

Werner Drewes

(1899-1985)



Werner Drewes, painter, printmaker, and teacher was born in Canig, Germany in 1899. His father, a Lutheran Minister, expected him to channel his artistic talents into a career as an architect, but Werner instead chose the vagabond life of an artist. After being drafted into the army and serving his term on the front line in France, Werner was admitted to the Bauhaus in 1921 where he studied under such artists as Klee, Itten, and Muche. Later, he traveled extensively throughout Italy and Spain to study such old masters as Tintoretto, Velasque, and El Greco. Werner survived by selling prints as postcards and the occasional commissioned piece. After marrying Margaret Schrobsdorf, a German nurse working in the Azores, they traveled throughout South America, North America, and Asia. Traveling was always an important source of inspiration for his work.

In 1930, Werner immigrated to New York City with his wife and three young sons. Under Hitler, Germany had become too restrictive an environment for an abstract artist. In New York City, despite the Depression, Werner joined other Bauhaus artists such as Mondrian and Feininger to make a living as an artist. This group became the core of the American Abstract Artists group. Werner taught at the Columbia University, worked on the design of the 1939 Worlds Fair building, and had shows at the Museum of Modern Art, the Kleeman Gallery, and elsewhere. In 1946, he accepted a tenured position at Washington University in St. Louis. With his sons grown, Werner's financial burdens were somewhat eased and he was able to be more creative and productive, further fine-tuning his unique printmaking techniques and use of color. His wife pursued her own art form of weaving and rug making until her death in 1965.

Werner remarried a jeweler and fellow professor from Washington University, Mary Louise Lischer. They moved to Point Pleasant in Bucks County, Pennsylvania to enjoy a rural retirement yet still be near the art hub of New York City. Still lifes and landscapes, many in an abstract style, depict this era of his life. The colors in his work gained brilliance and balance.

Long winters led them to move once again. This time to Reston, Virginia. Here he continued his teaching, showing, creating, and traveling into his 85th year. Arthritis forced a new form of artistic

expression: cut-out collages to add to his still growing collection of oils and prints. The *Rose Catalog* of his prints was published and several videos were taped of him in action and discussing his ideas and methods. He continued to show at major galleries in Germany, Turkey, and in the United States. The Smithsonian held a special show attributing his 65 years as a printmaker at the Museum for American Artists. To the very end, he cut his multiple plate color woodcuts, rubbed his prints by hand with a stylus and added stylistic innovations.

Today, this acclaimed artist has works shown at most major museums throughout the United States and in Europe. We hope you enjoy this small collection near the artist's final home. If you are interested in more information about his life and would like to view a video of the artist at work, or are interested in purchasing other work by this artist, please inquire.

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Shimmering Waters - Chicago Sunset (1960-62)

<http://drewesfineart.com/works/1788182/shimmering-waters-chicago-sunset-1960>