

**Thiebaud**  
From page B1



Wayne Thiebaud's "Eight Lipsticks" (1988) is currently on display at Pepperdine's Weisman Gallery, among his other works.



Wayne Thiebaud, *Dark Cake*, 1983. Color woodblock, trial proof II, 15 x 17-1/2 inches

Works on Paper, 1948-2004," which just opened at the Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art at Pepperdine, offers plenty of examples of the works for which he was hailed as an early master of the Pop Art movement of the 1960s. It also forays into woodblock printing, lithographs, serigraphs and an early self-portrait filled with energy and homage to Picasso.

The show, curated by museum Director Michael Zakian, is the third Thiebaud exhibition at the Weisman, underscoring its "special relationship" with the artist.

"What fascinates me about Wayne Thiebaud is his longevity," Zakian said. "Most artists are lucky to get a good 15 or 20 years. Wayne has been largely in the public spotlight for 50 years now, with a very diverse range of collectors."

Thiebaud worked as a cartoonist and animator for years before he ever formally studied art. He apprenticed at Walt Disney Studios. He was a cartoonist and filmmaker for the Army Air Force Corps. By the age of 29, he was designing ads for Rexall Drugs.

Degrees from San Jose State University and CSU, Sacramento left him smack in the Abstract Expressionism of the late '40s and '50s. But Thiebaud considered himself a realist and created lithos of everyday objects in precisely patterned designs—like an OCD-driven observer of the quotidian life.

A man in black stands silhouetted against a bright storefront window. "Dinner Table" (1956, stone litho) lays out plates, cutlery and wine with precision enough to satisfy the denizens of Downton Abby. "The Marquee" (1950, color litho) uncovers the beauty and liveliness of the rococo patterns in a vintage movie theatre.

In 1962, Thiebaud debuted his signature paintings depicting everyday American desserts and was recognized as an artist who exemplified, early on, the Pop Art of the Warhol era. Gumball

dispensers lined up in a row, ice cream cones, chocolate cakes and pies of every variety were immortalized by Thiebaud, who by many accounts was fascinated with the American preoccupation with food.

Examples on display at the Weisman include drypoint etchings and color lithos like "Neapolitan Pie Portfolio" and "Pie Case." Thiebaud was intrigued with the cultural image of pie in American vernacular like "pie in the sky," pie-eating contests and pie-throwing antics in Chaplin films. Apparently, a meringue is not just a meringue.

But Thiebaud also brought his extraordinary skills as a graphic artist to bear in striking urban San Francisco landscapes. His vertiginous views of hilly city streets and high-rise buildings like "Down Mariposa Street" (1979, hard ground etching) and "Neighborhood Ridge" (1984, aquatint and drypoint etching) show streets rising almost vertically, and buildings that tower into a skyline dotted with palm trees and tiny, puffy clouds. It's almost a Seussian perspective that defies laws of linear perspective, but absolutely captures San Francisco imagery.

The exhibit also features several pastoral examples of expanses of the Sacramento River Valley, from perspectives above and at ground level. His paintings of Yosemite, as in "Canyon Ridge" (1991, color monotype) and "Round Ridge" (1977, color monotype), reflect the same intense fascination for the drama of Yosemite's towering cliffs that Ansel Adams showed photographically.

But Thiebaud continued to return to his absorption with orderly renditions of everyday objects. In "Black and White Lipsticks" (1964), "Eight Lipsticks" (1988) and "Paint Cans" (1990), he gently mocks the pretensions of being a fine artist, with the same systematic order he treats shoes, bow ties and toys.

Zakian said Thiebaud's appeal "ran the gamut, from art professionals to children.

"This is why Wayne is as relevant today as he was decades ago," Zakian said. "Everyone can find something fascinating. He didn't follow trends, and he painted what he wanted. He said that with everything he did, he tried to do it well."

"Wayne Thiebaud: Works on Paper" runs through March 30 at the Weisman. More information, call 310.506.4851 or visit arts.pepperdine.edu/museum.



"Steep Street," (1989) showcases Thiebaud's background as a graphic artist through the imagery of the urban San Francisco landscape.



All images ©Wayne Thiebaud/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. All rights reserved. "Gumball Machine" (1971), by Wayne Thiebaud, is currently on display at the Weisman Gallery. Color linocut, unique trial proof, 24-1/4 x 18 inches.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!

Celebrate with  
\$0 Enrollment  
2014

Present this ad at the front desk by 1/20/14 for \$0 Enrollment

Ocean Views  
Personal TV's on Cardio  
Free Classes  
Pilates Studio  
Spinning Studio  
Personal Trainers  
Free Weights & Circuit  
Private Steam Rooms  
Infrared Sauna  
Massage  
Outdoor Spinning  
Body Sculpt  
Yoga  
Fusion  
Pilates Mat  
Body Bar

22917 PCH #220, Malibu  
**310.456.7721**

MALIBU HEALTH CLUB

Free Day Pass  
Get Started Today

Call For Special Rates • Free Classes

**Hirsch**

From page B1

and they were fragile, much to Hirsch's frustration.

"I kept rolling my chair over these bundles and breaking them," Hirsch said. "I must have gone through six or seven of them before I realized something has to be done about this."

The solution, he determined, was to put a light source inside the mouth: no more shadows. He just needed someone to design it. He turned to his brother, Jim, an industrial designer, to see what he could do.

"I remember the first thing I said to him," Hirsch recalled. "I said, 'Jim, I'm going to make you a millionaire. And you know what? You're going to do all the work.'"

That was 1984. Little did Hirsch realize that it was going to take nearly 20 years to see his dream realized.

With Jim as the "design guy" and Tom as the "concept guy," the original idea was to produce a three-piece mouthpiece (like what football players wear), that would provide light, suction, isolate the area being worked on and protect the patient's tongue and check from cuts and prevent anything from going down the patient's throat.

Eventually, with a bit of advice from a friend and fellow inventor, the two brothers decided to create it in one piece. During the early design years, the Hirsches went through about two dozen prototypes, each of which cost roughly \$1,500.

None of them hit the right spot, and for about 15 years the project stalled.

Finally, in 2001, Hirsch and his brother had their "inventor's moment," akin to Alexander Graham Bell calling for Watson.



Photo courtesy of Isolite Systems  
Malibu dentist Tom Hirsch and brother Jim spent 20 years developing the Isolite System (above), which provides a light source in the mouth for dentists when performing procedures on patients.

"We didn't have any more money to make the one-piece prototype," Hirsch remembered. "And I guess out of frustration, lack of funds, out of 'I'll show you!' or whatever it was, Jim was using his design program and just hit 'merge' on the computer and forced the three pieces together."

They tried it out. "It fit perfectly," Hirsch said.

"By May 2002, we had a viable product," he said. Now it was time to road test it. They took their new product to the California Dental Association meeting, and it immediately caught on. They sold 66 units that weekend.

"We sold each one for about \$700 and afterward I was like, 'Wow, we just made \$42,000. That's great!'" Hirsch said. "But I remember someone telling me something very important after that: 'Don't fall in love with your calculator.'"

They still needed to make them, and that required capital.

"We had to ask friends and family for money to get it started, mortgaged our houses, my par-

ent's house," Hirsch said. "Three or four times we were on the precarious side of bankruptcy."

The belief that the product would sell kept them going, though. Despite another design change that forced them to wait another six months before delivery of that first Isolite System, the brothers persisted. The rest is history.

Since then, the company has grown every year, reaching annual sales of between 5,000 and 10,000 units.

Since starting out as a family affair—Tom's wife did most of the bookkeeping—the company today has 52 employees. It outsources the manufacturing, but assembly, testing and shipping is done from its Santa Barbara headquarters.

"Everything is made in the United States," Hirsch said. "We are very proud of that."

Although the two brothers encountered setback after setback along the way, Hirsch said he has no regrets.

"I felt that if I had a need, every dentist would have that need," he said.