



MACCONNAL - MASON

ESTABLISHED 1893



John Koch (1909 - 1978)

Interior – The Soyers, 1966

Oil on canvas

30 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 25 in – 76.5 x 63.5 cm

Frame size

36 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 31 $\frac{1}{2}$ in – 92.7 x 80 cm

Exhibitions

New York, NY, National Academy of Design, 142nd Annual Exhibition, 1967;

New York, NY, Kraushaar Galleries, Inc., John Koch, 17 February – 8 March 1969, no.4, illus. in catalogue;

New York, NY, The New York Cultural Center, John Koch, 21 February – 1 April 1973, no.39, illus. in catalogue;

New York, NY, Kraushaar Galleries, Inc., John Koch: A Memorial Exhibition, 4 – 29 November 1980,
no.12, listed in catalogue;

New York, NY, The New York Historical Society, John Koch: Painting a New York Life, 16 October 2001

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27 January 2002, no.59, illus. in catalogue

Literature:

Michael M. Thomas et al., John Koch: Painting a New York Life, Scala Publishers Ltd., London, 2001

Artist description:

John Koch was an important figure in 20th century American Realism, best known for his paintings of interiors, portraits, and carefully observed social scenes. His work often depicted elegantly dressed figures within refined domestic settings, many inspired by his own Manhattan apartment, and frequently included subtle classical and art historical references.

Born in Toledo, Ohio, he spent much of his childhood in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In 1928 he moved to New York before spending several formative years in Paris, where he developed his technique through the close study of Old Master paintings in the Louvre and other museums. Largely self-taught, he drew particular inspiration from the great European traditions of figure painting and interior scenes. Over time he developed a distinctive realist style, characterised by precise draftsmanship, theatrical composition, and an exceptional treatment of light.

Koch's paintings are notable not only for their technical refinement but also capturing New York's intellectual and artistic circles during the mid-20th century. His wife was the distinguished pianist and teacher Dora Zaslavsky and the couple's friends, students and fellow artists frequently appeared as subjects in Koch's work. He remained dedicated to realism throughout his career despite working in a period increasingly dominated by abstraction. As he remarked: "I am quite visibly a Realist, occupied essentially with human beings, the environments they create, and their relationships."

His first solo exhibition was held in 1939 at the Kraushaar Galleries in New York City, where his painting *East River* was acquired by the Brooklyn Museum. The gallery continued to represent him for the next 34 years, hosting more than a dozen solo exhibitions. Koch was elected an Associate member of the National Academy of Design in 1953 and became a full Academician in 1954. He received the gold medal of the National Arts Club in 1963 and was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1970. After his death, the New-York Historical Society honoured his legacy with the exhibition *John Koch: Painting a New York Life* in 2001–2002.

His works are held in major American museum collections including Massachusetts, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; New York, Brooklyn Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art and Washington DC, Smithsonian American Art Museum.