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# Common Ground: Early 20th-Century Artist Communities in Southern California

## Note to Teachers

UCI Jack and Shanaz Langson Institute and Museum of California Art (Langson IMCA) is a rich resource for educators and students grades 3–12, and offers school visits, programs, digital tools, and activities that contribute to the development of critical thinking, empathy, and curiosity about art and culture. School visits offer the opportunity for students to develop their skills of observation and interpretation of art, to build knowledge independently and with one another, and to cultivate an interest in artistic making. This Teacher Resource Guide includes essays, artist biographies, strategies for integrating the exhibition into an interdisciplinary curriculum, discussion questions, methods for teaching with objects, and activities focused on three works included in *Common Ground: Early 20th-Century Artist Communities in Southern California*.

## About the Exhibition

*Common Ground* explores how artists' communities in Los Angeles, Laguna Beach, and La Jolla contributed to the development of California plein air painting in the early 20th century. Southern California experienced rapid growth during this period, as marked by population increases, suburban expansion, and the rise of automobile culture.

Amid such transformations, a new wave of artists, many of whom were recent arrivals to the region, gravitated toward the region's scenic locales. There they formed friendships and alliances that enabled artistic exchange and members gathered for painting trips, group exhibitions, and social events. These collaborative efforts honed their individual practices, gave plein air painting national visibility, and enriched the cultural fabric of their communities. The exhibition presents artworks by Franz A. Bischoff, Alfred R. Mitchell, Edgar Payne, Elsie Palmer Payne, Guy Rose, William Wendt, and others.

Curated by graduate students from UC Irvine's Visual Studies Ph.D. program, the exhibition features 36 works that map out these creative ecosystems and evoke the spirit of fellowship that thrived in these seemingly uninhabited landscapes.

## Featured Works

William Wendt, *The Lake*, 1940

William Lees Judson, *The Wendts at Laguna Beach*, between 1912 and 1928

Alson Skinner Clark, *San Diego Mission*, 1922

See full listings below for medium, dimensions, and collection information.

## Learn More

To schedule a school visit, please contact the Education Department by email ([imca@uci.edu](mailto:imca@uci.edu)) or phone (949-476-0924) or register online at [imca.uci.edu](http://imca.uci.edu).

# Artists' Communities in Southern California

## Artists' Communities in Southern California

The artists in this exhibition are united by their involvement with artists' communities and organizations in Southern California in the first half of the 20th century. These communities offered comradeship, opportunities, ideas, and a sense of a shared mission. Their common ground was rooted in the depiction of scenic places, and artists often traveled to paint mountains or shores that colleagues had depicted before them. It focuses on the following three communities:

### The Painters' Club of Los Angeles

Founded in 1906, the Painters' Club of Los Angeles was a small, short-lived artist association composed mainly of recent arrivals to the developing city. The intimate club was invitation-only and limited membership to men, including painters like William Wendt, but excluding notable Los Angeles artists such as Marion Kavanaugh Wachtel and Wendt's spouse, Julia Bracken Wendt. By staging regular meetings at members' homes or studios, the club fostered lively debates on new works. Membership soon grew to over 50 artists. Committed to depicting the California landscape, the group was championed by Antony Anderson, a founding member of the club and the first art critic of the *Los Angeles Times*, who described the group in 1906 as "an association for mutual betterment in their craft and for good-fellowship." Despite its growing size and a regular exhibition program that drew substantial audiences, the club disbanded in 1909. Accounts attribute this to the disgruntlement of members who were upset when their works were not selected for the club's second and final juried exhibition. Historians have also speculated that the club's exclusion of women was a contributing factor in its dissolution.

### The Laguna Beach Art Association

The scenic beauty of Laguna Beach's isolated shoreline, rocky bluffs, and craggy canyons attracted **plein air painters** in the early 1900s. A tight-knit community of artists soon blossomed in this sparsely populated coastal retreat in Orange County. Seeking an outlet for their creativity, they refurbished an old local building into a temporary gallery space. In 1918, a group of artists established the Laguna Beach Art Association (LBAA) "to advance the knowledge of and interest in Art, and to create a spirit of cooperation and fellowship between the painter and the public." Unlike other art clubs, the LBAA supported women artists and promoted their visibility in exhibitions; Julia Bracken Wendt was among the club's members. They also welcomed members of other artistic communities in Southern California, including the California Art Club—William Lees Judson was a member of both organizations—and Women Painters of the West. Over decades, the LBAA gathered a permanent art collection and since 1972 it has operated as the Laguna Art Museum. Located near the city's the main beach, the museum focuses on the art of California.

### Art Communities in La Jolla

Initially a sparsely populated seaside settlement about twelve miles north of downtown San Diego, La Jolla's rich cultural scene was sparked by the arrival of Anna Held, the former secretary of a British actress, in 1894. She used her land to build uniquely designed "Carpenter Gothic" cottages, a community that she dubbed the Green Dragon and that served as a vibrant gathering place for poets, musicians, and painters. La Jolla changed dramatically in the decades after 1900. No longer a rustic seaside village, it quickly developed into a year-round tourist destination, and served as a magnetic subject for artists like Alson Skinner Clark, an inveterate traveler who painted scenes in La Jolla, San Diego, and Mexico, among other places. The thriving artistic environment of the Green Dragon encouraged additional developments including the founding of the La Jolla Art Association which serves the artists of the region to this day.





William Wendt, *The Lake*, 1940, oil on canvas, 30¼ × 36⅞ in. (77 × 92 cm).  
Gift of The Irvine Museum

## About the Artwork

Wendt's paintings flowed from his spiritual attachment to, and respect for, nature. Seeing the land as vital to human well-being, his landscapes focused on the beauty of the natural environment. When looking at Wendt's paintings, we rarely see people, animals, buildings, roads, or bridges, features the painter omitted, believing that tourism and industry were rapidly—and negatively—changing the landscape. When viewing a Wendt painting, we see nature on a grand scale and we feel, consciously or unconsciously, stillness and sense of serenity.

Wendt was devoutly religious. In his view, nature was a manifestation of the divine, and he viewed himself as the faithful interpreter of God's creation. To achieve this fidelity, he often worked outdoors, sometimes sketching, but usually finishing large paintings **en plein air**.

Wendt's painting positions the viewer on a high perch. We might be a bird in flight or a hiker who has reached the summit of a neighboring mountain. The pinks and greens of the rugged land are interrupted by a slash of blue-green water. Wendt often used diagonal landforms to activate the scene, providing movement and a bit of instability.

Wendt expressed his feelings toward nature in a letter to a friend, the painter William Griffith (1866–1940), sent while visiting California in 1898. He wrote:

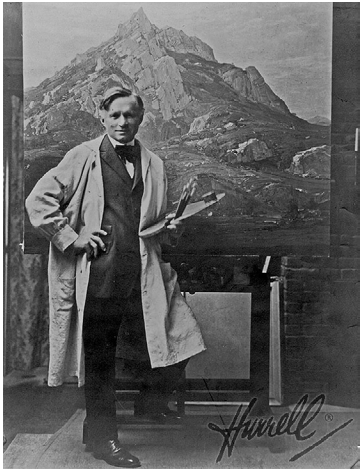
The perfection of this spring day and the gladness thereof make one think of Genesis when the earth was young and morning stars sang to each other....  
The peace, the harmony which pervades all, give a Sabbath-like air to the day, to the environment. One feels that he is on holy ground, in Nature's Temple....  
The perfume of the flowers and of the bay tree are wafted on high, like incense....

**Wendt's paintings flowed from his spiritual attachment to, and respect for, nature.**

The birds sing sweet songs of praise to their Creator. In the tops of the trees, the soothing [murmuring] of the wind is like the hushed prayers of the multitude in some vast cathedral. Here the heart of man becomes impressionable. Here, away from the conflicting creeds and sects, away from the soul-destroying hurly-burly of life, it feels that the world is beautiful, that man is his brother, that God is good.

Painted in 1940, long after the dissolution of the Los Angeles Painters' Club, *The Lake* demonstrates Wendt's lifelong adherence to the style he and his colleagues developed during their formative years of association—an approach to which he held in later life, even as new and more abstract approaches to painting were on the rise.





William Wendt (c. 1930s)

## About the Artist

Born in Benzen, a village in northern Germany, Wendt (1865–1946) would later be known as the “Dean of Southern California landscape painters.” Before moving to Chicago in 1880 he was apprenticed to a cabinet maker, and in Chicago his first experience with painting was in a commercial art shop that mass-produced paintings. Working six days each week, Wendt used days off to search out wilderness in northern Illinois where he could satisfy his own creative talents. Having attended only two terms of evening classes at the Art Institute of Chicago, he did so with skills largely learned on the job or self-taught.

In search of landscapes more untrammelled by modern life, Wendt made several trips to California between 1896 and 1904, and developed a style influenced by **Impressionism**, or painting directly from the landscape using loose brushstrokes. Eventually, Wendt and his wife, sculptor Julia Bracken, moved to Los Angeles, where the style was widely embraced, and found common cause with the short-lived Painters’ Club of Los Angeles.

After the club’s dissolution, Wendt co-founded the California Art Club in 1909 and served as its president for several years in the 1910s. Wendt and his spouse moved permanently to Laguna Beach in 1918, where they built a studio-home and adopted a more secluded lifestyle. Despite being struck by serious illness in the 1920s, he continued to paint and exhibit his work. Wendt died in 1946 in Laguna Beach and was buried next to his wife Julia. In his honor, a street in Laguna Beach is named Wendt Terrace.

**Wendt made several trips to California between 1896 and 1904, and developed a style influenced by Impressionism, or painting directly from the landscape using loose brushstrokes.**

# About the Artist

# William Wendt

# View and Discuss

## View and Discuss

It can be difficult to assess an artist's style and intentions from looking at a single work. Luckily, a collection of 58 works by Wendt is available to view online in a single six-minute [video](#). View the video with your students and ask them to suggest five characteristics that echo across the painter's work. Ask each student to write a short paragraph beginning "William Wendt was an artist who..." When the paragraphs are complete, have students share their writing and together build a list of the attributes mentioned most often.

Read with your class the artist's quote in the *About the Artwork* section above. What response do your students have to Wendt's writing style? In what ways are Wendt's writing and painting styles in sync with one another, and in what ways are they distinct? Ask them to explain their responses.

A painting by William Wendt, a landscape painted ca. 1920, was appraised on the popular PBS program, *Antiques Roadshow*. View the [video](#) with your class and ask students if they learned any new or surprising things from watching it.



## Activities

### Artist Alliances

This exhibition highlights artists' groups in three California locales. Formal organizations like the Painters' Club of Los Angeles provided spaces for artists to convene, exchange ideas, and exhibit their work. Additionally, informal alliances and friendships among artists further enriched the creative atmosphere, leading to cross-pollination of ideas and styles. This sense of community provided emotional support and served as a catalyst for artistic innovation and growth. Artists united by their appreciation for California's landscapes likewise socialized and collaborated with artists and artistic communities elsewhere in the state. Ask your students: Why might artists band together and organize an artists' group? What benefits might they get? What tensions might arise?

### Who Gets to Join?

The Painters' Club of Los Angeles was short-lived, lasting only three years, 1906–09. By contrast, the California Art Club, founded in 1909 on a different set of values, was more enduring, and indeed survives to this day. Membership of the Painters' Club was restrictive: they admitted only men, only painters, and only Los Angeles residents. The California Art Club admitted both men and women, included artists who worked in other mediums, including sculpture, and allowed artists to join from across the United States. Ask your students: Which artist group they would prefer to join? Why?

### The Quest for Voting Rights: California and the 19th Amendment

Julia Bracken Wendt (1870–1942), the spouse of William Wendt, was a notable American sculptor in her own right and had a fascinating history. Born on June 10, 1871, in Apple River, Illinois, she was the twelfth of thirteen children in an Irish Catholic family. Following the death of her mother when she was nine years old, she ran away from home at thirteen. By sixteen she was working as a domestic servant for a woman who recognized her talent and drive and paid for her to enroll to study art in the Art Institute of Chicago.

Bracken Wendt pursued a successful artistic career for several years when, in 1906, she married painter William Wendt and moved to Los Angeles, where she taught and continued her studio practice. She was instrumental in founding the California Art Club in 1909, which was developed on the premise of allowing women and sculptors to be members. Bracken Wendt was also a noted advocate for women's suffrage and equality, and some of her work focuses on powerful women from Greek myths or was devoted to women's organizations—for example, her design for the seal of the National Women's Trade Union.

The women's suffrage movement in California began in the 19th century. After decades of organizing and the defeat of a referendum on women's right to vote in 1896, the question of women's suffrage was again put statewide vote in 1911. This time the referendum passed, though narrowly, with a margin of only 3500 votes. Many women and men involved in the California suffrage movement then became active in the national suffrage movement, which led to the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US

## Activities

Constitution in 1920, which extended women's right to vote to national elections. Documents from that struggle are preserved in an online exhibit titled *On the Road to Ratification*.

The story of the long struggle to achieve voting rights for women is also the subject of the play *Suffs*, which completed a successful run on Broadway and is scheduled to tour nationally in 2025. Watch a seven-minute feature on the play from CBS Sunday Morning with your class and ask them to research and report on this vital aspect of U.S. history.





William Lees Judson, *The Wendts at Laguna Beach*, between 1912 and 1928, oil on canvas, 15 × 25 in. (38 × 64 cm). Gift of The Irvine Museum

## About the Artwork

Judson was a leading figure of the **Arts and Crafts Movement** in Los Angeles and visited Laguna Beach in search of inspiration. His connection with fellow artists William Wendt and Julia Bracken Wendt likely developed at the Los Angeles-based California Art Club, born from the breakup of the Painters' Club of Los Angeles and featuring the couple as core members. The Wendts relocated to Laguna Beach in 1918 and seldom attended social events; Wendt even posted a sign that read “no visitors” on his studio door. Judson’s painting captures an intimate moment between the couple as they contemplate crashing waves, immersed in their own private world.

Unlike William Wendt, who rarely included figures in his landscapes, Judson, who earlier in his career had been a portrait painter, sometimes included figures, lending a sense of scale and human presence to his works. Although they are seen at a distance, the Wendts occupy the painting’s center stage. Judson further calls attention to the couple through his use of color. The red of Bracken Wendt’s sweater is echoed in dabs of color in other parts of the painting, animating the work and moving the viewer’s eye around the rocky terrain.

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# About the Artwork

## The Wendts at Laguna Beach

# William Lees Judson

## About the Artist



Professor William Judson painting a picture on the bank of the Colorado River during a trip with George Wharton James, ca. 1910

### About the Artist

Born in Manchester, England, Judson (1842–1928) emigrated to the United States with his family when he was 10 years old and settled in Brooklyn, New York. Between 1852 and 1890, he frequently visited and sometimes lived in Canada. After serving in the United States Army during the Civil War he returned to Canada to work as a cattle rancher. He moved to Chicago around 1890 and worked as a portrait painter. Diagnosed with tuberculosis, he relocated to Los Angeles seeking a milder climate in 1893, which offered him an inspiring natural setting filled with light and beauty. He fell in love with the area and used his painterly skill to create light effects, not only to paint the landscape but also to produce beautiful stained glass for new buildings throughout Los Angeles.

Teaching was central to Judson's life in Los Angeles. He initially taught at the Los Angeles School of Art and Design and joined the faculty of the University of Southern California as a professor of drawing and painting in 1896. Acting as dean until his retirement in 1920, Judson was integral in developing the school's curriculum and responsible for the academic training of many artists educated in Los Angeles for over 25 years. Artists' associations also played a strong role in his life and work.

**He relocated to Los Angeles seeking a milder climate in 1893, which offered him an inspiring natural setting filled with light and beauty.**

Judson was a member of the California Art Club and the Laguna Beach Art Association and co-founded the Arroyo Guild of Fellow Craftsmen in Pasadena's Arroyo Seco area in 1909.

Judson has had a long-lasting legacy. Founded in 1897 by Judson's three sons, the W. H. Judson Art Glass Company

specializes in fine stained-glass and mosaics. Now called Judson Studios, it occupies the same building to the present day and is still run by the Judson family. Amid a resurgence in building-refurbishment in downtown Los Angeles, the studio is involved with restoring stained glass works produced in the studio in the early 20th century. Headed by David Judson, the great-great-grandson of William Lees Judson, Judson Studios is now the oldest family-owned stained-glass studio in the nation.

# View and Discuss

## View and Discuss

We see only two figures in this painting. However, there were three people there: William Wendt, Julia Bracken Wendt, and William Lees Judson. Each experienced this vista simultaneously, but all were focused in a somewhat different direction. Ask students to immerse themselves imaginatively into this scene—its sounds, smells, and textures—and to describe what they might be experiencing from the perspective of each one. What might they be seeing, thinking, feeling, or saying?

Judson and Wendt were colleagues and friends, and both were well-respected plein air painters, so it is interesting to contrast their respective styles. Ask students to observe and compare Judson's painting with Wendt's painting *Dana Point, 1907*. Although they depict different locations, the subject matter and compositions are comparable. Challenge your students to find similarities and differences in their approaches and painting styles.

An artist can make a beautiful view even more dramatic through their framing, color choices, style of painting, and so on. Compare a contemporary photograph of Laguna Beach showing the same rocky outcropping with Judson's century-old painting. Ask students to articulate how Judson has used the elements of design, including color, texture, value, scale, and composition, to amplify aspects of the Laguna Beach coast.

# Activities

## Activities

### The Life of a Plein Air Painter

The art critic Anthony Anderson discussed the perils of being a plein air painter in a 1913 article published in the *Los Angeles Times*. He contrasts the idealized image of a landscape painter—someone at one with nature in an idyllic setting—with the reality of the profession. Logistically, artists needed to carry their own heavy, bulky equipment to remote sites where they would, as they were painting, be confronted with the variability of nature, including storms, rattlesnakes, mosquitoes, wind, and wasps. Ask students to consider the realities of painting in the open air. What would be the rewards? What obstacles might they encounter? What preparation and supplies would be needed?

### Experiencing Plein Air Painting

Plein air painting, or painting outdoors, is an important part of the practice of landscape painting in California and elsewhere. Encourage students to try it. Watercolors, rather than oil or acrylic paints, may be the most practical medium for a beginner. They should bring their paints to an outdoor setting and, without first laying down a sketch, attempt to capture the light, shadow, color, and forms of the setting. Plein air painting can be challenging, as changing light and weather conditions can impact your work. But painting outdoors also has many benefits. It requires you to work quickly and adapt to the environment. It is also a great way to develop your skills, allowing you to observe and interpret the landscape. When students have completed their paintings, ask them to compare the experience of painting on-site to painting indoors. What are the benefits and drawbacks of each approach?

### The Appeal of the Handmade

During the **Industrial Revolution**, which transformed the landscape and daily life of the many places where it took hold, some artists, architects, and craftsmen began to cultivate a powerful, oppositional design philosophy focused on handmade craftsmanship. First articulated in Great Britain, where factory production was especially intense, the Arts and Crafts movement spread quickly throughout Europe and North America.

Like their counterparts elsewhere, Southern Californian artists and architects involved in this movement sought inspiration in nature. While they were inspired by the British movement, their work reflected a landscape lush with native flora and light. Judson, an adherent of this movement, co-founded the Arroyo Guild of Fellow Craftsmen to pursue this unique perspective on the Arts-and-Crafts ideal.

Many items we use today are factory-made. Ask students to look around their homes for something that is handmade, and something similar that is manufactured. Have them bring these items to school and to compare the handmade items with those that are mass-produced. What are the similarities and differences? What are the advantages of each method of production? What are the drawbacks of each?



**The Judson Studios Today**

Colored glass has been made since ancient times and stained-glass windows, as we know them today, can be traced back to as early as the seventh century. It is remarkable that a company producing stained glass has remained in the same family for more than 125 years. To get a sense of what Judson Studios looks like today and the process of creating stained glass artworks, their website contains historical information, archival photographs, and several videos that tour the facilities and offer a glimpse into the process of creating stained glass installations.

**Craft in California**

PBS has produced an episode of *Craft in America* dedicated to highlighting the varied and important contributions of California’s craftspeople. It includes segments on Judson Studios, and the Arts-and-Crafts-oriented architectural firm Greene and Greene.

# About the Artwork

## San Diego Mission



Alson Skinner Clark, *San Diego Mission*, 1922, oil on board, 15½ × 19¼ in. (39 × 49 cm). Gift of The Irvine Museum

### About the Artwork

Clark, an inveterate traveler and tourist, studied art in Europe and documented the building of the Panama Canal before finding inspiration in the diverse terrain and atmospheric conditions of Southern California. This painting deploys dramatic lighting and color effects to depict San Diego de Alcalá, the first Spanish mission founded in the state. Devoid of human presence, the tranquil work absents the site's tumultuous history.

Dedicated on July 16, 1769, San Diego de Alcalá served as a religious, cultural, and agricultural hub, and set the stage for the establishment of the California mission system. Known the “mother of the missions,” it was the first of 21 missions established by Spanish settlers along the California coast. It was also the site of conflict. In the summer of 1775, priests baptized more than 300 **Indigenous** people, members of the Kumeyaay Nation, the original inhabitants of San Diego County. Unhappy with their treatment, members of the tribe led an uprising during which the mission was burned to the ground.

**Clark, an inveterate traveler and tourist, studied art in Europe and documented the building of the Panama Canal before finding inspiration in the diverse terrain and atmospheric conditions of Southern California.**

Rebuilt in 1776, control of the mission shifted over the course of the 19th century, passing first to Mexico, then to the United States, and returning to the Roman Catholic Church in 1862. Mission San Diego, which had fallen into disrepair, was rebuilt again in 1931, and it remains an active church today. The church is now a national historic landmark.

When Clark painted it in 1922, the mission was in ruins. Nevertheless, he monumentalizes his subject, which we observe at the top of a hill. The scene is harmonious and serene, even

as his use of color adds subtle drama, bathing the vista in deep orange and red tones made more vivid by the complementary green of the foliage.





Alson Skinner Clark, ca. 1916.  
Public domain

## About the Artist

Alson Skinner Clark (1876–1949) was an American Impressionist painter known for luminous landscapes and intimate portrayals of everyday life. Born in Chicago, Illinois, to a wealthy family, Clark studied briefly at the Art Institute of Chicago before traveling to New York to study with the Impressionist William Merritt Chase, and to France, where he studied with the painters James McNeil Whistler and Alphonse Mucha. Inspired by Chase's vibrant colors and loose brushwork, Clark developed a style of Impressionism characterized by skillful handling of light and color, which he used to portray tranquil scenes of rural life, sun-dappled gardens, and fleeting moments of beauty in the natural world.

Clark traveled and exhibited widely—the Art Institute of Chicago gave him a solo exhibition in 1906—and he took on unique projects, including a series of paintings of the building of the Panama Canal in 1913, and service as an aerial photographer during World War I. After visiting California for his health in 1919, he moved to the Arroyo Seco in Pasadena in 1920 and immersed himself in the region's burgeoning art scene, including membership in the California Art Club and the Pasadena Art Association.

Always looking for beautiful scenery, he often spent summers vacationing and painting along the coast in Laguna Beach, La Jolla, San Diego, and Mexico. In 1921, he joined the faculty of the Stickney School of Fine Arts in Pasadena and soon became the school's director. He was honored with several solo exhibitions in California during his lifetime, notably at the San Diego Museum of Art in 1938 and at the Los Angeles Museum of History, Science, and Art—now the Los Angeles County Museum of Art—in 1940. Clark died in 1949, at 73 years old, while painting in his Pasadena studio.

**Clark developed a style of Impressionism characterized by skillful handling of light and color.**

# About the Artist

# Alson Skinner Clark

# View and Discuss

## View and Discuss

Provide students with time to look at Clark's painting and ask them to write down five to ten words they would use to describe it. Then, in a group discussion, ask them to contribute a word from their list and provide evidence from the painting to describe how Clark has conveyed this attribute. As an example, if one of the words from their list is *quiet* ask them to provide evidence for that observation. They might say that they don't see any people, cars, or even a road, so this must be a remote place with little activity.

When Clark created this painting in 1922, the San Diego Mission would have been in ruins. Fortunately, several pre-restoration photographs of the mission exist and can be viewed on the internet, including the following sources: [Calisphere](#); [San Diego History 1](#); [San Diego History 2](#); [City of San Diego](#). These images give evidence of what Clark's subject looked like when he encountered it. Show students these historical photographs and compare them to Clark's painting. How are they similar? How are they different?

You will encounter contemporary images of Mission San Diego de Alcalá at the [mission's website](#). These bear little resemblance to the humble structure that Clark depicted. Compare these contemporary images (or others available online) with Clark's 1922 painting. How has the mission changed? What aspects have been maintained?

## Activities

### A Kid's-Eye Tour

The family travel video blog *Look Who's Blogging* explores California from the perspective of two young brothers and features a [six-minute video tour](#) of the San Diego Mission. Watch the video with your class and discuss what destinations in your community would make an interesting subject for a video tour. In addition to learning about a local landmark, students will also experience the steps needed to create a short video including:

- Brainstorm** a list of destinations in your community. It might be your school, library, a local park, or any other place of interest nearby. Decide on one to focus on.
- Research** and visit the chosen site.
- Storyboard** the video using sketches on paper to plan out each scene. Storyboards usually look like cartoons where each frame suggests a shot to be included.
- Write** a script with dialogue or plan out what narrative and facts should be included.
- Rehearse** so that everyone is comfortable with their part in the production.
- Record** the video.
- Edit** and delete anything not essential. Some free, simple editing platforms include iMovie, Davinci Resolve and Canva Online Video Editor.
- Share.**

### Simultaneous Contrast: How Colors Interact with Each Other

The perception of color has been a subject of extensive study throughout the history of art. Like many California Impressionists, Clark sought to capture the clear, intense light of the state and to accentuate the role of color to produce brilliant effects. One scientific theory that influenced many 19th- and early 20th-century artists is known as *simultaneous contrast*. Simultaneous contrast happens when we put two colors side-by-side. They can make each other look different and sometimes more intense.

We see the use of simultaneous contrast in Clark's painting of the San Diego Mission as he uses reds and oranges punctuated by patches of green. Because red and green are situated on opposite sides of the color wheel, each color is enhanced by being placed next to its opposite. Color pairs can either heighten or diminish our impression of their intensity. An artist can use color relationships like these to influence how viewers perceive the work.

Students can experiment with simultaneous contrast by creating a small drawing that includes several shapes, duplicating that drawing on a photocopier, and completing the copied drawing several times using different colors and color combinations. When the series of drawings is complete, look at them side by side. Which color combinations seem most vibrant and exciting? Which produce the most calming effect?

# Vocabulary

## Vocabulary

**The Arts and Crafts Movement** was a cultural movement focused on handmade objects and natural forms that began in Great Britain during the Industrial Revolution and that spread across Europe and then to North America. In the early 20th century, artists and architects in Southern California adapted this style to their locale and created works inspired by nature, natural materials, and handmade craftsmanship.

**Impressionism** was an art movement and style of painting that emerged in the late 19th century in France that focused on capturing the changing qualities of natural light through quick brushwork and vibrant colors. French Impressionist painters like Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, along with American painters like William Merritt Chase, used the style to depict everyday scenes and landscapes.

**Plein air painting** is the practice of creating artworks outdoors to capture the natural environment directly on canvas. Popularized by the Impressionists in the 19th century, this technique allows artists to observe and depict changing light, weather, and atmospheric conditions in real time, leading to dynamic representations of landscapes.

**Indigenous** people are members of the original inhabitants of a place, especially before the arrival of colonists or settlers.



## Resources

### William Wendt

Jean Stern, "William Wendt: 1865–1946," Laguna Plein Air Painters, <https://lpapa.org/william-wendt-1865-1946/>.

"William Wendt and the California Landscape," Doyle, May 7, 2024, <https://doyle.com/story/william-wendt--the-california-landscape/>.

### Julia Bracken Wendt

Viki Sonstegard, "Julia Bracken Wendt: Sculptor with Feminist Sensibilities," Women Out West, February 21, 2014, <https://womenoutwest.blogspot.com/2014/02/julia-bracken-wendt-sculptor-with.html>.

"Noted Advocates for Suffrage," *Enterprise* (Riverside), September 5, 1911, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MPE19110905.2.111&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN----->.

### William Lees Judson

"William Lees Judson," Loch Gallery, <https://www.lochgallery.com/artist/william-lees-judson>.

"Judson Studios: Artisanal Stained Glass," PBS SoCal, October 17, 2011, <https://www.pbssocal.org/shows/departures/judson-studios-artisanal-stained-glass>.

### Alson Skinner Clark

Wendy Greenhouse, "Alson Skinner Clark, 1876–1949," Schwartz Collection, <https://schwartzcollection.com/artist/alson-skinner-clark/>.

### Women's Suffrage in California

Frances Kaplan, "Women's Suffrage in California: What One Document Reveals," California Historical Society, September 24, 2021, <https://californiahistoricalsociety.org/blog/womens-suffrage-in-california-what-one-document-reveals/>.

"History of Women's Suffrage in California," California Secretary of State, 2020, <https://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/women-get-right-vote/history-womens-suffrage-california>.

### Laguna Beach Art Association

"Our History," Laguna Art Museum, <https://lagunaartmuseum.org/history>.

### Art Communities in La Jolla

Jean Stern, "Artists in La Jolla, 1890–1950," *Journal of San Diego History*, 2008, <https://sandieghistory.org/journal/v54-4/pdf/v54-4Stern.pdf>.

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### Mission San Diego de Alcalá

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