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Masterworks of the Exposition Era 1915 EXPOSITION CENTENNIAL ART EXHIBITION

The San Diego History Center, Balboa Park

January 17, 2015 – January 3, 2016



Image: *California*

Tower, Balboa Park, 1915 Maurice Braun

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

San Diego, California: February 2015: In honor of the Balboa Park 2015 Centennial Celebration, the San Diego History Center has premiered a stunning new exhibition, ***MASTERWORKS OF THE EXPOSITION ERA***, a celebration of masterpieces by leading national and regional artists which were on exhibition one hundred years ago, at the 1915 Panama California International Exposition in Balboa Park, San Diego. www.sandiegohistory.org/Masterworks1915Expo



Image: The Panama-California Exposition

MASTERWORKS OF THE EXPOSITION ERA commemorates the art of the original Exposition, which featured a dramatic presentation of work by a group of prominent American painters, hand-selected by renowned artist Robert Henri, including George Bellows, John Sloan, William Glackens, George Luks, Guy Pene du Bois and other great American artists of the era. The assemblage of paintings, pairing the **urban expressionism** of East Coast artists with contemplative, **impressionistic** West Coast works, was displayed across three gallery venues in Balboa Park in 1915.



Image: Artist Robert Earle Henri (American, 1865–1929)

This exhibition of these now-classic paintings by members of the **Ashcan School and The Eight**, was complemented by a display by such notable California artists of the era as William Wendt, Guy Rose, Anna Hills, Frank Cuprien and E. Charlton Fortune, along with outstanding works from a group of regional artists who were soon to turn San Diego into a thriving art center, including Maurice Braun, Alfred Mitchell, and Charles Fries.

Derrick Cartwright, Director of the Hoehn Galleries at the University of San Diego, and exhibition Co-Curator, comments, "***The Panama California Exposition provided a first chance for many San Diegans to experience contemporary art in person and in depth. The public that came to the exposition in 1915 was impressed by the quality of work on display by artists of both national and local renown. This exhibition recreates the experience of wonder and recognition felt so keenly by visitors to Balboa Park and reminds us of how much the art community here has grown in the intervening 100 years.***"



Image: Alfred Mitchell "Mountain Landscape (After Braun)", 1913
Collection of The San Diego Museum of Art, Gift of Elizabeth W. Colburn, 2011.60



Image: Mountain Infinity 1913 William Wendt



Image: William Wendt (American 1865-1946)



Image: Leading Lady 1915 Guy Rose (American 1867-1925)

The exhibition also features for the first time the outstanding contributions of San Diegan Alice Klauber, noted local artist and Henri student (later instrumental in the founding the San Diego Museum of Art) who orchestrated this unprecedented juxtaposition of West Coast transcendentalists and East Coast realists. www.sandiegohistory.org/online_resources/aliceklauber.html



**Image: San Diego Harbor 1910 Artist: Alice Klauber
(American 1871-1951)**

The Curatorial Department of the History Center gathered works from distinguished public and private collections throughout California and the nation to create this exhibition noting the fact that San Diego's citizens created one of the world's great cultural parks, an architectural fantasy which has transformed the city and the region. The Park was filled with contemporary paintings and this modest seaside city soon became a mecca for art and culture.

Bram Dijkstra, Professor Emeritus of American and Comparative Literature, University of California at San Diego, and exhibition Co-Curator, cites the significance of this historic exhibition: ***"The History Center's centennial reconstruction of the exhibition of California paintings shown during the Panama-California exposition of 1915 in Balboa Park will be a truly revelatory experience. It has for far too long been assumed that the only significant work by American artists presented at the Fair featured Robert Henri's East Coast friends, but, in fact, the History Center's exhibition will show that a parallel exhibition of the work of California painters was able to cast, in the words of Maurice Braun, "a spell all its own." Indeed, the "great variety of scenery"***

provided by our State, Braun pointed out, was represented by stunning "interpretations of the high Sierras, the mesa land, the shores of the Pacific, the rugged pines of Monterey, the graceful eucalyptus, the fleeting snows of the upper altitudes, the missions under the mid-day sun and by moonlight, the desert, and Indian life." These works, with a World War brewing, were, given the California artists' native optimism and love of nature, at the time unable to compete for the public's attention with the much darker mood of the Henri contingent. However, now, at a century's remove, the History Center's recreation of the exhibition will reveal, in dramatic detail, that the Californians' masterful, and also deeply respectful, celebration of a nature not yet ravaged by industrial excess, can stand toe-to-toe with the art of their far more celebrated East Coast counterparts."

Masterworks of the Exposition Era will have feature 70 works in all, with the first Collection on exhibition from January to June of 2015, and the second group of works presenting July through December. The Collection includes numerous award-winning paintings from the Exposition: the Grand Prize painting, *Mountain Infinity*, by William Wendt from a private collection; Maurice Braun's Gold Medal landscape, *California Hills*, from the Irvine Museum; a Silver Medal view of Coldwater Canyon by Alfred Mitchell and a monumental view of Cuyamaca Mountain by Charles Fries, from the History Center's own collection. Other highlights include rare works from the period by E. Charlton Fortune, and gorgeous California landscapes by such artists as Guy Rose, Anna Hills, Detlef Samman, John Gamble, and others.

www.sandiegohistory.org/Masterworks1915Expo



Image: Cuyamaca Mountain 1914 Charles Fries (American 1854-1940)

Paintings from local collections will also be featured, revealing the deep cultural impact made by the 1915 Exposition. Works on display are drawn from museums across the country, including the New Mexico Museum of Art, Mt. Holyoke College Art Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Irvine Museum, the San Diego Museum of Art and numerous notable private collections including the renowned Sefton Collection. Many of the works from private collections throughout Southern California have rarely been on public display over the past 100 years.

In describing **MASTERWORKS**, History Center Executive Director Charlotte Cagan stated, ***"This 2015 centennial commemoration recreates a spectacular aspect of the 1915 Exposition and a unique and transformative moment in San Diego history that shaped our community and our artistic and cultural heritage."***

WHAT: Masterworks of the Exposition Era Exhibition

WHEN: January 17, 2015 – January 3, 2016

The exhibition is open from 10 am to 5 pm daily*

***check website for museum closures.**

WHERE: 1649 El Prado #3

San Diego, CA 92101

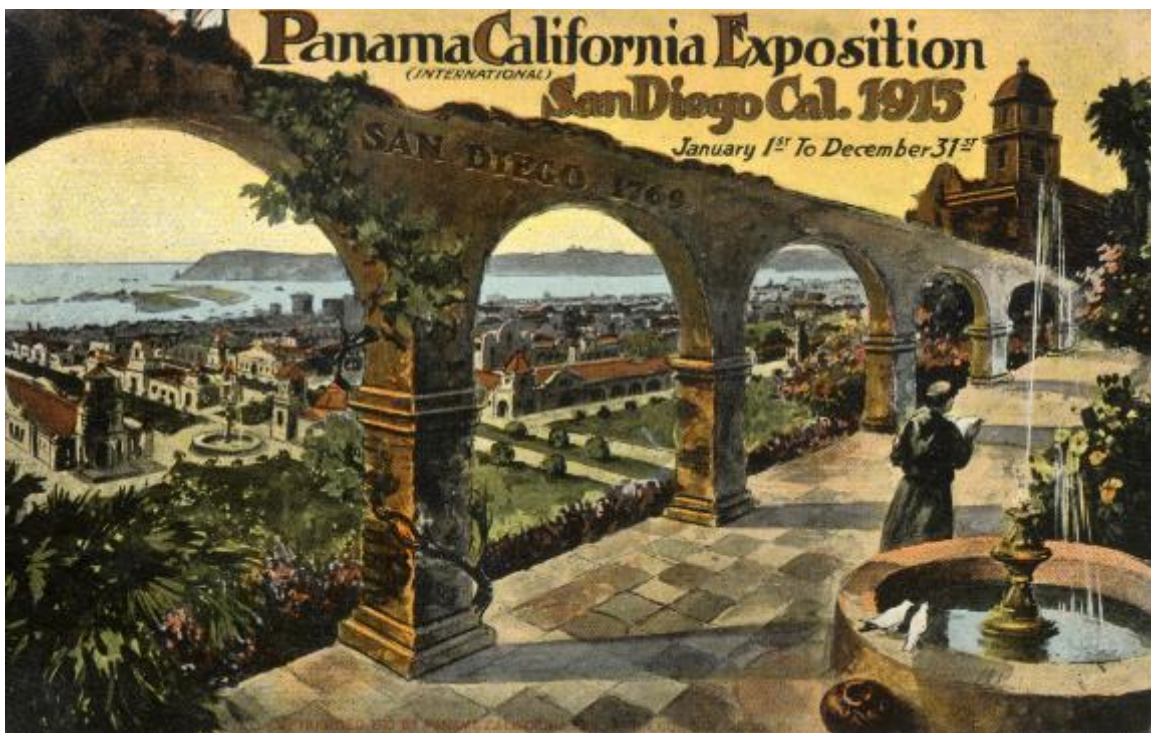
INFO: (619) 232-6203 Extension 102

WEBSITE: www.sandiegohistory.org/Masterworks1915Expo

Admission to both museums: Adults \$10, Seniors \$8, Youth \$6

Children under 5 are free.

In honor of the exhibition and the Centennial Year, A complimentary Masterworks Exhibition Catalog (\$20 value) will be gifted with the acquisition of a new membership at the \$100 level and above.



High-Resolution Artwork (300dpi) and Interviews with Executive Director, Charlotte Cagan and Noted Curator Bram Dijkstra

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bram_Dijkstra are available upon request @ allison@relevantcommunications.net

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ABOUT THE San Diego HISTORY CENTER

The San Diego History Center, which operates its flagship museum in Balboa Park as well as the [Junípero Serra Museum](#) in Presidio Park, tells the diverse story of our region—past, present, and future—educating and enriching our community, preserving our history and fostering civic pride. The History Center was founded in 1928 and is one of the oldest and largest historical organizations in California. It is one of only a handful of institutions nationwide that is dedicated to celebrating the heritage of a major American city.

For further information: www.sandiegohistory.org/

