

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Wayne Thiebaud

Cakes and 'Scapes: A Selection of Rare, Unique and Hand-Colored Prints

March 6th – April 19th, 2014

Opening March 6th 6–8pm

Jim Kempner Fine Art

501 West 23rd Street

New York, NY 11215

"There's nothing really that I've ever found in other lines that is like an etched line--its fidelity, the richness of it, the density you just don't get that any other way." - Wayne Thiebaud

Jim Kempner Fine Art is pleased to present Wayne Thiebaud *Cakes and 'Scapes: A Selection of Rare, Unique and Hand-Colored Prints*. The collection of work in this exhibition is a survey of Wayne Thiebaud's dynamic hand-colored prints of delectable sweets and sloping landscapes. *Cakes and 'Scapes* will be on view from March 6th through April 19th, with an opening reception on March 6th from 6 – 8 pm.

Known for rendering decadent and pristinely organized desserts, Wayne Thiebaud is a seminal artist in post-war American art, lying at the vanguard of Pop Art and modern realism. The exhibit is intended as a small-scale retrospective of Wayne Thiebaud's prints, showcasing his trademark subject - American food- along with his images of San Francisco's urban landscapes. Thiebaud was thoroughly interested in the beauty of print media, and the elements of chance, surprise, and continuity that existed in the practice. This exhibition showcases the editioned and

hand-colored trial proofs that came out of his well-crafted investigations into various print practices.

Print media was used as a platform for Thiebaud to explore the possibilities of transfiguration, and the idea that a work of art is never truly complete. In printmaking, a trial proof or artist proof allows the artist to explore different compositional decisions and color palette (known as a color trial proof). Thiebaud described this process by saying “It is the potential for change that captivates me. Trial proofs offer a chance to experiment with variations and permutations that can be transmitted to the next stage.” Applying a layer of watercolor or pastel over a print encourages a direct freshness and gives new life to the images. Thiebaud relishes the ability to rework an image and the struggle to find the point at which an image is truly resolved.

Such exploration is evident in works like *Delicatessen*, the aquatint from 1964. *Cakes and ‘Scapes* features the black and white version from the edition of 100 and its hand-colored counterpart. The high-contrast, graphic quality of the editioned work in comparison to the vibrant hand-colored version probes the viewer to question which is more complete and successful as an image.

Later in his artistic career, Thiebaud began depicting the cityscapes of San Francisco. He was interested in the vertical dynamism of the city’s roads and the sense of displacement and disorientation it caused in space. *Hill Street* demonstrates this compositional distortion, and presents Thiebaud’s jaunt with ukiyo-e woodcut. This Japanese woodcut technique creates a print with a strong likeness to a watercolor. Thiebaud re-visited landscapes repeatedly, exploring the nuances of form, composition, and color in an array of print media.

Wayne Thiebaud was born in 1920 in Mesa, Arizona, and grew up in Long Beach, California. A deep admirer of drawing, he spent a short time as a professional cartoonist at the Walt Disney Studios and later enrolled in technical school in southern California for commercial art. He worked for an advertising agency and was encouraged to pursue fine art. Thiebaud’s knowledge of and respect for commercial illustration greatly informed his subsequent work, which is marked by the formal geometric order and clearly defined forms characteristic of the trade. Thiebaud’s electric colors, bold style and consumer subject matter lead scholars to associate him with the Pop Art movement. Thiebaud, however, considered himself a realist and preferred to steer away from the Pop Art label. Since his first solo show in the early 1960s, Thiebaud’s work has been acquired by countless museums and collectors around the world.

For more information, please contact Dru Arstark at dru@jimkempner.com or Sarah at sarah@jimkempner.com.