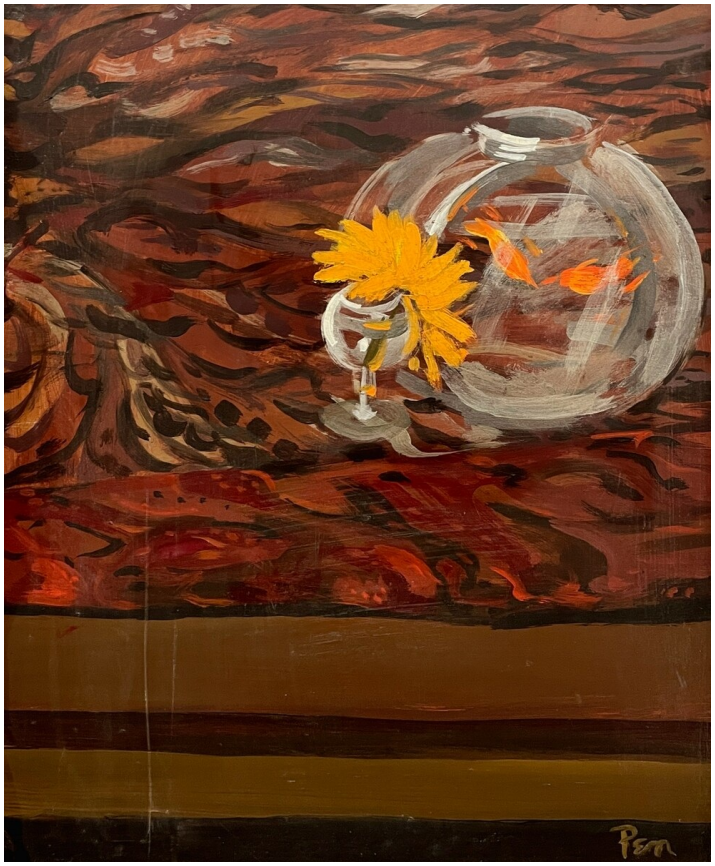

Rudolph T. Pen (American, 1918 - 1989)
Untitled (Still Life with Zinnia and Gold Fish Bowl), ca. 1950s
Oil on Masonite, in artist's original frame
24 x 19 inches (framed 28 x 23 inches)
Signed Pen, lower right
#21978

Rudolph T. Pen

Rudolph Pen, a prolific American artist, was a Chicago native. He graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago and served on its faculty from 1948 until 1963. His long association with the "Institute" included service as President of the Alumni Association and Director of Oxbow, the Art Institute's summer school of painting.

His work has been exhibited in numerous galleries. Pen is the recipient of numerous prizes and awards, including a Huntington Hartford Foundation Grant, an award from the National Academy of Design in New York City and the Art Institute of Chicago's prestigious Joseph Ryerson Fellowship.

The work of Rudolph Pen may be seen in public collections (The Library of Congress, The Vincent Price Collection, The Davenport Museum, Art Institute of Chicago) as well as in private collections throughout America.

Subject and Medium:

Pen's work embraces a large variety of subject matter, inspired by his extensive travel in Europe, South and Central America, the Caribbean, and North Africa. His subjects include landscapes, seascapes, horse races, boat races, still lifes, dancers and musicians as well as medical, religious and political works. As a courtroom artist, Pen's work was often seen on TV during a particularly exciting time in Chicago's history. He worked in a wide range of media including oil, acrylic, watercolor, ink, charcoal and pastel. He was a member of the American Watercolor Society. Additionally, there is a large selection of prints and drawings.

Style and Philosophy:

Rudolph Pen understood on an instinctive and molecular level that all things move. His work explores the way in which things move within unusual (often trapezoidal) shapes. Pen believed that our eyes rarely look at anything steadily and directly. His work leads the viewer beyond the confinement of the "square." Most importantly, Pen felt that innovation is the key to art. He is documented as the first artist to advocate shaped canvases.

Source: Ron Pen, son of the artist.