



## In the Land of Sunshine: Imaging the California Coast Culture

September 25, 2016–February 19, 2017



Dennis Hare, *The Cove (Monterey)*, 1982. Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches. Mark and Jan Hilbert Collection

**Pasadena, CA** — Even before California became a state in 1850, artists responded to the diverse views and experiences of the 840 miles of coast. Continuing its tradition of showcasing the breadth of California art, the Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is proud to present *In the Land of Sunshine: Imaging the California Coast Culture*. Illustrating the evolution of the landscapes, lifestyles, and industries of the California coastline from the mid-1800s to present, the exhibition assembles approximately 90 oil, acrylic, and watercolor paintings and prints as well as magazines, posters, photographs, and other ephemera.

“Like the coastal communities of Newport Beach, Balboa Island, Laguna Beach, and San Francisco, Pasadena has attracted and inspired a significant number of artists, yet the creative outputs vary from sea to Seco,” says Gordon McClelland, the exhibition’s curator and an acclaimed California art historian and writer. “Pasadena is just far enough away from the shoreline that when artworks depicting and created on the Pacific Coast are viewed there, they take on a fresh, inland context and a distinct meaning.”

On view in the PMCA’s Main Gallery, *In the Land of Sunshine* celebrates the varied artistic visions and interpretations of the coast and culture as well as the way industry and society shape the landscape and its people, giving California its mystique and defining it as a coastal haven. Borrowing its name from *The Land of Sunshine*, a Los Angeles periodical published from 1894 through 1923 that portrayed a potent and alluring illustration of the Pacific Coast, the exhibition showcases art that bloomed in the dazzling California sunlight. The historic and contemporary works from *In the Land of Sunshine* depict the commercial practices of the fishermen, canning operations, and cargo ships alongside the leisure lifestyles of the surfers, sailors, and sport fishermen.

Organized chronologically and by medium, the works trace the formal and historical developments occurring within the state. Moving from early representational views of an idealized West to Joseph Duncan Gleason’s traditional fundamentals of beauty, Alson S. Clark’s impressionistic scenes of the shoreline, and Marion Wachtel’s light-infused watercolors, the exhibition segues to Phil Dike’s playful abstractions and Roger Kuntz’s captivating oscillation from

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representation to abstraction in his large-scale works. In addition to galleries dedicated to watercolors and oil paintings, the surf culture gallery punctuates fine art with ephemera related to the Southern California beach lifestyle. With Alexandra Bradshaw's dynamic 1930s-era watercolor of surfers in Laguna Beach, Bill Ogden's more recent fantastical and hypnotic ocean paintings, and the 1960s psychedelic surrealism of Rick Griffin, the surf gallery highlights the influence of California's free spirit on mid-twentieth-century culture. The exhibition closes with contemporary work demonstrating the continuing dynamism of the Golden State with the energetic and synesthetic watercolors of Keith Crown and unpopulated urban landscapes by Suong Yangchareon.

The distinct physical and cultural aspects of California's coastal development have visually stimulated and emotionally inspired artists for over 150 years. The highly creative works in *In the Land of Sunshine* celebrate the wide variety of artistic approaches used to capture the ever-changing look and mood of the Pacific Coast's communities. They demonstrate the influence of California as both an artists' haven and a center of industry and culture.

*In the Land of Sunshine: Imaging the California Coast Culture* is organized by the Pasadena Museum of California Art and curated by Gordon T. McClelland. The exhibition is supported by the PMCA Board of Directors, PMCA Ambassador Circle, Jan and Mark Hilbert, Diane and Van Simmons, and the Historical Collections Council of California Art.



**Left to Right:** Phil Dike, *Sunlit Afternoon (Corona del Mar)*, 1940s. Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 inches. Private Collection; Louis Betts, *Mid-Winter, Coronado Beach*, ca. 1907. Oil on canvas, 29 x 24 inches. The Irvine Museum

## Museum Information

### MISSION

The mission of the Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is to present the breadth of California art and design through exhibitions that explore the cultural dynamics and influences that are unique to California.

### HOURS

Open Wednesday–Sunday, 12:00–5:00pm; third Thursday of each month, 12:00–8:00pm; closed Monday, Tuesday, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

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**ADMISSION**

\$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors (62+); \$5 for students & educators; free for PMCA members and children (12 and under); free the first Friday of each month (12:00–5:00pm); free the third Thursday of each month (5:00–8:00pm). Access for people with disabilities is provided.

**PLAN YOUR VISIT**

The Museum is located at 490 East Union Street. From the 210 Freeway, take the Lake Avenue exit. Go south and take a right on Union Street. From the 110 Freeway/Downtown Los Angeles, follow the freeway until its end, then take Arroyo Parkway and turn right at Colorado, then left at Oakland to get to Union Street. Parking is available at the Museum.

**DOCENT TOURS AND GROUP RATES**

The Museum offers docent tours on the second Saturday of each month (2:00pm; free with admission). Docent tours are also available Wednesday–Friday, 12:00–5:00pm, to private groups for a fee of \$75. A non-refundable deposit of \$40 is due two weeks prior to the scheduled date. Self-guided tours for K–12 students are offered for free. We regret that we are unable to accommodate docent tours for groups larger than 35 people. Before requesting a tour, please check the exhibition calendar to see which exhibitions will be available during your visit.

A discounted group rate of \$3 per person is available for groups of 20 or more (K–12 student groups are free). Please call to notify us at least one week in advance for these special admission rates. For any questions or to make reservations for a tour or group rate, call our Membership, Visitor Services & Bookstore Associate, Susan Wang, at 626.568.3665 x14 or email [swang@pmcaonline.org](mailto:swang@pmcaonline.org).

For more information, please call 626.568.3665 or visit [pmcaonline.org](http://pmcaonline.org).