His groundbreaking "Cosmic '60s" imagery—with its brilliant colors, celestial forms, bold lines and unmistakable sense of possibility—captured the energy and idealism of an era and helped establish an artistic vocabulary that remains immediately recognizable today.

Peter Max did not simply document a generation. His art helped define its visual language.

His extraordinary career crossed boundaries rarely traversed by a fine artist. Max appeared on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson and The Ed Sullivan Show and was featured on the cover of LIFE magazine. His art became associated with major American and international cultural moments, including the World Cup, Super Bowls, Woodstock, the U.S. Open, the 2006 U.S. Winter Olympic Team and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. In 1974, the U.S. Postal Service commissioned Max to create the environmental postage stamp commemorating Expo '74.

His interpretations of the Statue of Liberty and the American flag became among the most enduring images of his career. Max also created portraits of U.S. presidents and world leaders, while his work entered museum, embassy, corporate and private collections around the world.

Throughout his life and work, Max continually returned to the ideas that defined both his artistic vision and his worldview: color, freedom, peace, love, nature, spirituality, America and the cosmos.

Adam Max, Peter Max's son, said:

"To the world, our father was an artist whose work brought color, optimism, and imagination to generations of people. To us, he was simply Dad.

We will remember his extraordinary creativity, his warmth, his curiosity, and the way he saw beauty and possibility everywhere. His art became part of American culture, but the man behind that art—the father we knew and loved—is the person we will miss most.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has loved and appreciated our father and his work throughout his remarkable life. Knowing how much joy his art brings to people around the world means more to us than we can express.

We ask for privacy as our family mourns his loss and celebrates his life, his art, and the extraordinary legacy he leaves behind."

A RELATIONSHIP SPANNING MORE THAN FIVE DECADES

Peter Max shared an extraordinary relationship with Park West Gallery and its Founder and CEO, Albert Scaglione, beginning in 1972 and developing into one of the most enduring artist-gallery relationships of its kind. Park West became one of Max's most significant dealers and has introduced his work to generations of collectors around the world.

Albert Scaglione, Founder and CEO of Park West Gallery, said:

"Peter Max was far more than an extraordinary artist to me—he was a dear friend and an important part of the Park West Gallery family for more than five decades. Our relationship began in the early 1970s, and I had the privilege of watching Peter's remarkable vision, boundless optimism, and unmistakable use of color touch generations of people around the world.

Peter created a visual language entirely his own. His art celebrated freedom, love, hope and the extraordinary possibilities of life. His passing is deeply personal for me, for my family and for all of us at Park West Gallery.

We have lost an American icon, but Peter's brilliant colors, joyful spirit and extraordinary legacy will live forever through his art."

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