New Exhibition Opens


The exhibition comprises over 30 paintings representing more than 20 artists who settled in Laguna Beach, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Drawn from both Langson IMCA holdings and private collections, **Variations of Place** features seascapes, landscapes, and figure paintings. Artists include Franz A. Bischoff, Colin Campbell Cooper, Anna Althea Hills, Guy Rose, William Wendt, and others responding to Southern California’s temperate climes and variety of natural features.

Langson IMCA’s interim museum location at 18881 Von Karman Avenue in Irvine is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is free. Parking is validated for museum visitors. Please check the website for information to plan your visit.
Featured Work: Temple Crag

Edgar Payne was born in 1883 to a farm family in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri. By the age of 23 he had moved to Chicago, IL and enrolled in the Art Institute of Chicago. He quickly determined the formality of the school experience did not suit him and withdrew after two weeks. Before becoming an easel painter full-time, Payne made a living painting houses and stage sets, and worked as a commercial artist.

In 1909 Payne made his first sojourn to California where he painted the landscape in an impressionist style with a distinct approach to shape and form and a color palette informed by the West Coast light. For many years he traveled between Illinois and California before permanently relocating to the Golden State in 1917. That same year he made his inaugural excursion into the backcountry of the Sierra Nevada, a place he would return to again and again.

In “How to Get From Space to Place in a Very Short Stretch of Time,” philosopher Edward S. Casey writes, “There is no knowing or sensing a place except by being in that place, and to be in a place is to be in a position to perceive it. . . .Places gather experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts. Think only of what it means to go back to a place you know, finding it full of memories and expectations, old things and new things, the familiar and the strange and much more besides. What else is capable of this massively diversified holding action?” It was through Edgar Payne’s revisiting of places and practice of making many drawings, photographs, and oil sketches en plein air that he was able to observe, perceive, and endeavor to know the lands that he painted. While his preparatory images were direct observations, his large paintings, like Temple Crag pictured above, were finished in the studio (see footage of Payne working on the painting at 40:22 in the
film). This required the artist to consider not only his recorded perceptions onsite, but to also call upon and gather his memories of place in the landscape of his imagination.

Langson IMCA is pleased to include *Temple Crag* in its collection. The painting is on view in *Variations of Place: Southern California Impressionism in the Early 20th Century* through September 3, 2022.

**Virtual School Visits**

School visits to Langson IMCA's interim museum contribute to the development of stronger critical-thinking skills, empathy, and curiosity about art and culture. When students are encouraged to express themselves and take risks in discussing and creating art, they awaken their imaginations and nurture their creative and innovative potential. School visits offer opportunities for students to develop observation and interpretation skills using visual and sensory information, build knowledge independently and with one another, and cultivate an interest in artistic production.

In Fall 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Langson IMCA pivoted from in-person school visits to virtual school visits. During the 2020 – 2021 academic year, more than 2600 students (grades 3 through 12) from 48 schools across 19 districts participated. They joined Sofia Gutierrez, associate director of education and community engagement, and UCI student museum educators for an interactive, online experience with artworks in *Radiant Impressions*. In an effort to be responsive to the needs of teachers operating in evolving and hybrid learning environments, Langson IMCA also offered the virtual program during the 2021 – 2022 academic year. This year more than 2200 students from 40
schools across 15 districts engaged with the works, themes, and ideas in *The Resonant Surface: Movement, Image, and Sound in California Painting*.

Reflecting on her experience and feedback received from teachers over the past two years Gutierrez shared, “Virtual school visits became a lifeline for the school community in Orange County and beyond, providing a space of refuge, care, and learning through the arts.” Mina Park, 5th grade teacher at Stone Creek Elementary (Irvine Unified School District), expressed her gratitude for the program: “My students looked forward to this all week. You helped bring some normalcy to our year since we aren’t able to go on any in-person field trips.”

Requests for school visits (in-person and virtual) during the 2022 – 2023 academic year open in July 2022. Teacher Resource Guides are available for download at imca.uci.edu, and print versions are available upon request.

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**Collection Work: Dawn with Silhouetted Trees**

Dedrick Stuber was born in 1878 in New York City and studied at the Art Students League of New York. In the state’s Hudson River Valley and along the Long Island shore, Stuber “haunted little meadows and brooks among the Westchester Hills, at Montauk, and other favorite painting grounds developing that intimate acquaintance with nature that is so strong a factor in his painting. He paints two or three skies every day of his life, has kept up this practice for twenty years, and one notices at once the variety and veracity of the ever-changing sky in his picture” (“Where a Tree Grows He Finds a Subject,” *The Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 1928). Stuber moved to California in 1920 and settled in Los Angeles. After his death in 1954, he was lauded for his commitment to rising every morning to observe the sunrise and the resulting landscapes painted in the tradition of American painter Alexander Wyant (*The Los Angeles Times*, September 12, 1954).
In “World at Dawn,” poet, essayist, and naturalist Diane Ackerman writes about the early hours of the day that were similarly observed and captured by Stuber in *Dawn with Silhouetted Trees*, pictured above: “At dawn the world rises out of darkness, slowly, sense-grain by grain, as if from sleep. Life becomes visible once again. ‘When it is dark, it seems to me as if I were dying, and I can’t think anymore,’ Claude Monet once lamented. ‘More light!’ Goethe begged from his deathbed. Dawn is the wellspring of more light, the origin of our first to last days as we roll in space, over 6.684 billion of us in one global petri dish, shot through with sunlight, in our cells, in our minds, in our myriad metaphors of rebirth, in all the extensions to our senses that we create to enlighten our days and navigate our nights. . . .Painting its own time zone, its own climate, dawn is a land of petrified forests and sleeping beauties, when dry leaves, hardened by frozen dew, become ghost hands, and deer slouch through the woods, waiting for their food to defrost. Part of the great parentheses of our lives, dawn summons us to a world alive and death-defying, when the deepest arcades of life and matter beckon. Then, as if a lamp were switched on in a dark room, nature grows crisply visible, including our own nature, ghostly hands, and fine sediment of days.”

Musings
Two generations back, some of my family immigrated to the United States from Ukraine, and I find myself watching media images of the Russian invasion closely from my home in California. Ben Sakoguchi’s *Body Count Brand*—centered on a carefully painted rendition
of a journalist’s gruesome photograph—exposes the tendrils that another far-off war sank deeply into California life. In this small work made nearly half a century ago, Sakoguchi injects imagery of the atrocities of the war in Vietnam into the format of an orange crate label. Oranges of Southern California meet Agent Orange. Death Valley, the great national park, frames the landscape of death along the Mekong. Who is painting California scenarios of today’s suffering in Ukraine?

Bert Winther-Tamaki
Professor of Art History and Visual Studies, UC Irvine

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**Gallery Talk and Artist Demonstration**

Join artist and educator Jeff Sewell on June 30, 2022 for a gallery talk and artist demo at Langson IMCA’s interim museum. Sewell shares his perspective as an artist, focusing on the innovative painting techniques used by California Impressionists in *Variations of Place: Southern California Impressionism in the Early 20th Century*. Following his gallery talk, Sewell conducts a painting demonstration in the Education Studio. Space is limited. Please register in advance for either the 11 am or 3 pm program. The duration of the program is 90 minutes.

Register for the 11 am program

Register for the 3 pm program

**About the Artist**

Jeff Sewell was born and raised in Southern California. His artistic practice adheres closely to the principles of California Impressionism, including working *en plein air* and deepening the artist’s connection to the land, ocean, and sky. Sewell describes himself as both self-taught and open to learning from others, finding inspiration by visiting galleries and museums. His work is held in numerous public and private collections including Langson IMCA. Sewell was included in the Laguna Beach Plein Air invitational in 2015 and awarded the Collectors Choice Award and Randy Higbee Award of Excellence. He has also received 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place, and Honorable Mention ribbons in the Borrego Springs California Plein Air Invitational; Laguna Canyon Foundation Award at the Laguna Beach...
Plein Air Invitational in 2013, and Collectors Choice award at the Laguna Beach Plein Air invitational in 2011.

Sewell is an honored Signature Member of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association (LPAPA) and serves on the LPAPA board of directors as the director of education and mentorship. It is through this affiliation that he launched The Plein Air Project, a program that shared the history and importance of California Impressionism with hundreds of students each year. Sewell is also an Esteemed Artist Member of the California Art Club and most recently became a recognized Signature Member of the American Society of Marine Artists.

Save the Date | Gallery Talk with Janet Blake

Join curator Janet Blake on Tuesday, July 12 from 10:30 – 11:30 am for an in-person walkthrough of Variations of Place: Southern California Impressionism in the Early 20th Century. A dedicated scholar of California Impressionism, Blake offers visitors a unique opportunity to learn about her curatorial approach to the subject matter and shares insights into the work and lives of some of the most renowned California landscape painters of the early 20th century.

Janet Blake is an independent curator based in Southern California. She received a BA in art and art history from California State University, Long Beach and began her career in 1981 as a curator for the Diane and E. Gene Crain Collection. She was curator of historical art at Laguna Art Museum in Laguna Beach, CA until her retirement in December 2020. Her scholarly interests include California Art from 1900 to 1950, with a focus on California Impressionism, and American Scene artists of the 1930s and 1940s. Recent exhibitions curated by Blake include Art Colony: The Laguna Beach Art Association, 1918–1935 (2018) co-curated with Deborah Solon, Phil Dike: At the Edge of the Sea (2017), and Miss Hills of Laguna Beach (2016).
Credits

Elmer Wachtel, *Valley Afternoon*, circa 1920, Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in. UC Irvine Institute and Museum of California Art, Gift of The Irvine Museum

Edgar Payne, *Temple Crag*, circa 1920, Oil on canvas, 32 x 40 in. The Buck Collection at UCI Institute and Museum of California Art

Virtual School Visit, 2022. Photo by Julie DelliQuanti © The Regents of the University of California

Dedrick Stuber, *Dawn with Silhouetted Trees*, circa 1928, Oil on canvas, 11 x 15 in. UC Irvine Institute and Museum of California Art, Gift of The Irvine Museum

Ben Sakoguchi, *Body Count Brand*, 1978 – 1979, Acrylic on canvas, 10 x 11 in. The Buck Collection at UCI Institute and Museum of California Art

Jeff Sewell. Photo by Serena Brinderson. Courtesy of Jeff Sewell


Charles Reiffel, *Spring*, circa 1928. Oil on canvas, 34 x 37 in. The Buck Collection at UCI Institute and Museum of California Art

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Jack and Shanaz Langson Institute and Museum of California Art
University of California, Irvine
Irvine, CA 92697-1010
Langson IMCA is temporarily closed through June 10, 2022
949-476-0003  imca.uci.edu
Interim Museum Location: 18881 Von Karman Ave, Irvine 92612
Interim Museum Hours: Tuesday – Saturday | 10 am – 4 pm
Office Hours: Tuesday – Saturday | 8:30 am – 5 pm
Langson IMCA is temporarily closed through June 10, 2022

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Langson IMCA's ongoing collections research continues to provide new information, which will result in updates, revisions, and enhancements to object records. At the time of publication image credits are reviewed by Langson IMCA's curatorial staff and reflect the most current information the museum has in its database but may be incomplete.

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