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Jester *by* Norman Rockwell

Lithograph on Paper - Main Subject: Illustration

Item Number
1354596098

Retail Value
$4,000

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$2,950
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Dimensions (As Shown)
20.5W x 25.25H Inches
52.07W x 64.14H cm

Medium
Lithograph on Paper

Edition
- Limited Edition of 200
- Hand-Signed
- Numbered

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About Norman Rockwell

Born in New York City in 1894, Norman Rockwell always wanted to be an artist. At age 14, Rockwell enrolled in art classes at The New York School of Art (formerly The Chase School of Art). Two years later, in 1910, he left high school to study art at The National Academy of Design. He soon transferred to The Art Students League, where he studied with Thomas Fogarty and George Bridgman. Fogarty's instruction in illustration prepared Rockwell for his first commercial commissions. From Bridgman, Rockwell learned the technical skills on which he relied throughout his long career.

Rockwell found success early. He painted his first commission of four Christmas cards before his sixteenth birthday. While still in his teens, he was hired as art director of *Boys' Life* , the official publication of the Boy Scouts of America, and began a successful freelance career illustrating a variety of young people's publications.

At age 21, Rockwell's family moved to New Rochelle, New York, a community whose residents included such famous illustrators as J.C. and Frank Leyendecker and Howard Chandler Christy. There, Rockwell set up a studio with the cartoonist Clyde Forsythe and produced work for such magazines as *Life* , *Literary Digest* , and *Country Gentleman* . In 1916, the 22-year-old Rockwell painted his first cover for *The Saturday Evening Post* , the magazine considered by Rockwell to be the "greatest show window in America." Over the next 47 years, another 321 Rockwell covers would appear on the cover of the *Post* . Also in 1916, Rockwell married Irene O'Connor; they divorced in 1930.

The 1930s and 1940s are generally considered to be the most fruitful decades of Rockwell's career. In 1930 he married Mary Barstow, a schoolteacher, and the couple had three sons, Jarvis, Thomas, and Peter. The family moved to Arlington, Vermont, in 1939, and Rockwell's work began to reflect small-town American life.

In 1943, inspired by President Franklin Roosevelt's address to Congress, Rockwell painted the *Four Freedoms* paintings. They were reproduced in four consecutive issues of *The Saturday Evening Post* with essays by contemporary writers. Rockwell's interpretations of *Freedom of Speech* , *Freedom to Worship* , *Freedom from Want* , and *Freedom from Fear* proved to be enormously popular. The works toured the United States in an exhibition that was jointly sponsored by the *Post* and the U.S. Treasury Department and, through the sale of war bonds, raised more than $130 million for the war effort.

Although the *Four Freedoms* series was a great success, 1943 also brought Rockwell an enormous loss. A fire destroyed his Arlington studio as well as numerous paintings and his collection of historical costumes and props.

In 1953, the Rockwell family moved from Arlington, Vermont, to Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Six years later, Mary Barstow Rockwell died unexpectedly. In collaboration with his son Thomas, Rockwell published his autobiography, *My Adventures as an Illustrator* , in 1960. *The Saturday Evening Post* carried excerpts from the best-selling book in eight consecutive issues, with Rockwell's *Triple Self-Portrait* on the cover of the first.

In 1961, Rockwell married Molly Punderson, a retired teacher. Two years later, he ended his 47-year association with *The Saturday Evening Post* and began to work for *Look* magazine. During his 10-year association with *Look* , Rockwell painted pictures illustrating some of his deepest concerns and interests, including civil rights, America's war on poverty, and the exploration of space.

In 1973, Rockwell established a trust to preserve his artistic legacy by placing his works in the custodianship of the Old Corner House Stockbridge Historical Society, later to become Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge. The trust now forms the core of the Museum's permanent collections. In 1976, in failing health, Rockwell became concerned about the future of his studio. He arranged to have his studio and its contents added to the trust. In 1977, Rockwell received the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Lithograph on Paper

This printing technique uses a planographic process in which prints are pulled on a special press from a flat stone or metal surface. The surface has been chemically treated so that ink sticks only to the design areas, and is repelled by the non-image areas. Lithography was invented in Germany in 1798. The early history of lithography is dominated by great French artists such as Daumier and Delacroix, and later by Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Braque and Miro.

Based on the principle that oil and water repel, a Lithograph is created when an artist produces an oil-based or pen image on a stone or piece of metal. This surface is then moistened and covered with an oil-based ink. The resulting chemical reaction

between the oil and water drives away the ink on the surface except where the drawing was first done. Fine quality paper is then placed against the surface and a lithographic press is used to create the print. Modern technology and processes have provided artists with many unique methods with which to create magnificent lithographs. In the 1890s color lithography became enormously popular with French artists, Toulouse-Lautrec most notably of all, and by 1900 the medium in both color and monotone was an accepted part of printmaking, although France and the US have used it more than other countries. George Bellows, Alphonse Mucha, Pablo Picasso, Jasper Johns, David Hockney and Robert Rauschenberg are a few of the artists who have produced most of their prints in the medium.

As a special form of lithography, the Serilith process is sometimes used. Serilith are mixed media original prints created in a process where an artist uses the lithograph and serigraph process. The separations for both processes are hand drawn by the artist. The serilith technique is used primarily to create fine art limited print editions.

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