

California Artists during the early 20th Century

A small intro to United States and California's history at the beginning of the Century

The 20th century opened with promise for the United States and California. Soon enough, two events shook people across the country; the assassination of President McKinley in 1901 and the great earthquake and fire in San Francisco in 1906 rattled Americans.

These tragic events were framed by impressive developments: the creation of the first motion pictures (silent); the first sustained, controlled, heavier-than-air flight by the Wright Brothers; more oil discoveries in California; the rebuilding of San Francisco; and the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914. The same year that grand world expositions were planned for San Francisco and San Diego, the rest of the world clashed in the worst war ever launched -- "the war to end all wars." By 1917, the United States had declared war on Germany and entered the globe-encompassing conflict.

The international expositions to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal introduced Americans to artistic developments from other countries and from other regions of the U.S. The impact of this introduction reverberated well into the 20th century. Yet, these international fairs played out against the backdrop of a world at war. Although relations between countries were shut off, the influences of art and ideas flowed across physical boundaries. You will learn how California artists benefited from this experience.

Student Outcomes

- Identify artists, stylistic approaches, and subject matter associated with Tonalism and California Impressionism.
- Develop and demonstrate the skills to read a focus artwork (visual literacy) to interpret its formal and expressive properties and its content, meaning, or purpose relative to the Monterey Peninsula Art Colony and Impressionism.
- Cite the historical, geographic, and/or social influences evident in California artworks produced during this time period.

The opening of the Panama Canal was another event that affected San Francisco and San Diego.

Crossing the Isthmus was one of three routes available to Argonauts (gold seekers) en route to California between 1849 and 1853. The 50-mile trip across the Isthmus was shorter than the overland route or a trip around Cape Horn, but it wasn't without its perils; those crossing the Isthmus faced danger and disease. Many travelers lost their lives.

The Panama Canal was built between 1904 and 1914. The first ship went through on August 15, 1914. With the completion of the **Panama Canal**, both San Diego (the first American port north of the Panama Canal on the Pacific coast) and San Francisco

announced that they would host an exposition to celebrate this engineering feat. The rivalry between hosts was resolved when each city announced separate fairs, drawing international visitors to California. The 1910 census revealed that San Diego had a population of about 39,000, and San Francisco had a population of nearly 417,000.

- San Diego opened the **Panama-California Exposition** on December 31, 1914.
- San Francisco's **Panama-Pacific International Exposition** opened on February 20 and ran to December 4, 1915.
- The outbreak of World War I (summer of 1914) impacted these plans.



At midnight on December 31, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson pressed a button (in Washington, D.C.) that turned on the lights and opened the Panama California Exposition. This fair celebrated the region's romantic ties to its Spanish past. Influences from this era remain in Balboa Park. The fair took place in Balboa Park and some of the architectural gems from that event are still in use today.



The California State Building, San Diego Exposition, 1916, Colin Campbell Cooper (1856-1937)

Colin Campbell Cooper was a well-known American Impressionist painter. He and his wife, **Emma** (also an artist) spent their younger years in Philadelphia and New York. In 1915, they traveled to the expositions in San Diego and San Francisco. Cooper exhibited work in both fairs; the work shown in San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition earned a Gold Medal for oil painting and a Silver Medal for watercolor. Cooper also produced a series of paintings portraying each of the Fair's buildings, such as *The California State Building*, shown here. These paintings reflect the artist's interest in architecture.

The Coopers spent the winter of 1915/1916 in Los Angeles. In 1921, following Emma's death, Cooper moved to Santa Barbara.

The California State Building remained after the Fair and was reborn as the Museum of Man, which is an attraction in Balboa Park today.

Some of the fun fast facts:

- The Fair site was a man-made fill located in the current Marina district.
- The Fair welcomed 18 million visitors during its run.
- A total of 11,403 artworks were exhibited in 120 galleries of the Palace of Fine Arts.

- The Fair's name, **Jewel City**, was selected through a contest.
- The Tower of Jewels was covered with 102,000 colored glass Novagem jewels.
- One slogan introduced during the Fair was "From the City that Was to the City that Is!"



Palace of Fine Arts, 1915, Colin Campbell Cooper (1856-1937)

The Palace of Fine Arts -- the only remaining building from the San Francisco PPIE - - was rebuilt in 1965 and restored again in 2009. Today, it houses the Exploratorium, a hands-on science museum. In this painting, a rare nocturnal version of Impressionism, Colin Campbell Cooper captured the elegant Palace of Fine Arts in all of its reflected glory.

The Pursuit of Light and Development of Art Colonies

At the outset of the 20th century, California's population shifted from north to south. Beyond demographic changes in the general public, artists sought new places to work and live. Some moved to the coastal communities beyond San Francisco or to valley communities outside of Los Angeles. The 1906 earthquake and fire compelled several artists to leave San Francisco and head to the Monterey Peninsula.

Only a few years earlier, in 1903, developers created the art community of Carmel. The attraction of smaller communities, picturesque scenery, and the silvery fog of the Monterey Peninsula began a generation earlier when **Jules Tavernier** set up his studio in Monterey.

In 1847, a reported 459 people lived in San Francisco. Far fewer lived in Los Angeles. What event dramatically impacted San Francisco's growth one year later? Because California was admitted to the Union in 1850, you can consult census records for comparative numbers in these two cities over a 70 year period.

By 1920, Los Angeles' population exceeded San Francisco's. What might have led to this population growth? During the late-19th and early-20th century, southern California's population swelled in response to land promotions, oil discoveries, development of sanitariums, and the attractive climate. Nowhere in California was the phrase "health, fg wealth, and sunshine" more applicable than along the coast and in the valleys of sunny, southern California.

Artists, too, were drawn by the light of coastal and inland colonies such as Pasadena, the Arroyo Seco, and Laguna Beach. According to census figures, the population boom in southern California represented the largest internal migration in U.S. history!

Consider the patterns of population in California's two major cities:

	1850	1870	1900	1920
San Francisco	35,000	149,473	342,782	506,676
Los Angeles	1,610	5,728	102,479	576,673

The two World's Fairs (1915) also catalyzed change in artistic attitudes. Both the number of practicing artists and artists' subject matter changed in response to the World's Fairs. **The Panama-Pacific Expositions in San Francisco and San Diego showcased local and international artwork. Artists working at this time were influenced by European Modernism and American Impressionism and Tonalism.** Whatever provincialism existed before was shaken by external influences.

Artists working in California at this time received their share of recognition and awards. These artists felt great pride and validation by showcasing their work internationally and competing with other artists from different countries. You'll discover how artists overcame isolation through the formation of art associations and art colonies.

Tonalism, another stylistic development that first occurred on the East Coast, had a distinctive impact in northern California, which reflected the differences in landscape and light between the regions. The muted palette and simplified picture plane of Tonalism suited the character of northern California. Both California Impressionism and Tonalism held sway from the late-19th to early-20th century in California. By this time, there were more professional women artists working in California than in previous decades. You will meet a few of them now.

Impressionism originated in Paris. New York artists interpreted the concept of perceived light" differently than their French contemporaries. The once-radical approach appeared later in California than in Paris and New York; once there, it stayed longer. Although California artists embraced Impressionism, the style played out more strongly in sun-drenched southern California and in the beach communities.

In the following sessions, you will review examples of Tonalism and California Impressionism.



Mountains of Santa Cruz, circa 1875, Jules Tavernier (1844-1889)

Jules Tavernier was one of the first California artists who rejected the tenets of the Hudson River School. Instead, he gravitated to a more intimate scale and more poetic interpretations.

Born in Paris in 1844, Tavernier studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and exhibited to acclaim at the prestigious Salon. In 1873, Tavernier immigrated to the U.S. and sketched his way across the country as an illustrator for *Harper's Weekly*. From 1874 to 1884, he divided his time between San Francisco and Monterey -- he was the first serious artist to set up his base on the Peninsula.

Mountains of Santa Cruz, painted during the same period, reflects the artist's move to the Monterey Peninsula. Notice the way that Tavernier infuses light through the trees - -almost as a mist -- to gently illuminate the foreground. Although the style draws from the loose brushwork of Impressionism and incorporates ephemeral qualities of light, the palette is a harmonious blend of greens, grays, and beiges that reflects Tavernier's early receptivity to the Tonalist approach.

Around 1884, Tavernier fled his debts and "escaped" to Hawaii, where he produced moody nocturnes of active volcanoes. These works were so popular there that he eventually became known as the official painter to the king.



[George Innes](#)(1825-1894), California 1894

These works are presented together to show the significant connection between the artists **William Keith and George Inness**. At the time, Inness was considered one of the most important artists working in America. Keith was held in high esteem in California and known in art circles throughout the country. Inness defined the East Coast Tonalist style. His trip to California in 1891 and his friendship with Keith were catalysts in bringing these ideas to the West Coast.

Harvey Jones writes:

Keith and Inness also shared an interest in the religious philosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg, whose metaphysical and mystical writings on the all-pervading immanence of God in the essence of the visual world struck a harmonious chord with the artists' own mysticism. Inness's visit to San Francisco is said to have revitalized Keith's flagging enthusiasm and refined his artistic theories.

Keith produced *Carmel Bay* during his 1891 trip to the Monterey Peninsula. Although painted with a brighter palette than many of his works from this period, the tones are still subdued. The depiction of the area is also softer and more intimate than Keith's earlier landscape views. This softness reflects Keith's move toward Tonalism and Inness' influence on his work.

Inness' *California* reflects the limited palette and warm tones typical of Tonalists. Their works, when set in a more intimate scale, were intended to evoke the spiritual qualities of

nature.



Cypress Point, 1892,
William Keith (1838-1911)

Like so many of his San Francisco-area colleagues, Keith was captivated by the unique scenery of Monterey: the desolate coastline, the white sand, the gnarled forms of the cypress trees, and the frothy wild surf. Light here was, more often than not, diffused by a silvery fog.

The work of **Xavier Martinez and Gottardo Piazzoni** exemplifies the Tonalists' approach: subjective response to the spiritual qualities of nature; muted, harmonious color palettes; simplified forms; and flattened perspective. At the vanguard of Modernism in Northern California, both were influential as teachers. Both artists spent extended periods of time in the Monterey area and, despite their extensive travels and awards, both considered the area their artistic haven.



Born in Guadalajara in 1869, **Xavier Martinez** demonstrated an early talent for painting. In 1893, he traveled to San Francisco, where he was sponsored by the wife of the Consul General for Mexico to study at the California School of Design. In 1897, Martinez went to Paris to study at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux Arts. Martinez returned to San Francisco in 1901 and opened a studio, which became the gathering spot for the city's Bohemian crowd. The 1906 earthquake and fire destroyed his studio. In the aftermath, he went to live with his friend **Herman Whitaker** in Piedmont, where he married one of Whitaker's daughters. The couple's home became the center of the avant-garde circle of artists and writers, including writer Jack London.

In 1908, Martinez joined the teaching staff at California School of Arts and Crafts, where he remained until 1942. He was recognized with numerous awards during his lifetime, including an Honorable Mention at the Paris Exposition of 1900 and a Gold Medal and Honorable Mention at the PPIE in 1915.

Martinez' style represents Tonalism at its finest, featuring low-key lighting, a limited palette, and blurred forms. Among the many accolades for his work was this statement by the artist's contemporary Porter Garnett: "...no painter in California...more closely approached universality in his art, none may be said to represent a particular school more completely than Xavier Martinez." Several of his paintings depicted the Piedmont hills surrounding his home.

Among Martinez's close friends was the writer **Jack London**, shown here as Martinez paints his portrait.



Reflections, 1909 (left),

California, 1924 (right)



Both images by Gottardo Piazzoni (1872-1945)

Piazzoni was noted for "transposing onto canvas the rare beauty that Nature gave to California and in a manner that was completely his own." In a 1976 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, his work was praised for its style of "near abstract purity."

Piazzoni expressed his artist philosophy in an interview during the late 1930s: "I have devoted my life to a study of landscape...not to a copy of the natural scene but to an

expression of what it means to me. I am concerned not with the external aspect of the landscape, but with its inward life..." Piazzoni's work is characterized for its simplicity of form and subtlety of coloration.

You may remember that when asked about his religion, Piazzoni said, "I think it is California." Although born in Switzerland in 1872, Piazzoni claimed Carmel Valley as his home and died there in 1945.

Piazzoni's father left the family in Switzerland to immigrate to Australia and then to Monterey, where he established a dairy farm. In 1887, 15-year-old Gottardo and his family joined his father in California. In 1891, after convincing his father that he wanted to be an artist, Piazzoni enrolled at the California School of Design. Three years later, he went to Paris to continue his studies.

In 1898, due to the death of his mother and brother, Piazzoni returned to California to help his father with the ranch. In time, he resumed his artistic career.

In 1901, he established two studios in San Francisco. His first solo exhibition took place in 1905. After several years of traveling, painting, and exhibiting abroad, Piazzoni returned to San Francisco and worked on the first of his mural commissions. He appreciated the opportunity to integrate art and architecture and to place art in "places where people of all classes could see and enjoy it."

Piazzoni met with critical and popular success. His exhibited two works at the 1915 PPIE in San Francisco. During this time, he also gave classes, building a reputation for patience and skill in teaching. Eventually, he was appointed an instructor at the California School of Design (the name changed over time), a position that he held until 1935.

Encouraged by travel abroad, Piazzoni remained open to new ideas and modern approaches to art. Piazzoni's most ambitious commission came from the Board of Trustees for the San Francisco Public Library. In 1932, he completed a two-part, ten-panel mural titled *The Sea and The Land*. This pair of murals is now installed in the De Young Museum in Golden Gate Park.

Read More About Tonalism:

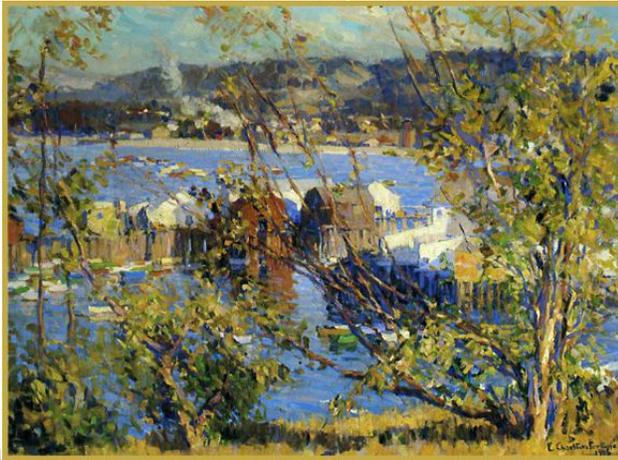
[Introduction to the Monterey Peninsula Art Colony and Impressionism](#)

Impressionism came later to the West Coast, and California artists modified its tenets to make the style their own. In his essay, *Towards Impressionism in Northern California*, Raymond L. Wilson summarized the shift to the Impressionistic style in California at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries:

Anne Bremer and Mary DeNeale Morgan, who started their careers painting the muted moods and harmonies of Barbizon and the next-generation Tonalism of Mathews, perceived the abundant potential contained in a higher-keyed palette combined with the changing atmospheric effects characteristic of the Monterey Peninsula, particularly its misty fogs and hazy sunshine.

Perhaps closest to the original French Impressionists in spirit and technique was Euphemia Charlton Fortune. Her light-washed and loosely composed scenes around Monterey suggested a measure of spontaneity lacking in the studied approach of her peers. Often vigorous, broadly brushed strokes are accented with small, flickering spots of brilliant color.

This selective survey will focus on artists who worked in the Monterey Peninsula art colonies. You will study the works of Bremer, Morgan, and



Charleton

***Monterey Bay*, 1916, E. Charleton Fortune (1885-1969)**

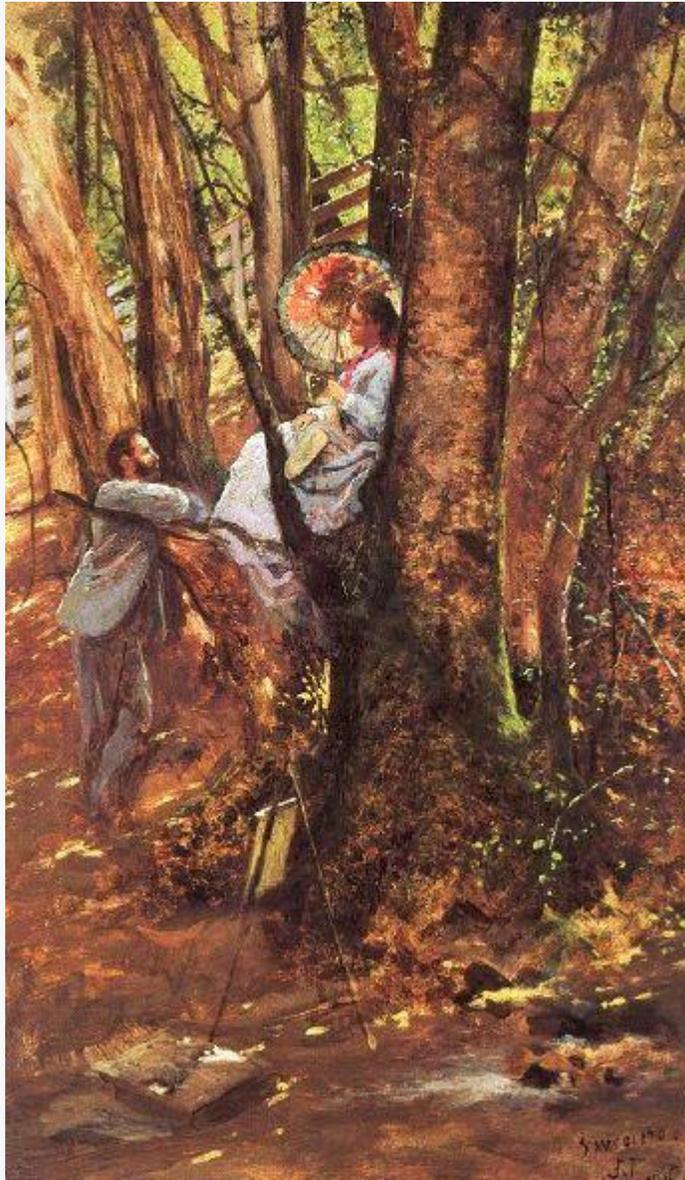
This version of *Monterey Bay* is considered by some critics as Fortune's masterpiece. Her style was praised as an "almost pure form of American Impressionism." Compare this work to the following painting, also titled *Monterey Bay*, which was produced two years later, after her relocation to Carmel (and before her return to Europe). This brilliantly lit scene of a sweeping view is a testimony to Fortune's achievements in color and light.



Monterey Bay, 1918, E. Charleton Fortune (1885-1969)

E. (Euphemia) Charleton Fortune was born in Sausalito. Her father died when she was young, but her mother, recognizing her daughter's artistic talents, made it possible for her to study in Scotland and London. She returned to the U.S. in 1905 and enrolled in the Mark Hopkins School Institute (formerly the California School of Design). There, she studied under **Arthur Mathews**. She studied next in New York where she met the influential artist **William Merritt Chase**. By now, Fortune was earning a handsome living as a portrait painter.

After more travel and exhibitions abroad, Fortune returned to California in 1912. She settled in Carmel-by-the-Sea, by now recognized as an artists' colony. Soon she had studios in San Francisco and Monterey and garnered commissions and great praise for her work. In 1915, she was awarded silver medals for paintings exhibited at the PPIE in San Francisco and the Panama California Exposition in San Diego. In 1921, Fortune went to Europe again, and in 1924, one of her works won the silver medal at the Paris Salon. She returned to the U.S. in 1927, settling in Monterey. From the beginning, her works were praised for their modern tendencies, strength, and luminosity.



In Wildwood Glen, Sausalito (sic), 1875, Jules Tavernier (1844-1889)

You met Tavernier in a previous session. Recall that he was the first among San Francisco artists to make Monterey his base. This light-dappled scene of *In Wildwood Glen, Sausalito*, completed the same year as *Mountains of Santa Cruz*, depicts a quiet spot in Marin County and focuses on the artist and his subject/muse. She holds a parasol that encircles her profile -- a device frequently used by artists painting in the Impressionist style. The sense of leisure, peacefulness, and grace permeates this gentle scene. Tavernier was a master of lighting effects and is an example of an artist who used Impressionistic techniques in his own way.



Carmel Valley Pumpkins, circa 1907, M. Evelyn McCormick (1862-1848)

Evelyn McCormick spent much time working in and around Monterey as early as 1892. Born in Placerville in 1862, McCormick moved to San Francisco with her parents at an early age. She attended the California School of Design in the 1880s. Mary DeNeale Morgan and Guy Rose (whom you will meet soon!) were fellow students.

In 1889, at the encouragement of Rose, McCormick traveled to Paris for further study. They were among a group of artists drawn to Giverny, Monet's home. Back in California, McCormick produced several works that were exhibited to major acclaim. She opened a studio in Pacific Grove but then moved to Monterey, where she settled permanently in 1912.

McCormick is the first Monterey Peninsula artist to be considered an Impressionist. Her work is characterized by a bright, vibrant palette. This work, featuring a pumpkin field, was considered a departure in subject matter. It garnered particular praise when it was

exhibited in late 1907 at the Hotel Del Monte.

The gallery at Hotel Del Monte in Monterey was the first art gallery devoted solely to showcasing California artists.



Cypresses, William Ritschell (1864-1949)

Born in Bavaria in 1864, **William Ritschell** spent part of his youth as a sailor, which foreshadowed his later prominence as a marine painter. He studied art at the Royal Academy in Munich and traveled through Europe before getting married in 1891. Four years later, he settled in New York City, where he garnered awards for his work and moved in the circles of the best-known American artists of the time.

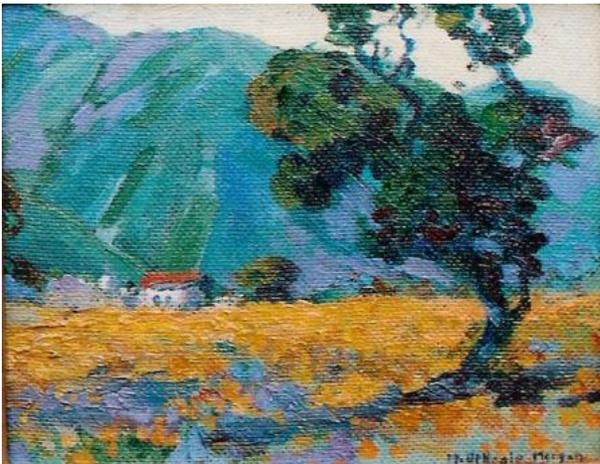
At some point after 1909, he moved to California. He won a gold medal at the 1915 PPIE. In 1917, he moved to the Carmel Highlands and built a castle-like studio and home high on a bluff overlooking the ocean. Even from this remote location, Ritschell maintained an active exhibition program throughout the United States and Europe. His extensive travels to Europe and the South Seas imbued his work with vitality and validity. His interpretations of the California coast earned him the title of "Dean of American Marine Painters." Years later he stated, "An artist should be an optimist, seeking beauty and giving pleasure." During World War II, Ritschell sold his gold medals and donated his earnings to the American Red Cross.



Carmel Beach, no date, Bertha Stringer Lee (1869-1937)

Born in San Francisco to a well-to-do family, **Bertha Stringer Lee** attended the University of California, Berkeley. Following graduation, she studied with **William Keith**. In addition to studying in New York City and Germany, Lee also attended the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (successor to the California School of Design). She began exhibiting her work in the late 1880s.

In 1898, Lee began visiting the Monterey Peninsula. Although her primary residence remained San Francisco, Lee spent several weeks of each year in Monterey. Known for her San Francisco waterfront views and her paintings of sand dunes of the Monterey area, Lee always worked directly from nature. In later years, she adopted a looser brushstroke. She often accompanied fellow artist Mary DeNeale Morgan.



Springtime Carmel Valley, no date, Mary DeNeale Morgan (1868-1948)

One of the most active members of the Monterey Peninsula art colony, **Mary DeNeale Morgan** maintained a studio in Carmel and rarely traveled beyond that region. Born in San Francisco in 1868, she was interested in art at an early age. In 1886, she enrolled

in California School of Design. There, she studied under **Virgil Williams** and **William Keith**, among others. She opened a studio in Oakland in 1896 and had her first solo exhibition in 1907.

She made her first visit to Carmel in 1903. Finding the area absolutely enchanting, she made it her home. She immediately became active in the art community and taught private classes.

Her first New York exhibition took place in 1922 -- the first of several beyond northern California. Her critical acclaim was well-deserved, but may have been awarded because critics didn't know she was a female artist. She signed her works as "M. DeNeale Morgan," which led some to believe that these powerful works were done by a male artist.

Morgan continued to exhibit through the 1940s until shortly before her death at age 80. Although her works were considered "conservative" by the 1940s, she actually embraced Modernism if the composition was "based on a firm foundation."



The Green Parasol, circa 1909, Guy Rose (1867-1925)

Guy Rose is a "bridge artist" in your survey of artists for this module. He was born in San Gabriel (southern California). Following high school, he moved to San Francisco to attend the California School of Design, where he befriended several artists who were active in Northern California.

In 1888, Rose went to Paris to undertake private and to attend the Academie Julian. In 1898, he earned an honorable mention at the Paris Salon -- the first California artist from California to earn such recognition. In the mid 1890s, he went to New York and taught at the Pratt Institute. He earned his living as an illustrator for *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, and *Century* magazine. In 1899, Rose and his wife (also an illustrator) returned to France. They purchased a cottage at Giverny, where they lived from 1904 to 1912. There, Monet became his mentor and friend.

In 1914, Rose and his wife moved to California. He taught at the Stickney School of Art in Pasadena and later served as the school's director. Rose had been exposed to lead poisoning in France, an affliction that returned in 1920 and eventually led to his death in 1925.

Typical of California's preeminent Impressionist painters, Guy Rose celebrates several qualities of light within one composition, from the dappled sunlight on the vegetation to the light filtering through the green parasol. His sitter is ensconced in an exotically patterned robe that pools around her and across the grass. This detail exemplifies Monet's and Giverny's influence on Rose. Much like Monet, Rose enjoyed painting the same subject at different time of the year or day capture the changing qualities of light. He pursued light along the coast from Carmel to southern California.



Silver and Gold, no date, Granville Redmond (1871-1935)

Granville Redmond is another "bridge artist" who began his career in northern California, settled in Los Angeles, and returned to northern California. A remarkable artist, Redmond distinguished himself in several areas. Diagnosed as deaf at age 2-1/2, he never spoke. Redmond nonetheless was noted for his personal appeal and wide circle of friends.

Redmond's family arrived in San Jose in 1874. He attended the California School for the Deaf in Berkeley, where artist and teacher **Theophilus Hope de'Estrella** recognized and encouraged Redmond's artistic talent. In 1890, Redmond enrolled in the California School of Design and studied under Arthur Mathews. Among the several awards he collected was an endowment to study at the Julian Academy in Paris in 1893.

In 1898, Redmond returned to California and settled in Los Angeles. During the early 1900s, he painted in the Laguna Beach area with fellow artists **Elmer and Marion Wachtel**. In 1905, Redmond received acclaim in a review titled "Color King Is Granville Redmond." A few years later, Redmond and his family returned to northern California, living in San Mateo, Monterey, and Tiburon. He befriended **Xavier Martinez** and **Jack London** during those years. **Gottardo Piazzoni** became a lifelong friend and even studied sign language to communicate with Redmond.

In 1917, Redmond translated his flair for pantomime into acting roles in the emerging movie industry. He developed a unique friendship with **Charlie Chaplin**, who learned

nuances of gesture and pantomime from Redmond, and provided Redmond with an art studio on his movie lot. Redmond's most celebrated role was as the sculptor in Chaplin's *City Lights*.

Redmond is known best for his coastal views from Laguna Beach to Tiburon, particularly of Catalina Island and Monterey. His depictions of lupine fields and poppies are also quite famous.



Carmel Old Fashioned Garden

Both works by Anne Bremer (1868-1923). No date for either work.

Anne Bremer's work has some characteristics of Impressionism, but possesses stronger compositional elements than the work of her contemporaries. Born and raised in San Francisco, Bremer attended the California School of Design and studied at the San Francisco Art Students League with **Arthur Mathews**. She joined the all-female Sketch Club and took part in its exhibitions. In 1901, she left for Paris to study at the Academie Julian and later took private study. One year later, she returned to San Francisco and became president of the Sketch Club. She instituted changes based on new ideas about art. The 1906 exhibition she helped curate included works by **E. Charlton Fortune** and **Lucia Mathews**. After another sojourn in France, Bremer returned to San Francisco. In 1915, five of her paintings were included in the PPIE, where she was awarded a bronze medal.

Impressionism and the Other Art Colonies, Part 2

The artists with work featured in this session were active in Southern California. Notice not only the difference in scenery, but also the more vibrant use of light. Impressionism took hold more strongly in Southern California because of the region's climate and favorable natural qualities. Studies of trees became so prevalent that critics derisively referred to Southern California art of this period as the **Eucalyptus School**.

In upcoming modules, you will view other forms of art produced during this period. These works will shed light on why more realistic pieces were dismissed by progressive Modernists.

Carmel Old Fashioned Garden(1856-1937). No date for either work.

You viewed Cooper's work in earlier sessions. Remember his paintings of the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Diego and the PPIE in San Francisco?

Prior to his arrival in California, Cooper was already an acclaimed American Impressionist painter. In 1921, following the death of his wife, Cooper moved to Santa Barbara. He was appointed Dean of Painting at the Santa Barbara Community School of Arts.

Considered conservative in his approach, Cooper did not appreciate direction of modern art. For Cooper, modern art was "hopelessly depressing and banal." Having moved later in his life to California, Cooper exhibited a less uniquely "California" style of Impressionism. His subject matter clearly associates him with Southern California.



Sunset, No date, Elmer Wachtel (1864-1929)

Elmer Wachtel and his wife **Marion** painted the California landscape during a 25-year period. They were described by one writer as "two of the strongest, most subtle exponents of the beauties and glories of Southern California landscape art."

Elmer was born in Maryland and raised in Illinois. Rather than adopt his family livelihood of farming, he took up the violin. In 1882, at age 18, he joined an older brother in Los Angeles. While working on a ranch, he continued his interest in music, performing as first violinist for the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Unable to support himself through music, he saved enough money to pursue art studies in New York, which he began in 1900. He next spent an idyllic period in London and returned to California in 1901.

Wachtel's persistence paid off, gaining him increasing patronage and the attention of San Francisco's **William Keith**. Around this time, he met Marion Kavanagh. They were married in 1904 and made their home in Los Angeles' Arroyo Seco area, which was home to artists, writers, printers, and other creative types. They sold their first home to artist **William Wendt**, then built their own home that was accessible only via a grassy

trail. Elmer, exhibiting talents in woodworking and metalwork, designed and built the furniture that filled their home.

Elmer and Marion later sold their Arroyo Seco home to establish a new home-studio. They loved painting together and traveled throughout southern California. While on a long-dreamed-of painting trip to Mexico (1929), Elmer suddenly passed away.

In the work shown here, Elmer Wachtel presents silhouettes of trees framing a view of the Arroyo Seco. The dreamy colors of his sky serve as a backdrop to an idyllic Southern California evening.

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A Santa Barbara Courtyard Green Bench



Both works by **Colin Campbell Cooper** (1856-1937). No date for either work.

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Elmer was born in Maryland and raised in Illinois. Rather than adopt his family livelihood of farming, he took up the violin. In 1882, at age 18, he joined an older brother in Los Angeles. While working on a ranch, he continued his interest in music, performing as first violinist for the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Unable to support himself through music, he saved enough money to pursue art studies in New York, which he began in 1900. He next spent an idyllic period in London and returned to California in 1901.

Wachtel's persistence paid off, gaining him increasing patronage and the attention of San Francisco's **William Keith**. Around this time, he met Marion Kavanagh. They were married in 1904 and made their home in Los Angeles' Arroyo Seco area, which was home to artists, writers, printers, and other creative types. They sold their first home to artist **William Wendt**, then built their own home that was accessible only via a grassy trail. Elmer, exhibiting talents in woodworking and metalwork, designed and built the furniture that filled their home.

Elmer and Marion later sold their Arroyo Seco home to establish a new home-studio. They loved painting together and traveled throughout southern California. While on a long-dreamed-of painting trip to Mexico (1929), Elmer suddenly passed away.

In the work shown here, Elmer Wachtel presents silhouettes of trees framing a view of the Arroyo Seco. The dreamy colors of his sky serve as a backdrop to an idyllic Southern California evening.



Sentinel, no date, by **Marion Kavanagh Wachtel** (1876-1954)

Born into an artistically talented family, Marion Kavanagh Wachtel studied figure painting at the Chicago Art Institute. After teaching for several years at the Art Institute and in public schools, Marion accepted an offer from the Santa Fe Railroad to travel in exchange for her sketches. She ended up in San Francisco, where she studied briefly with **William Keith**. Keith recommended that she travel to Southern California and look up Elmer Wachtel, a man "who can paint." It was love at first sight for both. Elmer followed Marion to Chicago, where they married in 1904.

Although they painted together and won acclaim for their work, each had a distinctive approach. Elmer worked in oils, and for most of her career, Marion worked in watercolor. Marion's work was decidedly less Impressionistic than her husband's; some people found her paintings, with their unified tones and softened forms, akin to that of Arthur Mathews and Piazzoni. For a period following Elmer's death, Marion gave up painting. She eventually resumed her work and began exhibiting again in the early 1930s.

During his lifetime, William Wendt was known as "Los Angeles' national artist" and "Dean of Southern California artists." Born in Germany, Wendt immigrated to Chicago at age 15. He took some evening classes at the Chicago Art Institute and secured a position as a staff artist in a commercial art shop. He divided his efforts between the formulaic work required of his job and the easel painting that he loved. In time, he earned recognition and an award for the latter.

Seeking new opportunities in 1894, Wendt made his first trip to California. In 1898, he traveled to England for travel and art studies. Returning to Chicago, Wendt exhibited

work. His English and California landscapes caused a "sensation."

In 1906, Wendt settled in California. He purchased a house from **Elmer and Marion Wachtel** and made a home with his bride, sculptor **Julia Bracken**. Wendt sought out remote, natural settings and found a special religious/spiritual connection between his painting and nature. During the next several years, Wendt's paintings received numerous awards. In 1912, he was elected an Associate of the National Academy of Design. He and his wife established a studio in Laguna Beach that became a mecca for aspiring artists.

The **Arts and Crafts Movement**, which emerged first in mid-19th century England, was a social and artistic reaction to the perceived negative influences of industrialization. Artists like William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites turned to Medieval art for inspiration in an effort to produce art rooted in purity of design. Morris and his contemporaries valued harmony with nature, hand-made objects (rather than machine-made ones), and unity among art forms, from painting to fabric design, book binding, architecture, and beyond. Like their counterparts in England, California artists, designers, and architects felt the need to push back against the effects of industrialization. California artists sought a higher ethical and aesthetic realm by seeking harmony with nature and the unification of the arts. It may be more accurate to state that the Arts and Crafts Movement in California started with architecture rather than the fine arts. No building in California better represents the beginning of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the United States than the **Swedenborgian Church** in San Francisco, built in 1895.

It can also be said that the Arts and Crafts Movement took hold in California before appearing elsewhere in the country. The first society devoted to the movement, which started in San Francisco in 1894, was **The Guild of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco**. Boston, often credited as being the first U.S. city to promote the movement, did not form an Arts and Crafts society until three years later. Furthermore, the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco and the Gamble House in Pasadena realized the vision of the "humble cottage" advocated by English artists William Morris and John Ruskin. Thus, it could be argued that Californians offered the first and most fertile ground for the Arts and Crafts Movement in America. Several Swedenborgians were at the forefront of the American Arts and Crafts Movement; they believed that art could and should be spiritually uplifting, rather than being art for art's sake.

George Inness, one of the country's most acclaimed artists of the late-19th century, embraced the Swedenborgian ideas. Inness saw God reflected in nature and felt that art, if it was to be spiritually uplifting and meaningful, needed to reflect the true and the natural. When Inness traveled to California in 1891, he shared these ideas with William Keith. Keith was already a convert to Swedenborgian philosophies. It's easy to understand why the Swedenborgian philosophy resonated with Northern California artists; Northern Californians, after all, are known for their appreciation of nature. Swedenborgian ideas were also embodied in the Tonalists' approach to art, most notably in their harmonious, low-key, spiritually-infused homages to nature.

Which Tonalist artists or artworks from the previous module reflect concepts discussed in this session?

The California Decorative Style represents a **fusion** of:

- The formal American Renaissance style of the late-19th century, portrayed in murals and paintings for architectural sites;
- A Japanese aesthetic as filtered through modern French artists; and
- The Arts and Crafts Movement, fueled by William Morris' inspiration, that sought to elevate and unify the arts.

More specifically, this style embodied the unique California coloration and lifestyle and presented a Modernist approach to classical themes. Mathews' style manifested itself through allegorical themes set in California landscapes; an emphasis on linear, flat shapes compressed into stylized compositions; and a Tonalist approach to subdued color. As Director of the Mark Hopkins Institute/California School of Design from 1890 to 1906 and juror for every major art exhibition during the first two decades of the 20th century, Arthur Mathews wielded tremendous influence over a generation of Northern California artists.

Arthur and Lucia Mathews spent a great deal of time in the Monterey area, whose fog-softened silvery light resonated with the Tonalist palette. Their presence in San Francisco, however, especially following the destruction and rebirth of the city, was even more significant than their presence in Monterey. Their ideas for a new city-state, echoing idealized qualities of the western classicism and harmony of design, framed the California Decorative Style.

California's version of the Arts and Crafts Movement presented a distinctive vision of unity of the arts, design, lifestyle, and nature and found its form most notably (although not exclusively) in the **California Decorative Style** developed by Arthur and Lucia Mathews. The **California Decorative Style** was the name applied to both an **aesthetic approach** and to the **production company** developed by **Arthur and Lucia Mathews**. In the next session, you will learn about Arthur Mathews' role as an art teacher, his exposure to European art, and his attraction to classical ideals of beauty and unity of the arts.

The image above shows the Mark Hopkins Institute, formerly the California School of Design. The California School of Design moved into the former Mark Hopkins residence on Nob Hill in 1893, at which time it was renamed the Mark Hopkins Institute.

Mathews developed his drawing skills at a young age while working in his father's architectural office. In 1885, at the age of 25, he went to Paris to study art at the Academie Julian. When Mathews returned to San Francisco in 1889, he joined the faculty of the California School of Design, and one year later became its director.

Mathews infused the Mark Hopkins Institute's curriculum with the French ideas that he absorbed while living and studying in Paris. He also encouraged his students to continue their studies in Paris. As a teacher, Mathews was considered rude, opinionated, and egotistical, but he also insisted that students develop their own artistic voice.

Mathews was noted for his equal treatment of male and female students. He took particular interest in one of his more talented students, Lucia Kleinhans, who enrolled in the School in 1893.



Self-Portrait, 1899, Lucia K. Mathews (1870-1955)

Lucia was one of Mathews' favorite students at the Mark Hopkins Institute. They married in 1894. In 1898, they went abroad to allow Lucia the opportunity for further study.

While in Paris, Lucia studied at James McNeill Whistler's Academie-Carmen. Painted when the artist was 29, Lucia



California, 1905, Arthur Mathews (1860-1945)

You viewed this work in an earlier module. The central figure is reminiscent of Minerva the Roman goddess of wisdom, who is depicted on the great seal of

California. Here, she is shown in profile, seated beneath the branches of a Monterey cypress, looking toward the horizon and contemplating human experience. The figure in the shadows (behind her) represents history, who points to the pages of an open book meant to represent history, poetry, and philosophy.

Mathews emphasizes the colors blue and gold, symbolic of California. The golden robe of California is meant to represent the golden poppy, California's state flower. This work visually defines California's version of the Arts and Crafts style. Rendered in a Tonalist palette of closely related colors, this painting also represents Mathews' interrelated interests in allegorical themes and California's natural beauty.

The choice of presenting the figures in profile, especially the dominant figure representing California, echoes Mathews' approach to mural painting.

produced this self-portrait while she and her husband were in Paris.

Arthur and Lucia Mathews (continued)

In the aftermath of San Francisco's 1906 earthquake and fire, the Mathews saw the chance to be involved in rebuilding a city that reflected the Arts and Crafts philosophy of beauty as part of one's surroundings. They opened **The Furniture Shop** in the home of a wealthy patron on California Street, and hired talented, experienced craftsmen to execute their ideas. According to Harvey Jones, their biographer, "The ideals of ancient Greece and their appreciation of art and nature were central themes to them, which they transplanted to the California landscape."



The Furniture Shop (1906-1920)

The work produced in the shop represented the integration of the arts into one's whole life; such work included paintings, frames, furniture, lamps, screens, boxes, and more. Shown here is a turned wood candle holder, a painted four-fold screen, a chair, and a covered vessel, all products of the Furniture Shop and all intended to be used within the contemporary household. The Furniture Shop remained in business until 1920.



Dancing Girls, circa 1916-1917, Arthur Mathews (1860-1945)

Social Realism

A number of American artists turned their sights inward during the 1930s, creating artwork based on specific areas of their country and the people and conditions they observed. This was the era of the Great Depression. Artists elevated the lives of ordinary people, calling attention to their innate dignity.



Tenement Flats, 1933-1934, Millard Sheets (1907-1989)

Millard Sheets was born in Pomona, California. A gifted artist, Sheets was still a teenager when his watercolors were exhibited in the prestigious California Watercolor Society annual exhibitions. At age 19, he was elected into its membership. He attended the Chouinard Art Institute, and before he graduated he was hired to teach watercolor there.

By the early 1930s, when ***Tenement Flats*** was painted, Sheets was already a nationally recognized talent. Although this work is executed in oil on canvas, Sheets was considered the leader of the California Style Watercolor movement. By the time

he was 28, he was the subject of a book on art. Recognition and income from sales allowed him to travel widely. Over the next several years, he became known for producing outstanding work in a wide range of media, including murals. You will learn more about his murals in a later module.

The emphasis of *Tenement Flats* is equally divided between the buildings and figures.

Even areas without *actual* figures feature evidence of their presence. Linens and clothing hang from lines stretched across the open areas between buildings. Flower pots sit on railings.

Sheets depicted the tenants and their dwellings in the Bunker Hill neighborhood of downtown Los Angeles during the Great Depression. Bunker Hill was once the most fashionable area of the city, but by the Depression, the buildings were run down. Once-elegant Victorian residences had become seedy boardinghouses.

In the upper left-hand corner of the painting, an ambiguous lone figure climbs the steps toward the older Victorian homes. Rather than focusing on the subjects' misery, Sheets shows the women (primarily) of this community going about their daily activities: hanging laundry to dry, watching their children, and gossiping among neighbors. This urban scene clearly conveys the theme of this module -- the people depicted came from every corner of the world and they were the face for a part of California.

During this period of Social Realism, also referred to as Regionalism, artists focused on people and their sense of place. Many artists also imbued their work with obvious social meaning, contrasting the have-nots with the haves. These figures and their surroundings, framed by the buildings in which they lived, represent the blight of the Depression Era. The design of the composition seems to trap the tenement dwellers within rigid boxes and keep them at the bottom of the hill. Beyond this scene are the larger, more comfortable homes of the well-to-do.

This work showing life in California revealed little or no resemblance to European influences. Because of its social implications, this should be considered progressive within its time period. However, within a decade, such candid and realistic views would be ridiculed as naïve and too conservative. This painting, so honest in capturing life in California and American life in the 1930s, was a gift to the nation and is now part of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. You will focus on more works of the 1930s in the next session.

In addition to his career as an artist, Sheets was an influential teacher and director. During the Depression, he worked with **Edward Bruce** to hire artists for the Federal Artworks Projects. He taught at Chouinard Art Institute, at Otis Art Institute (where he was director for 10 years), and at Scripps College (where he was director for 25 years).

Born in Fresno in 1875, Maynard Dixon was one of the most accomplished artists to portray the land and the people of the west. He traveled extensively, especially through the Southwest, and lived for prolonged periods among the Native Americans. Known by his symbol, the Thunderbird, Dixon produced murals, paintings, book illustrations, and graphic art that revealed a deep-felt empathy for his subjects, whether people like this destitute man of the Depression Era or the

open spaces of the west. He followed early advice to "go east to see the west." During the Great Depression, Dixon felt compelled to depart from his familiar western themes in order to reflect more social and political statements through his art. Virtually self-taught, Dixon was at the height of his success when the Depression occurred. He started the Forgotten Man series in response to the unfair social conditions he had observed for too long.



No Place to Go, 1935, Maynard Dixon (1875 - 1946)

Dixon developed a distinctive cubist realism that appears in some of his strongest works of the 1920s and 1930s. In the mid-1930s, Dixon was shocked by the conflicts, poverty, oppression, and violence in events surrounding the Depression and the San Francisco Maritime Strike. His response was simple, direct, and sober in works such as *No Place to Go*, *The Forgotten Man*, and his *Strike* series. His concerns paralleled those expressed in the *Migrant Mother* series of Dorothea Lange, his former wife, and writer John Steinbeck.



A Bigger Splash/The Splash, 1967, David Hockney (born 1937)

A Bigger Splash was painted in the early summer of 1967. It captures a typically warm, sunny, and cloudless Southern California day. David Hockney, born and

raised in England, was lured to in the mid-1960s California because of these very qualities.

The painting refers to a solitary figure who has just dived into the pool. The splash is the only mark of his presence. An empty, solitary chair with diagonally crossed lines plays off the clean-edge geometry of the pool, diving board, and California modern home. The two slender palm trees become part of the intersecting grid of vertical and horizontal lines. This would remain a cool, detached study of lines and planes if not for the frothy white foam. The splash is the stand-in for the human presence, a response to the moment and the place. Hockney painted a series of pool/swimming paintings during this period. The pool, palm trees, and single story home with sliding glass doors depict the iconic view of Southern California suburbia.



Self-Portrait, 1923, Mabel Alvarez (1891-1985)

"I want to take all this beauty and pour it out on canvas with such radiance that all who are lost in the darkness may feel the wonder and lift to it." Journal entry, Mabel Alvarez, 1918

Mabel Alvarez was born in 1891, on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii. Her family moved to Berkeley, California, in 1906, and then to Los Angeles in 1909. Alvarez distinguished herself as an outstanding pupil at the Los Angeles High School. One of her art teachers, James Edwin McBurney, received a commission to create murals for the Panama-California Exposition held in San Diego in 1915, and he invited Alvarez to work with him. Even at this early stage in her career, Alvarez attracted critical admiration. An art reviewer for the *Los Angeles Times* noted, "This young artist, always an earnest student, is advancing with much rapidity, doing better and more distinguished work from year to year."

Alvarez's first exhibition took place in 1918 at the Mark Hopkins Art Institute's annual show. She joined the California Art Club, a prestigious group in southern California, and won an honorable mention in her first showing with that organization. During the 1920s, Alvarez embraced some of the more avant-garde influences of southern California artist, Stanton McDonald Wright. She even joined the radical Modern Art Workers. Alvarez continued to work well into her 70s, and to exhibit regularly. Her enduring legacy is the significant role that she played in promoting Modernism in southern California. Although strongly identified

with California, she achieved recognition on the world stage through exhibitions, publications and the continuing interest of scholars and collectors. She passed away in 1985 at the age of 93.

About Alvarez's Self Portrait:

It was in 1922 that Alvarez became a part of the **Group of Eight**, painters who banded together to promote their art which was veering further and further away from the predictable standards of the California Art Club. Critic Antony Anderson observed that the group had "some decidedly modern tendencies," and they did in relation to standard California Impressionist fare. **Just how modern Mabel Alvarez was at this time is best revealed by one of the major paintings of her career, her *Self-Portrait* of 1923.**

Alvarez's image of herself is defined by broad areas of flat paint. The composition is simple, symmetrical, and focused - a lean description of her face in basic terms. The black line around the rim of her hat, which also appears on her shoulder, is a device to frame color, picked up in (Stanton) Macdonald-Wright's class (one he himself adapted from Cézanne). The psychological presence of the self-portrait declares itself in large measure by what it is not - clever, formulaic, prettified, or imitative. It arrests the viewer's imagination by virtue of its relentlessly honest transcription. For Alvarez and her audience, this was Modernism in the tradition of Robert Henri's economical (but deftly painted) realism. This was not academic art or a local variant of Impressionism, with its careful drawing, pasted palette, and routinely picturesque compositions. This was focused, abbreviated, and enigmatic.

Alvarez's self-portrait won the Women's Federation Prize that year, and was much reproduced in magazines and journals.



The Bride, 1970, Joan Brown (1938-1990)

Joan Brown was born in San Francisco and attended the San Francisco Art Institute where she received her B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees. Shortly after her graduation in 1960, Brown had her first one-woman exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. She soon became known as the wonder girl of contemporary art. Her early artwork reflected the abstract-expressionistic atmosphere of her mentors and contemporaries and embraced the Bay Area

Figurative approach of retaining the figure while piling on pigment with rich, bold gestures.

In 1970, she adopted a new approach and style. From this point forward, her works were known for their thin, flat applications of in bold colors and shapes. Throughout her career, Brown's work drew upon her personal life, family, friends, and animals, with which she identified.

In *The Bride*, a 7-1/2 x 4-1/2 foot painting, Joan Brown used commercial house paints combined with glitter to create a shimmering, textured surface. The subject, which is self-referential, incorporates unusual elements: a cat-faced bride in an elaborate white dress; a large rat attached by a leash to the bride's wrist; fish swimming behind the figure; and a field of poppies. The bride stands almost like a paper doll in the center of a flattened background. The simplistic color scheme and whimsical, detailed patterns have a childlike quality to them. Cats, fish, and rats appear in many of Brown's paintings, a fact that suggests their personal meaning to the artist.

Each of these animals also carries universal symbolic meanings. The fish is often seen as a Christian motif, a symbol for Christ, while the rat is a repulsive symbol of infestation and disease (the Black Plague). When combined, they suggest a power struggle, although physical conflict is not otherwise represented in the composition. Brown frequently appeared as a cat or with a cat in her self-portraits. The cat also alludes to the Chinese tiger and to the Egyptian sphinx; these, too, are images that have appeared in some of her other paintings and often represent power.

Brown was an avid swimmer and actually swam across the San Francisco Bay. If the fish are seen as swimming through water, then the combination of symbols might suggest rebirth or personal liberation.

Brown was drawn to the colorful work of Matisse and 16th-century Mughal painting. Like the artists she admires, Brown uses the power of color over perspective to arrest the attention of her viewer. Brown, an inveterate traveler, was also drawn to the mystical qualities of Eastern religions. She chooses symbols -- most of them familiar -- and endows them with enigmatic power in this captivating self-portrait.

Brown's fertile career was cut short -- she was killed, at age 52, in a fatal accident. At the time, she was working in India on a public sculpture.



Remember Friendship, circa 1970s, Betye Saar (born 1926)

A meaningful connection exists between Saar's background -- a combination of African, Irish, and Native American heritages -- and her interest in assembling objects. Born in Los Angeles in 1926, Saar still lives in the area. In the late 1960s, Saar began collecting images of Aunt Jemima, Uncle Tom, Little Black Sambo, and other stereotyped African-American figures from folk culture and advertising. She spoke through these figures to confront racism and derogatory stereotyping of African-Americans.

Always a collector and recycler, Saar is known for her collages and assemblage works. When her great-aunt died, Saar became immersed in family memorabilia and began making personal, intimate assemblages incorporating mementos of her great aunt's life. She arranged old photographs, letters, locket, dried flowers, and handkerchiefs in shadow boxes to suggest memory, loss, and the passage of time.

Remember Friendship comes from this series.

In the 1970s, Saar began exploring ritual objects from Africa as well as items from African-American folk traditions. In these boxed assemblages, Saar combined shamanistic tribal fetishes with images and objects intended to evoke the magical and the mystical. In 1972, she addressed the subject of racial stereotyping head-on in the acclaimed work, ***The Liberation of Aunt Jemima***. Featuring a smiling "black mammy," the Aunt Jemima face appears in three formats: the dark-skinned, full-figured woman, dressed in a brightly patterned dress and gingham kerchief; a smaller image in the center of an older-style cartoon figure who holds a screaming child on her hip; and the lighter-skinned "modern" version represented in repeated squares across the background. The larger-figured "mammy" holds a broom in one hand and a rifle in the other. At the front of the box is a defiant, raised black fist representing "Black Power" in the face of these demeaning images. The artist confronted two sides of the stereotype: the sex object and the "domestic soldier." Using the power of art to project her statement, Saar claimed this was "one woman's revolt to be free of the image."

In an artist's statement of 1998, Saar revealed more about this period and its link to her current work: "There has been an apparent thread in my art that weaves through early prints of the 1960s through late collages and assemblages and ties into the current installations." Early in her career, Saar was an artist in residence at California State University at Hayward. During the early 1980s, she taught at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and Otis Art Institute.



You were introduced to this artist and artwork in an earlier module, but it's worth revisiting in the context of identity -- the theme of this module.

Harry Fonseca was born in 1946 in Sacramento, California; he was of Niesnan/ Maidu, Hawaiian, and Portuguese heritage. His earliest drawings, prints, and paintings drew from his Maidu heritage and were influenced by basketry designs, dance regalia, and by his participation as a traditional dancer.

Fonseca is best known for his creation of the always-smiling, supremely self-confident **Coyote** that he introduced in the mid-1970s. The Coyote -- a Maidu figure involved in the creation of the world, as well as a figure of truth and deception -- was a filter through which Fonseca examined his vision of the artist, the Native American, and society. His earliest Coyote figures were dancers in traditional regalia and coyote headdress, the "spirit impersonators" of Maidu ritual. Then he catapulted Coyote into contemporary times to create a modern myth of Coyote in the city. Fonseca portrayed Coyote as the resourceful individual who left the reservation to make his way in the city. The city version of Coyote wears a black, metal-studded leather jacket and high-tops. Poking fun at stereotypes, Fonseca posed Coyote as a tobacco-store Indian in full eagle headdress and Levi's outside a Hollywood studio selling pottery, jewelry, and Kachina figures at Indian Market. In the version here, Coyote wears the high top-top sneakers, blue jeans and striped tank top along with traditional dance regalia.