



California Impressionism

William H. Gerds, Will South

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In recent years, the richly colored, exuberantly painted canvases by artists such as Franz Bischoff, Alson Clark, Joseph Raphael, Guy Rose, and William Wendt have attracted an expanding circle of admirers all across the country. In addition to the work of these established West Coast masters, many less-known California Impressionists are presented here, including John Frost, Evelyn McCormick, Bruce Nelson, and others whose work has not yet been widely discovered.

In his far-ranging introductory essay, Dr. Gerdts explores the context of California Impressionism, surveying the movement's sources abroad, the most influential exhibitions in America, and the critical responses to the art and the artists. He introduces the work of an almost entirely forgotten foursome—Helena Dunlap, Detlef Sammann, Ernest Browning Smith, and Jack Gage Stark—who were the first local painters to be identified as Impressionists in Los Angeles and who contributed to an important but long-overlooked moment in the city's cultural history.

Will South supplies an enlightening chronological narrative of the California Impressionists, starting with their often-ignored roots in the Hudson River school and other American realist art. Tracing the trajectory of their work from the innovations of the late 1800s to the style's final days in the 1920s and '30s, he offers vital new information and insight about their training and careers, as well as their ideas about art, nature, and the Golden State. Dr. South also provides detailed artists' biographies and an extensive bibliography.

At a time when interest in all aspects of regional Impressionism continues to flourish, California Impressionism commands the greatest interest of all. This book will be an invaluable resource and source of pleasure for the innumerable collectors, scholars, and art lovers who find this work—with its wind-swept coasts, majestic mountains, and poppy-strewn fields—irresistibly appealing.

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