



The Playground, 1958 – Richard Schmid

Richard Alan Schmid (American, 1934-2021)

The Playground, 1958

Oil on Board

35.5 x 66.5 inches (90.17 cm x 168.91 cm)

Signed, Dated Lower Left: *Richard Schmid 1958*

Artist and Painting Named On Partial Tag On The Reverse:

“Chicago Artist’s Exhibit;

Dimensions Framed: 44” x 73” (111.76 cm x 185.4 cm)

“The Playground”, a very early and rare example of the great realist painters’ work, was commenced by Richard Schmid in 1957, when the young artist was approximately 23 years of age and in the Army, stationed at Ft. Leonardwood, MO. It is believed the painting was finished in 1958, as dated. The only known showing of “The Playground” was in 1958 at the Chicago Artists Exhibition, an event sponsored by the renowned Art Institute of Chicago, where Schmid studied beginning at age eighteen. A PDF of the 1958 brochure referencing the artist and piece is available in the lot information.

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Acquired in late 1950's/1960 from the artist. A signed and dated 1978 letter from the artist to the purchasers, Don and Marian Jones, as well as a signed note from the original owners, both detailing the painting, are included with the sale. Excerpts from both are below.

- **Original note from The Jones' details the purchase of the painting from the artist:** "Around 1960, we luckily were able to buy a large allegorical-like original painting directly from Richard. He was awarded 'Honorable Mention' for it at a Chicago Navy Pier Exhibit. Called 'The Playground', it is an oil painting on Masonite board done when he was in military service. It pictures ancient wars and social injustices..."
- **In the 1978 letter from Richard Schmid to the Jones', the artist writes from his FL residence recalling his early work:** "Dear Joneses, Thanks for the lovely note. I remember 'The Playground' vividly. I painted it in 1957 while I was in the Army at Ft. Leonardwood MO. After completing basic training, the Army had no niche for a painter, so I had no assignment. I sent home for my paints and brushes (and) spent my time decorating the mess halls and working on 'The Playground' on the wall above my bunk.

So it turned out, the weekly inspections were a breeze for me as the inspecting officer spent most of his time on the painting and little if any on myself or my gear. Also, not one of them realized it was an anti-war statement – so much for the military mind... Thanks again for your letter. It evoked many warm memories. Sincerely, Richard Schmid"

EXHIBITED:

1958 Chicago Artists Exhibition, Chicago, IL

Condition Report*: As pictured. In-person inspections available by appointment. Framed Dimensions 44” x 74” Inches

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHY (Online Sources):

Richard Schmid was an American artist, author and teacher born in 1934. He has been referenced as “one of the greatest realist painters of the 20th and early 21st centuries...His paintings are veritable textbooks of color and value relationships, texture, brush handling, and the subtle power of edges in painting”. It was also noted of Richard Schmid, “Critically acclaimed and worshiped by his audience, he’s made realism evolve beyond comprehension...”

His earliest artistic influence came from his maternal grandfather, Julian Oates, an architectural sculptor. Richard’s initial training in landscape painting began at the age of twelve with the Chicago painter Gianni Cilfone. Subsequent studies in anatomy and figure drawing allowed his entrance at eighteen into the American Academy of Art in Chicago where he continued into the full range of

classical techniques under William H. Mosby.

William Mosby, a graduate of the Belgian Royal Academy in Brussels and the Superior Institute in Antwerp, was a technical expert on European and American realism. Studies with him involved working exclusively from life, at first using the conceptual and technical methods of the Flemish, Dutch, and Spanish masters, and eventually all of the late 19th century European and American painters.

By the age of 18 Schmid was a serious painter; by 19 he was already supporting himself... He sold his work on the streets of Chicago, and then, after moving to Manhattan, on the streets of New York. He continued selling on the streets even after galleries took his work, partly because it takes several years for a gallery to establish an artist, and partly to reach a market that might otherwise never know or be able to afford his work. Since then he has won almost every major art award in the United States.

Richard Schmid holds a Doctorate in Fine Arts and has won many major Fine Art Awards in America including the \$100,000 National Arts for the Parks Competition for his painting of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1987. In addition, Richard Ormond, John Singer Sargent's grandnephew, presented him with The John Singer Sargent Medal for Lifetime Achievement in 2000 during The American Society of Portrait Artists Foundation's Conference held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. He has exhibited in museum shows, including the Smithsonian, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Academy of Design, and the Beijing Exhibition Center in the Peoples Republic of China, and is represented in several museum collections.

Richard Schmid's masterwork, 'Abbotsford House' Oil 30" x 50" was presented to her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Royal Opening of Abbotsford's new Visitors Center in Melrose, Scotland. Doug Pringle, president of The K.T. Wiedemann Foundation, Inc. commissioned Richard Schmid to paint Abbotsford- The Home of Sir Walter Scott in 2011. The completed painting was shipped to Scotland and installed at Abbotsford on July 3, 2013.

Throughout his career, Richard Schmid had more than 50 one-man shows and wrote several influential books. He has promoted fine art education through his books, articles, workshops, seminars, and television presentations. His landmark book, ***ALLA PRIMA: Everything I Know About Painting***, first published in 1998 by Stove Prairie Press, LLC, went into thirteen printings. The greasy enhanced book, ***ALLA PRIMA II: Everything I Know About Painting and More***, published in September 2013 is considered "the finest instructional Fine Art book in the world." From the original book, Schmid writes:

□ Somewhere within all of us is a wordless center, a part of us that hopes to be immortal in some way, a part that has remained unchanged since we were children, the source of our strength and compassion. This faint confluence of the tangible and the spiritual is where Art comes from. It has no known limits, and once you tap into it you will realize what truly rich choices you have. May each painting you do from that sacred place include an expression of gratitude for the extraordinary privilege of being an artist. ~ Richard Schmid, 1998 - Excerpt from *Alla Prima*

Richard Schmid passed away peacefully on April 18, 2021 at the age of 86 in New England.

His works have been shown in:

- Chicago Art Institute Artists Exhibition
- K. T. Wiedemann Foundation, Wichita, KS
- Abbotsford, Melrose, Scotland: The Home of Sir Walter Scott
- The Smithsonian Institution
- The National Academy of Sciences
- The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
- The Art Institute of Chicago
- The Harvard Club
- The Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts
- The National Academy of Design
- The American [Watercolor](#) Society
- The Thomas Gilcrease Museum
- The Frye Museum
- The Allied Artists of America
- The Colorado Historical Society
- The Butler Institute of American Art
- The Holter Museum
- The St. Louis Artist's Guild
- The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center
- The Salmagundi Club
- The Tucson Museum of Art
- The Albuquerque Museum of Art
- The Loveland Museum
- The Beijing Exhibition Center, China

References:

Widewalls, <https://www.widewalls.ch/artists/richard-schmid>

Lines And Color, <http://linesandcolors.com/2021/04/20/richard-schmid-1934-2021/>

West Wind Fine Arts, <https://www.westwindfineart.com/richard-schmid>

Sentinel Source,
https://www.sentinelsource.com/archive/partners-in-life-and-art/article_e5fd6ae2-8646-5e07-a00d-d629697a76c9.html

Biography Section Official Site,
<https://www.richardschmid.com/category-s/1832.htm>