Paul Wagner

PAUL WONNER (1920-2008)

Fruit and Kitchen Towels on Blue and White Kitchen Towel

Signed lower left, "Paul Wonner"
acrylic on paper
9 x 13 1/2 in. (19 x 22 3/4 x 3/4 in.)
2002

29816

PROVENANCE:

Estate of Paul Wonner & William Theophilus Brown
Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento

Born in Tucson in 1920, Paul Wonner moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to study at California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, which is now California College of the Arts. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in 1941, followed by military service in Texas, Wonner moved to New York. There, he studied at the Art Students League for a short period of time and worked as a designer. Wonner moved back to the Bay Area in 1950, where he studied fine arts at UC Berkeley. He stayed in California, working in various library and teaching positions at UC Davis, the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, and UC Santa Barbara.

He is associated with the Bay Area Figurative Movement and received approval from the movement's originators, including David Park, Elmer Bischoff, and Richard Diebenkorn. His figurative paintings before the late 1970s were characterized by expressive brushwork, but later in his career, he adopted the crisp realism of Dutch Baroque still life painting, populating his paintings with objects from everyday contemporary life. His mature work makes use of vacant spaces to separate elements of the composition. Acclaimed for his expressive figurative paintings and distinctive style of still life painting, Wonner had numerous solo exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. His works are held at major museums throughout the United States, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York

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