



# Wayne Thiebaud: A Paintings Retrospective

*Steven A. and Adam Gopnik Nash*

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## **Wayne Thiebaud: A Paintings Retrospective** Steven A. and Adam Gopnik Nash

From Publishers Weekly: "He is an American painter, someone who paints for a living and whose subject, for all its formal perfection, is what we are to make of American abundance," writes New Yorker art critic Gopnik in his long, in-joke introductory essay to Thiebaud's oeuvre now touring the country as a retrospective. As Gopnik makes clear, Thiebaud is famous for his lush early '60s paintings of cakes, other sweets and people eating them, but this book and the exhibition it documents are put together by chief curator Nash of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, who also provides an essay. They reveal the painter to be preoccupied with a larger slice of American life. The impossible perspectives and multigraded blues and yellows of the cityscapes here seem more bizarrely true to San Francisco than stills from *Vertigo*. *Heavy Traffic*, *Deli Bowls*, *Tie Rack* and *Rabbit* are just what they say they are, yet their surfaces coax us into looking at them harder and longer than such banal objects could possibly entice on their own. Such dressings-up themselves are commonplace in media-saturated American life, and Thiebaud redirects their energy unerringly throughout the 160 illustrations here, most in color. One might wish for a less insidery guide to the work than Gopnik's, but the panache of his biographical prose carries readers right into the paintings, well and comprehensively selected by Nash, whose own essay provides welcome detail on Thiebaud's working life. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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