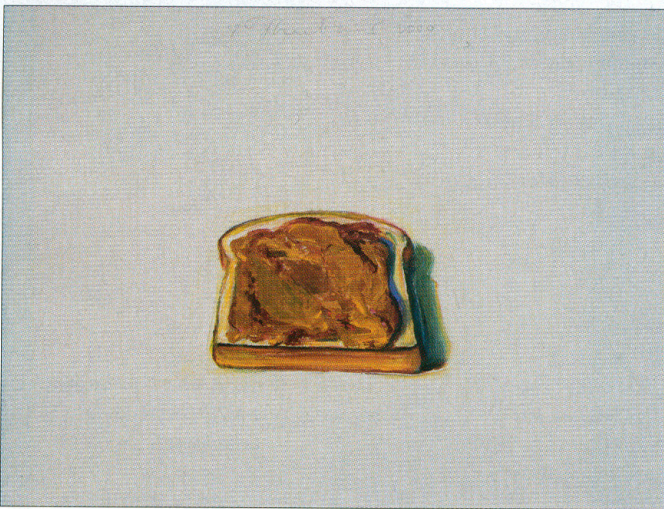


Wayne Thiebaud

Paul Thiebaud

Of the many artists affiliated with Pop art, Wayne Thiebaud is the most unabashedly luscious. His pies and cakes, gumballs and candies, painted in thick impastos and juiced-up colors, have always looked almost as edible as the real thing. Isolated from any conventional still-life context, they possess a strikingly hallucinatory quality. These are the desserts conjured up in febrile dreams or drug trips. When Thiebaud turns his attention to the vertiginous landscape of San Francisco, his native city, the results are equally disorienting: streets rise up like roller coasters, and the city's surrounding hills take on monstrous forms in bright and friendly colors.

The 89-year-old painter's works here, made during the last couple of years, provided a concise summary of the subjects that have attracted him for most of his career. There were several views of the northern California landscape, some realized in paint so slick it looked still wet. Occasionally Thiebaud seemed to be exploiting the countryside's comic potential, as in *Around Yountville (Study)*, 2009, in which a hillside bears a distinct resemblance to an elephant's foot. And so accustomed are we to thinking of the artist as the master of confections that the hulking geologic shape in *Layered Mountain* (2010) looks like a big gooey cake.



Wayne Thiebaud, *Peanut Butter Sandwich*, 2009, oil on canvas board, 12" x 16".
Paul Thiebaud.

Thiebaud has also periodically tackled the figure, but with mixed results. *Woman Reading* (2009–10) shows that this was

territory better left to Richard Diebenkorn, who brought more nuance to it.

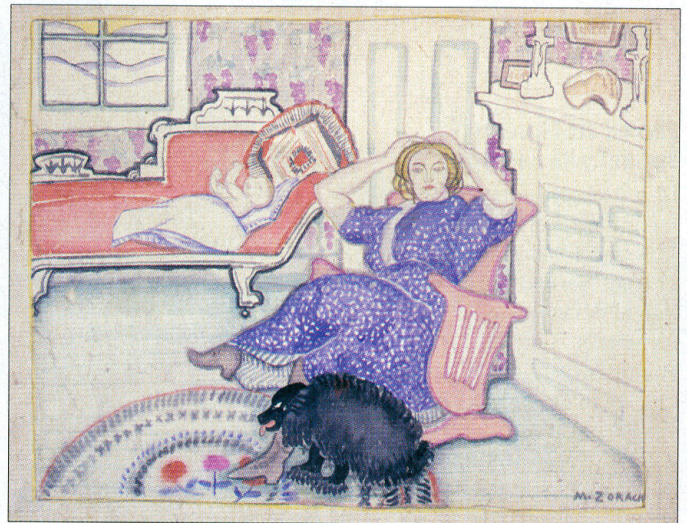
But above all, Thiebaud's high-calorie treats were evident in this show, where viewers could indulge, guilt-free, in his lonely *Peanut Butter Sandwich* (2009) and *Two and a Half Cakes* (2010).

On a sad note, dealer Paul Thiebaud, Wayne's son, died in June; an obituary appears on page 66.

Fairfield Porter & William and Marguerite Zorach

Michael Rosenfeld

Playing "cooked" to the Parrish Art Museum's Fairfield Porter show, titled "Raw," this exhibition featured paintings with a finished yet fresh quality that complemented the roughness of the museum's offerings. "Raw," drawn from the Porter family's gift to the Parrish of selections from Porter's studio, presented him as a working artist, sketching out ideas that appeared in more developed form at Michael Rosenfeld. Here one could almost step into the monumental *July* (1971) and interrupt the four people sitting in Adirondack chairs; a stand of dark evergreens at the end of the lawn



Marguerite Zorach, *Leisure*, 1915, watercolor on paper mounted to board, 12½" x 16¾". Michael Rosenfeld.

lends the scene an edginess, softened only by a homey flowering bush.

Porter's version of nature usually has an element of the domestic, whether it's people or structures. A consummate painter of lawns, usually broken up by tree trunks, he created branches that have a van Gogh-like unruliness. His daffodils and primroses were dashed off in just a few strokes. *Primroses* (1962) has in the foreground a field of flowers and, in the middle distance, a woman viewed from the back. It seems an homage to Monet.

Continuing the domestic theme was a selection of works by William and Marguerite Zorach. Marguerite, not seen here at her most vivid or ambitious, was represented by some 1915 watercolors of homespun New England interiors. Whether depicting people crowded around a stove, or pies cooling on a table, or a woman with a fluffy black dog seated on a flowered rug, the works were imbued with a simple folk-artiness that revealed the artist's interest in handiwork. Clusters of purple grapes adorn one scene's undoubtedly hand-painted wallpaper.

Works by William, better known as a sculptor, included several landscape watercolors. His *Stonington Harbor, Maine* (ca. 1920) stood out, with its faceted facades and sailboat masts seen from the water. The general bluish tone of the work is supported by a lineup of evergreens in the hilly distance. Land and sea offer a compositional balance and a snug fit for the buildings in between.

—Cynthia Nadelman