

Milton Wolsky

A MID-CENTURY MIDWESTERN ARTIST

Second Floor Gallery

May 7 - July 23, 2022

Gallery Statement:

Milton Wolsky was born in Omaha, Nebraska in January of 1916. He dedicated his entire life to art. Milton studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and later at the Art Students League of New York under the direction of Julian Levi and Hans Hofmann.

He was drafted into the Army at age 26, and illustrated for the Eighth Army Corp of Engineers during the occupation of Japan. From 1946–1954, he worked from a New York City studio, his work regularly appearing in Time, Redbook, Collier's, McCall's and Esquire, to name a few. Post-war America is considered to be the "golden age" for illustrators and Milton was considered to be among the very best; this list includes Norman Rockwell.

Despite his success in New York, he had a longing to come home to the Midwest. In 1954 he purchased "El Paraiso", the J. Laurie Wallace studio and returned to Omaha. He continued to earn his living with illustrative and commercial art. However, his true love remained with contemporary oils. A multi-talented artist, he produced realism, contemporary and abstract art with the same skill and expert results.

Milton befriended several "starving artists" during the years he spent in NYC, and word has it that when they had a birthday, he'd take everyone out to dinner at a swanky restaurant. When it was Milton's birthday they would all bring pot luck and the gift of a small painting to him...Milton gave his collection of abstract paintings, including Paul Klee, Hans Hofmann and Julian Levi to the Joslyn Art Museum in 1967. The Hans Hofmann painting still hangs in Gallery 15 at the Joslyn

Milton was a member of the Society of Illustrators, American Watercolor Society and a fellow in the International Institute of Arts and Letters. He was listed in "Who's Who in Art" from 1956 until his death in 1981. He exhibited his works by invitation at various museums including Joslyn Art Museum, Rochester Art Museum, Colorado Springs Fine Art Center, Walker Art Center, as well as the Smithsonian Institute and the U.S. Air Force Historical Foundation. He was one of two Nebraska artists included in the inaugural "Art in Embassy Program", a program President and Mrs. Kennedy began in 1963. Despite this recognition, Milton experienced little monetary gain from his art. He personally did little, if anything, to promote his own work.