

Alfred Bader

Alfred Bader Fine Arts

[The Realism of John Whalley - The Sheldon
Swape Art Museum]

1988

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THE REALISM OF JOHN WHALLEY

JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 28, 1988

THE SHELDON SWOPE ART MUSEUM



THE REALISM OF JOHN WHALLEY

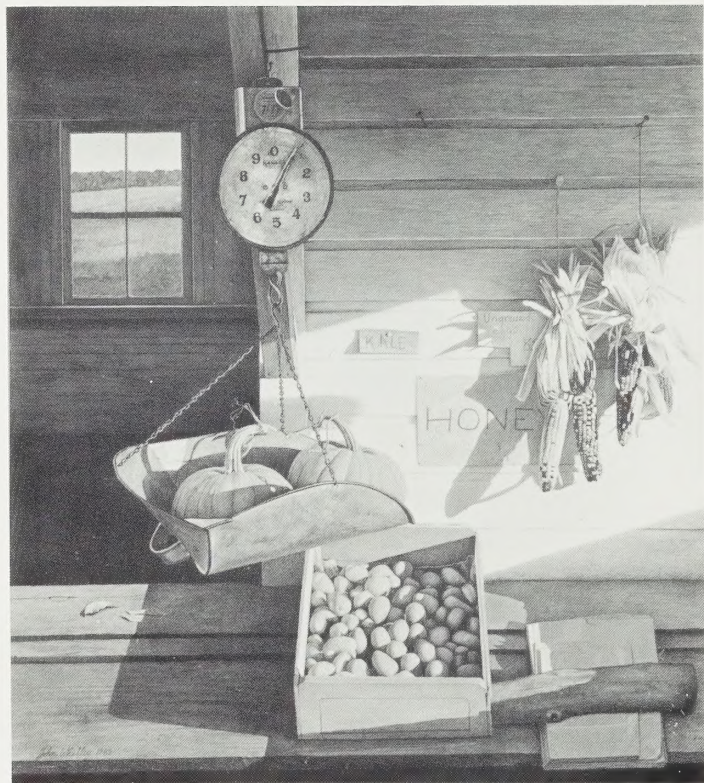
Exhibition catalogue by
Edward R. Quick



January 30 - February 28, 1988

The Sheldon Swope Art Museum
25 South Seventh Street
Terre Haute, Indiana

Cover: "*Still-life with Crock*," oil, 1986, 18"x 24"



"The Farm Sale", egg tempera on panel, 1982, 25" x 22½"

THE REALISM OF JOHN WHALLEY

American art has a strong background in realism. Even when early academic circles in America and Europe relegated technical perfection to the level of a mechanical feat, realist paintings were consistently admired for their accuracy and detail. We still have that admiration for the consummate skill of new realists such as John Whalley, and understand better than ever before the demands which the realist image exert on the artist's imagination.

The still-life paintings, the portraits, the scenes which Whalley details are not mere imitations of unimproved nature. The artist infuses a new strength, quiet dignity, and beauty into a familiar setting. His focus on his subject elevates its importance, significance and depth. Colors, forms, textures and meanings all have strength as they are bonded into a single image where their graceful blend establishes appreciation from even the most casual of observers.

Born 1954 in Brooklyn, but soon thereafter moving to rural New York, John Whalley has a special combination of refined skills and love of the marvellous details especially to be found in a rural setting. He and his family now live in Standish, Maine. He sees the Maine setting, however, with the acknowledged artistic influence of Jan Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Jean-Baptiste Chardin, Albrecht Durer, Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, and Andrew Wyeth.

Whalley's paintings and drawings stimulate the viewer on many levels. He focuses figures and shows them in persuasively three-dimensional space with dramatic morning or evening light which is clear and yet soft. He records scenes which are often a combination of interior and exterior environments, of human and natural forms, organic and inorganic. Handling a portrait or a still-life, Whalley concentrates on the subject in the same way that the human brain concentrates -- not seeing every single item in concise detail, but capturing specific elements on the subject and reducing definition on surrounding background compositions.

There is a superb drama in the detachment of John Whalley's portraits. Every sitter is an individual who is alive and vibrant in her or his own world, silently involved in activity which is ennobled by the artist's concentration and accuracy of observation. This accuracy in moving portrayals is dazzling in its seemingly effortless artistic virtuosity and is pleasing psychologically. We **know** these people, somehow, and we feel involved with their lives.

John Whalley expresses himself, with profound beauty, by concentrating on two or three essential elements. He records all of the details of his subjects -- the surfact textures, volumes and silhouette, interplay of light and pressure -- and keeps our attention focused on the element of his greatest interest, confronting us head-on with the beauty in the common scene, the specialness of the everyday action. The realism of John Whalley is the particular, special quality of creating intimate, timeless beauty from common subjects in our world.

The Sheldon Swope Art Gallery takes great pride in presenting John Whalley's first one-man exhibition in Indiana and is grateful to the private collectors whose cooperation and support have made it possible. Chief among these are Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader, whose fine taste in art and superb collecting are enhanced by their willingness to share their finds with an art-loving public. We are all enriched by their generosity.

Edward R. Quick
Director

CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION

[All of the pictures listed below are from the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader, except as noted]

Basket and Spade

Watercolor, 1987

Basket of Sweet Corn

Oil, 1986

Basket with Apples

Oil, 1986

Beaver Pond

Watercolor, 1983

The Bell (Above the Harbor)

Pencil, 1981

Bowl of Peaches

Watercolor, 1986

Cans and Creamer

Pencil, 1986

Cans and Creamer

Oil, 1987

Cape Elizabeth

Watercolor, 1986

Carts and Barn

Watercolor, 1983

The Carpenter

Tempera, 1981

Chemical Still-Life

Tempera, 1980

Child in Room

Oil, undated

Deer Portrait

Pencil, 1984

Ducks

Pencil, 1985

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. William Treul

The Farm Scale

Tempera, 1982

Farm Scale

Pencil, 1982

Green Cart in Field

Watercolor, 1983

Isabel Bader

Pencil, 1986

Late Sun

Oil, 1986

Linda and Matthew

Pencil, 1987

Loading Dock

Tempera, 1981

Mantouk Shell

Pencil, 1981

Matthew

Pastel, 1985

Collection of Mrs. Leland Howard

Morning Chores

Watercolor, 1984

The Newborn (Linda and Matthew)

Pencil, 1983

Pears and Grapes

Oil, 1986

Pears and Grapes

Pencil, 1986

Self-Portrait

Pencil, 1985

Shell

Tempera, 1985

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. G. Bishop

Shell with Mums

Watercolor, 1986

Shell with Mums

Oil, 1986

Still-Life with Cans

Watercolor, 1986

Still-Life with Crock

Oil, 1986

Still-Life with Paintbrush

Pencil, 1985

Still-Life with Paintbrush

Oil, 1986

Tools

Tempera, 1983

Untitled (Old Woman)

Lithograph 10 of 12, undated

Collection of Mrs. Leland Howard

Untitled (Peaches and Axe)

Tempera, 1984

Collection of Mrs. Leland Howard

The Woodpile

Pencil, 1986





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