

VAN DOREN WAXTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Richard Diebenkorn: Works on Paper, 1955 – 1967

November 8, 2017 – January 20, 2018

Opening Reception: November 8, 6-8 PM



Richard Diebenkorn, *Untitled*, c. 1963, Gouache and ballpoint pen on paper, CR no. 3343

Van Doren Waxter is pleased to present an exhibition of works on paper from 1955 – 1967 by Richard Diebenkorn (1922-1993). Organized in cooperation with the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation, *Richard Diebenkorn: Works on Paper, 1955 – 1967* features twenty-seven works, most of which are exhibited here for the first time. The presentation is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog, with an introductory essay by Rachel Federman, Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Drawings at The Morgan Library & Museum.

Living in Berkeley, CA in 1955, Diebenkorn began working figuratively, drawing from the model, painting still lifes, landscapes and interiors, much to the surprise of those who were familiar with his earlier Berkeley series of Abstract Expressionist paintings leading up to that point. Diebenkorn's early works from the late 40s through the mid 50s are considered among the finest examples of postwar American abstraction, all the more interesting that he should then change course for a period of about 10 years. His Bay Area figurative years from the mid 1950s through the mid 1960s marked a shift from the artist's early abstractions and set him apart from the prevailing movement of the time and many of his contemporaries, for whom the movement of abstraction was thought to be in direct conflict with figuration. Diebenkorn's change in focus embodied his willingness and

drive to improvise and reinvent himself and, like the early abstractions that preceded these works, his contributions to the figurative movement of the time are too considered singular and exceptional. Of course, the artist would later return to abstraction, most notably with the iconic Ocean Park series for which the artist is famously associated.

The works selected for this exhibition are intimately scaled. While Diebenkorn's works are often evocative of his surroundings, these works provide an even deeper familiarity and access into the artist's way of seeing. Untitled (CR no. 2493), c. 1958, shows the daybed in the living room, the family dog lying on top of the vibrant Indian print fabric which was used decoratively by his wife, Phyllis Diebenkorn, throughout their home. Common domestic scenes become contemplative studies: table settings, a telephone, a view from the window of the artist's studio. In 1966, Diebenkorn moved from Hillcrest Road in Berkeley, CA to Amalfi Drive in Santa Monica, CA. As with previous moves, each new surrounding would come to provoke a change in the artist's palette and in the overall rhythm of his compositions.

Concurrent with the Van Doren Waxter exhibition in New York, the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation has also helped organize a traveling exhibition opening at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA: *Richard Diebenkorn: Beginnings, 1942 – 1955*, a survey of Diebenkorn's work just preceding the works exhibited with Van Doren Waxter in advance of the artist's transition to figuration. The Richard Diebenkorn Foundation has also recently released *Richard Diebenkorn: The Catalogue Raisonné* (Yale University Press, 2016).

About Richard Diebenkorn

Born in Portland, Oregon (1922). Family moved to San Francisco Bay Area (1924). Attended Stanford University (1940–43; BA, 1949). Studied at University of California, Berkeley (1943) while serving in the U. S. Marine Corps (1943–45). Attended California School of Fine Arts (1946). Lived in Sausalito, California, and taught at the California School of Fine Arts (1947–50). Studied at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (MFA, 1951). Taught at the University of Illinois at Urbana (52-53). Began the Berkeley series of Abstract Expressionist paintings (1953). Began working figuratively, drawing from the model and painting still lifes, landscapes and interiors (1955). Taught at the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland (1955–59). Taught at the San Francisco Art Institute (1959–63). Lived in Santa Monica and taught at the University of California, Los Angeles (1966–73). Began the Ocean Park series (1967). Moved to Healdsburg, California (1988). Elected to The Royal Academy, London (1992). Died in Berkeley, California (1993).

Museum exhibitions include: *The Drawings of Richard Diebenkorn*, organized by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; traveled to San Francisco Museum of Art and The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. (1988–89). *Blue Surround, Evolution of Print*, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (1994). Major traveling retrospective: *The Art of Richard Diebenkorn*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; traveled to the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; The Phillips

Collection, Washington, D.C.; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1997–98). *Clubs and Spades*, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (2002). *The Ocean Park Series*, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; traveled to the Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, California; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2011–12). *The Berkeley Years, 1953–1966*, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco; traveled to the Palm Springs Art Museum (2013–14). *Richard Diebenkorn*, Royal Academy of Arts, London (2015). *Richard Diebenkorn: The Sketchbooks Revealed*, Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University (2015-16).

About Van Doren Waxter

Van Doren Waxter's international program emphasizes a multi-generational narrative, placing contemporary artists who are actively creating new work within the context of historically important artists. Van Doren Waxter exclusively represents the James Brooks Foundation, the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation, works on paper from the Al Held Foundation, the Harvey Quaytman Trust, the Alan Shields Estate, and the Hedda Sterne Foundation, as well as contemporary artists including Caetano de Almeida, Jeronimo Elespe, Volker Huller, Jackie Saccoccio, Mika Tajima and Ishmael Randall Weeks. Van Doren Waxter has two Manhattan gallery locations, uptown at 23 East 73rd Street, and downtown at 195 Chrystie Street.

Contact Information

23 E 73rd Street
New York, NY 10021
Hours: Tues-Sat, 10am-6pm
Tel: 212-445-0444
info@vandorenwaxter.com
www.vandorenwaxter.com

Media Contact

Augusto Arbizo
augusto@vandorenwaxter.com