

# California State Senate Contemporary Art Collection



2015 - 2016



# California State Senate Contemporary Art Collection



## Introduction

Welcome to the California State Senate's 2015-16 Contemporary Art Collection. Every two years, Senators select artists from their districts to honor. The result is an impressive mosaic, a snapshot of the amazing artwork being produced across the state by people of all ages and backgrounds.

The artists and their works reflect California's rich diversity, culture and its spectacular natural beauty. The pieces in this collection run the gamut in substance and style, from oils and watercolors, to bronze and glass, to glitter and digital lenticular images. The 2015-16 show promises to delight, enrich and inspire viewers.

Behind each work of art there is a story, and often an inspirational one. The Senate is proud to showcase the 2015-16 collection in this publication and tell you about the artists who created it.

2015-2016



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**ELENA ALLEN**

**Missing You**

Oil on canvas

**Selected by Senator Benjamin Allen (SD 26)**

Elena Allen, a long-time Santa Monican, is an accomplished expressionist artist in oils. She has long been fascinated by the urban, coastal and mountain landscapes of Southern California and the surreal worlds they evoke.

Her work has been featured in many solo and group exhibitions. For ten years, Allen served on the Santa Monica Arts Commission, including two terms as its Chair. Last spring, she was an artist-in-residence for two months at the American Academy in Rome.



## PATRICK BLYTHE

### Desert Dawn III

Cast and carved glass

**Selected by Senator Jeff Stone, Pharm. D. (SD 28)**

Patrick Blythe began painting in 1970 after studying art and photography at Lakeland College. In 1972, he began working in various metals. Blythe's artwork combines the skills learned while working in factories and on farms with his passion for nature, a contemplative appreciation of our desert environment and an intense desire to express personal experiences.

His award-winning sculptures have been exhibited in museums and public art exhibitions and can be found in collections around the world.



Blythe's work ranges in scale from tabletop sculptures to monumental public art. He works in glass, bronze and stone, and has created installation art works in wood and fiber. He is currently the Director of Glass and Sculpture at the Coachella Valley Arts Center.

Blythe is highly sought as a lecturer and teacher in studios and schools across the U.S. and overseas. He has completed residencies at Pilchuck Glass School in Seattle and North Lands Creative Glass in Lybster, Scotland, and will soon begin a residency at Cill Rialaig Arts Centre in Ireland in fall 2015. Blythe's studios in the U.S. and Ireland welcome artists and instructors from around the world for classes, retreats and residency programs.



**ROSEANNE BURKE**  
**Golden (Hirshman's Pond)**

Oil on linen

**Selected by Senator Ted Gaines (SD 1)**

Roseanne Burke is a painter that works in oils, pastels and encaustics. She studied at Syracuse University and UC Berkeley, and has always loved to draw and paint. After moving to Nevada City in 2002, Burke continued taking classes at Sierra College. She has also taken workshops with various artists not only in California, but also Arizona, Italy and Greece. She has won numerous awards and her work is in private collections throughout California.

Burke is a member of Nevada County Arts and the DANK Artists Collective. Her work can be seen at the Osborn/Woods Gallery at Miners Foundry Cultural Center in Nevada City.



## WARREN CHANG

### Fall Tilling

Signed giclee

#### Selected by Senator William W. Monning (SD 17)

Born and bred in Monterey, California, Warren Chang (b. 1957) graduated from the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in 1981, where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration with honors. He thrived for two decades as an award-winning illustrator in both California and New York, transitioning to a career as a fine artist starting in 2000.

Chang is renowned for his art, earning many awards and honors, including induction as a Master Signature member of the prestigious Oil Painters of America, the largest organization of oil painters in the U.S. He is one of only 50 to receive this honor. His awards also include Best of Show in the 2003 Salon International and 2009 Raymar Contest. In addition, his work has been profiled in many publications, including *American Artist* and *International Artists* magazines. Now based in his Monterey studio, he is an inveterate and popular teacher, currently affiliated with San Francisco's Academy of Art University.

Chang's work falls into two main categories: biographical interiors and fieldworkers. His interest in interiors reaches back to the 16th century artist Johannes Vermeer, and includes subjects of family, friends, students and self-portraits in the interior environments of his studio, classroom

and home. He creates mood and emotion through his manipulation of light and use of close value relationships and subdued color.

Chang is perhaps best known for his paintings of fieldworkers from the Monterey County area. His depictions of unidealized fieldworkers are unsentimental, yet celebrate the human spirit. Chang admits being inspired and influenced by the novels of John Steinbeck – books he read in his youth – as well as the ambience of growing up in Monterey.



**CHELLA**

**Young Almonds**

Oil on canvas

**California State Fair Tractor**

Oil on canvas

**Selected by Senator Cathleen Galgiani (SD 5)**

Chella Gonsalves graduated from Ball State University with a Bachelor of Science in Art Education. She came to California in 1956. For 50 years, she has taught art at various levels to youngsters and adults alike, including 27 years in the Modesto City School District. She has also painted extensively, exhibiting her work in many regional and national shows. She has received numerous awards for her work, which is widely recognized and in many private collections.

This proud Indiana Hoosier is an accomplished artist in various media and styles, including non-representational and abstract. She prefers en plein air oil paintings, working with light and shadow. Her works depict familiar sights seen in the Central Valley, rural and country, such as river parks, soon-to-be gone homesteads and other landmarks. Gonsalves has illustrated a cookbook, a poetry book and two coloring storybooks for Modesto's historical McHenry Mansion.

As an associate member of Oil Painters of America, Gonsalves studied with nationally-known artists, including I. Rice Pereira and Margo Hoff, as well as California artists Art Sherwyn, Brian Blood, Bob Gerbracht, Stan Goldstein, E. John Robinson, Gerald Brommer, Dan Petersen, Alexander Nepote, Peggi Kroll Roberts and Robert Burridge.

Gonsalves' works can be viewed at the John Natsoulas Gallery in Davis, the Trewin Gallery and the Central California Art Association/Mistlin Gallery in Modesto and the First Street Gallery in Turlock.

***Young Almonds*** is generously loaned from the private collection of Jennifer Sampson, Livingston, California.



## MAREN CONRAD

### Ladylike

Glitter, oil and resin

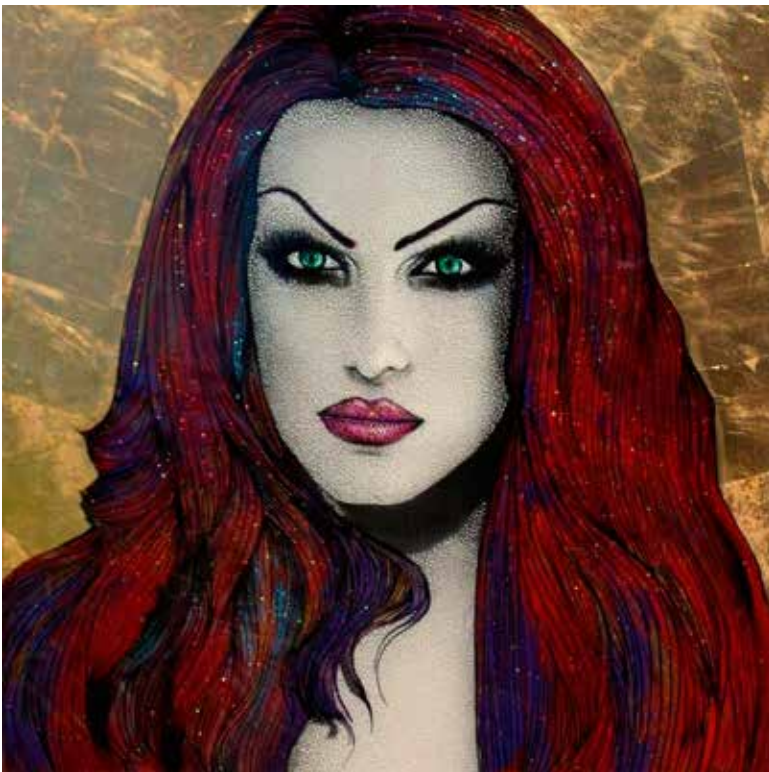
**Selected by Dr. Richard Pan (SD 6)**

In just five years, Maren Conrad has established a reputation as one of Northern California's most promising visual artists. Inspired by the concepts of loss and renewal, Conrad creates visual metaphors that express the collective truths learned from these shared human experiences. Composed of paint, glitter and metal-leaf between multiple layers of resin, her work creates a visually complex and multi-dimensional experience that establishes a distinct and lasting connection with her audience.

Working largely on a commission basis from her private studio in Sacramento, Conrad has successfully placed her work in both commercial and residential spaces throughout California, as well as private collections in Napa, Beverly Hills, San Francisco, Washington, D.C. and Tel Aviv. Additionally, she was honored to be named the artist-in-residence for The Andaz, Hyatt Hotel Corporation's celebrated boutique-hotel network. Locally,

Conrad was chosen as the first solo-artist to be featured at the Crocker Art Museum Art Mix in 2012, where she continues to be a popular guest lecturer and teacher in the museum's education programs.

Maren Conrad's work has received broad media coverage in USA Today, UK Yahoo homepage, Forbes, the Associated Press and San Francisco Magazine's Power Issue of December 2013. She was also the first featured artist in Golf & Lifestyle magazine in September 2013.



## KENTURAH DAVIS

### Meditation VIII: Karim

Pencil on somerset paper

**Selected by Senator Holly J. Mitchell (SD 30)**

In the words of the artist:

“The core of my work oscillates between portraiture and design, exploring themes related to the body, language and the formation of identity. From rendering a figure by writing a text repetitively to sewing highly individualized uniforms, my work unpacks layers of meaning embedded in how we socialize and perceive one another.

Employing the use of the written word to make drawings came about during my detour away from painting, as a way to investigate the mechanics of construction of our personal and collective identities. I stripped my work of color and gesture and instead began to construct works on paper by layering hand-written text. It extended the work into the realm of a performative act, in which the process of making it is as important as the finished piece. I see the drawings as a series of conversions where the subject has first been rendered with light through the photographic process, then carefully converted to text as I filter the photographic information through my eyes and hand. My first experimentations were composed with hand-written text, some cursive, some hand-printed. Further exploration using rubber stamp letters followed. In the way that the hand-written works engage with the history of penmanship and an individualized method of mark-making, the stamp drawings connect with industry, printmaking and a broader dissemination of information.”

Davis recently completed her first public art commission at Alliance Française d’Accra, Ghana. She has exhibited at the Torrance Art Museum, the MidTokyo Gallery in Japan, the Ian Potter Museum of Art in Australia and the Ucity Art Museum in China, just to name a few.

Senator Holly Mitchell selected Davis to represent the 30th Senate District in this exhibition with the help of Mr. Franklin Sirmans, the Terri and Michael Smooke Curator and Contemporary Art Department Head for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



## CHIEKO DELGADO

### Blossom Trail – Reflection

Watercolor

**Selected by Senator Andy Vidak (SD 14)**

Chieko Delgado was born in Tokyo, Japan. She graduated from art college in Japan and moved to Sanger, California. Delgado joined the local art collaborative, the Art Stand Gallery, in Minkler. The gallery relocated to Sanger and was renamed the Sanger Art Station. Since moving to Sanger, she has painted mainly local scenes.

One of Delgado's favorite subjects, the Fresno County Blossom Trail, is a self-guided 60-mile route featuring a panorama of blooming stone fruit and nut orchards and citrus groves. In the summer, these beautiful orchards produce delicious fruits and become the Fresno County Fruit Trail. Delgado has done many paintings of the trail over the last 15 years and **Blossom Trail – Reflection** is one of the most popular in the community. She loves to drive through the trail, especially after a day of rain - the air becomes clearer and water puddles reflect the pink and white orchards like a mirror.



## NISHAN DERKALOUSDIAN

### Deportation

Acrylic on canvas

**Selected by Senator Tom Berryhill (SD 8)**

Nishan Derkalousdian was born in 1950 in Beirut, Lebanon. He grew up in the small, vibrant village of Ainjar, where he attended Armenian Evangelical High School. It was there that his talent for painting was recognized. Nishan continued his education at Haigazian College and the American University of Beirut, focusing his studies in the areas of art and math. A career in education, teaching math and physics in various secondary schools in Lebanon, soon followed.

Derkalousdian and his wife, Arous, immigrated to the United States in 1978. They were blessed with three children: Movses, Ara and Maral.

His works are influenced by Armenian artist Kevork Bashinjaghian, and his paintings reflect his passion for landscapes in a pure and simple state, using both acrylic and watercolor. Derkalousdian's paintings have received a considerable amount of recognition, and have appeared in various exhibitions in California, Lebanon and Armenia.

*This piece is generously loaned by former State Senator Chuck Poochigian and Supervisor Debbie Poochigian.*



## ROBERTO GUTIERREZ

### Echo Park Lake

Gouache and watercolor

**Selected by Senator Kevin de León (SD 24)**

Roberto Gutierrez was born in Boyle Heights in 1943. His love for art began as a small child. As an adult, he used his GI Bill to attend East L.A. College, graduating to California State College L.A., where he majored in Art. Since then, Gutierrez has worked in the company of peers at Self-Help Graphics and in his studio. His work speaks to the community he knows: the barrios of Los Angeles.

Gutierrez's works are in the collection of actor Cheech Marin, and in museums, including the Smithsonian Institute, the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum in Chicago and the San Antonio Museum of Art. He has been widely shown in galleries throughout California, Texas and Tijuana, Baja California. Gutierrez has received awards from the Los Angeles Mayor's office and the California State Assembly for his work in artistically documenting the L.A. cityscape in all its urban flavors.





## CRAIG JOHNSON

### Ravine Falls on North Table Mountain

Photography

**Selected by Senator Jim Nielsen (SD 4)**

Craig Johnson has had a camera in his hand throughout most of his adult life, and enjoys both the art of photography and the process of bringing the image to paper. He is a retired Chemical Engineer and now has more time to devote to travel and photography.

Although Johnson has joined the digital age, he started with film. To him, the process was only half done when the shutter clicked. He built a darkroom complete with developing trays and tanks and an enlarger. He processed film and prints: push processing films, burning, dodging, toning and straight prints. He took travel, wedding, sports, artisan and performance art photographs and then worked in the darkroom to translate the images from captured moments to encapsulated events. Johnson worked primarily in black and white, but also did some color photography.

His darkroom is now dry and electronic, but many of the same techniques are there: burn, dodge and other effects. Johnson manipulates his images to varying degrees to achieve an effect that he feels is more pleasing, and perhaps even more true, than the original image.



## DIANE KELTNER

### The Home Stretch

Bronze

**Selected by Senator Joel Anderson (SD 38)**

“My goal is to make my portrait bust look like he or she is breathing life and is ready to have a conversation. I work primarily from photographs but it is always helpful to have at least one visit.”

Sculptor Diane Keltner was raised in San Diego and graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in art. She has studied with Richard MacDonald, considered by many to be the world’s pre-eminent living figurative sculptor, and Bruno Luccesi, one of the top figurative sculptors of our time.

Keltner specializes in the portrait in bronze. Her works are in the permanent collection of Grossmont Hospital, the Sam and Rose Stein Education Center and San Diego State

University. Most recently, she completed a life-size

bust of NBA great Bill Walton to be permanently

installed at the Bill Walton Gymnasium in

La Mesa, California. Keltner’s award-

winning art has also been part of

numerous exhibits, including the

Olaf Wieghorst Museum in El Cajon.

She is a member of the San Diego

Museum of Art, the Artists Guild

of America, the National Sculpture

Society, the Portrait Society of

America and the San Diego State

University Artists Alumni. Her work is

currently on display at the White Sage

Gallery in El Cajon, California.



## ARAGNA KER

### A Whisper Will Turn to Shouts and Screams

Watercolor

**Selected by Senator Ricardo Lara (SD 33)**

Aragna Ker was born in 1974, a native of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He immigrated to Southern California at the age of six. After graduating from high school, Ker relocated to attend the San Francisco Art Institute and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art in Painting in 1999. In 2004, he received his Master of Fine Art in Sculpture at Claremont Graduate University.

Essential experiences serve as a springboard for Ker's methodology. His playful works fuse cultural symbols and myth in order to explore a vast range of hybrid identities. His drawings and sculptures utilize the potency of motive to curiously attack simplistic materials.

The United States Embassy in Cambodia, the Hammer Museum, the Pacific Asia Museum, the Torrance Art Museum, the Oceanside Museum of Art and the Los Angeles Zoo are amongst his list of exhibition sites. Ker is currently employed as an Art Instructor at the First Street Gallery Art Center in Claremont, specializing in artistic instruction to adults with disabilities.



## ELENA C. KERN

### California Gold

Oil on canvas

**Selected by Senator Mike Morrell (SD 23)**

“It is never too late to become what you might have been...”

Elena Kern was born in 1942 in San Fernando, California, into a family of diverse artistic talent. She was the only child of Ramon and Julia Steelman Camargo. Her maternal great-grandmother, Julia Steelman Nichols [1848-1946] was a scientist, published poet, writer and artist. Julia and her husband, Dr. W. T. Nichols of Glendale, California, were patrons of the arts and held many art exhibitions in their home. Among their many artist friends was renowned early California Plein Air painter, Granville Redmond [1871-1935].

Hosea Steelman, silent film actor and Kern's grandfather, was assistant to famed movie director Cecil B. DeMille. It was through their friendship with the legendary silent screen star, Charlie Chaplin, that the Steelman family became life-long friends with Redmond, who, being deaf since the age of three, coached Chaplin in pantomime.

As a native Californian, Kern's paintings are born mostly of her love of early California plein air art. Every weekend was spent outdoors, usually by quiet streams, oak trees and rolling hills. Sun-drenched days filled with beauty and laughter spent with her parents and grandparents;

these images are indelibly etched in her childhood memories, leaving her a wellspring of inspiration. There is a little bit of her family in every painting that leaves her easel.



Kern first tried her hand at oil painting in 1963. For various domestic reasons, however, she retired her brushes for nearly forty years. She began painting again in 2002 and opened Four Corners Gallery in Idyllwild in December 2003. Kern recently relocated her gallery to Hemet as part of the Diamond Valley Arts Council.

## CHUCK KOVACIC

### Water Ladder

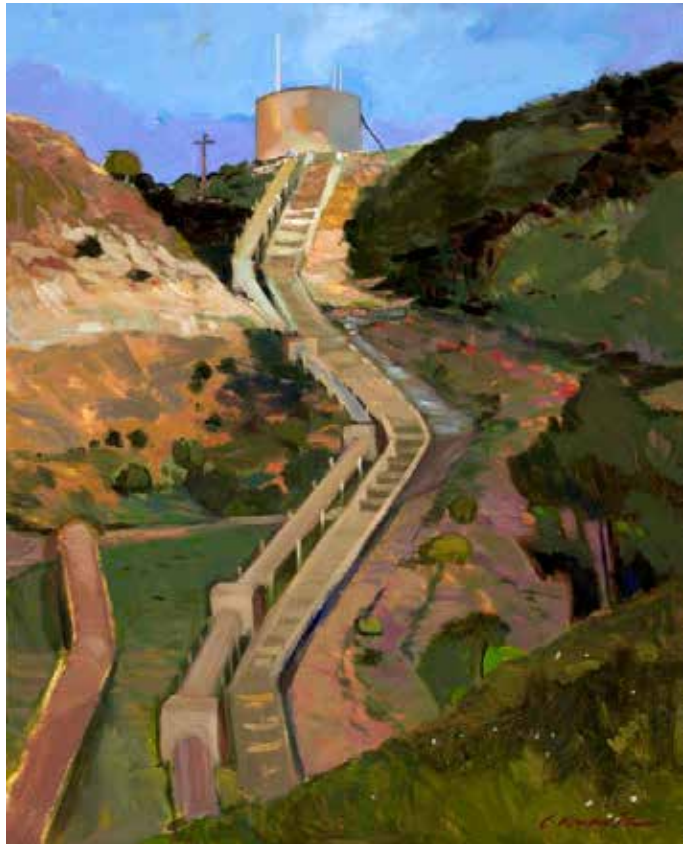
Oil on canvas panel

**Selected by Senator Robert M. Hertzberg (SD 18)**

“I investigate a variety of subject matter along the shores and ridges of California. My interest in the plein air approach allows me the immediacy of light, shadow and color. Recently, I’ve begun placing figures in my work which promises another pleasant diversion.”

After acquiring a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design with a minor in painting from the Cleveland Institute of Art, Chuck Kovacic art-directed numerous print campaigns for a variety of Fortune 500 clients, and detailed urban revitalization programs for communities participating in the “Main Street” program for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Upon leaving the advertising profession, he relocated to Southern California, focusing his artistic skills as a restoration expert specializing in pre-1950 merchandising ephemera and related antiques.

Currently, his painting investigates a variety of subjects rendered in the plein air style. Kovacic is an Honor Court member of the Mid Valley Art League as well as an Artist member of the California Art Club, and is pleased to be a part of their exhibitions at the Old Mill, Altadena Town & Country Club and the Gold Medal show.



## MAUREEN A. LANGENBACH

### Don't Let This Be the Last Drop

Assemblage

**Selected by Senator Bob Wieckowski (SD 10)**

Maureen Langenbach received her AA degree from Napa Jr. College, where she was first introduced to the medium of watercolor. In 1969, she graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art Education. After starting a family and moving to Fremont, she continued taking painting classes at Ohlone College under

the direction of Dave McLaughlin and Dennis Collins, and painted with watercolor exclusively for over 30 years.

Since retirement, Langenbach has had more time to experiment with other media, including assemblages, colored pencil, jewelry and oil pastel.

Her work has been exhibited at the Triton Museum of Art in Santa Clara, the Olive Hyde Art Gallery and Fremont Art Association, the Sun Gallery and John O'Lague Galleria in Hayward, as well as at the California State Fair and the Alameda, Marin and Napa County Fairs.

She and her husband Peter collaborated on the show "Two Sides of the Story" at The Gallery at 48 Natoma in Folsom. In addition, they have worked together on Day of the Dead installations at the Oakland Museum, SOMA in San Francisco, Meeks Mansion and Sun Gallery in Hayward and Niles Main Street in Fremont.



**JOAN LEWIS**  
**Carlsbad Flower Fields**  
Watercolor

**Selected by Senator Patricia C. Bates (SD 36)**

Born and raised in Beverly Hills, Joan Lewis found her artistic propensity as a classical pianist until marriage and family eventually won her full attention. Ultimately, however, her artistry manifested itself again in her fascination with painting and writing poetry.

Through the years, Lewis has attended art classes taught by professional artists. She now finds particular pleasure in painting; her interpretation and expression is inspired from the environment and colors she observes around her every day, whether in impressionistic or abstract forms.

Lewis has shown her work in several exhibitions. She creates greeting cards from her work, and is currently compiling a book of her poetry, which will be illustrated by several of her paintings. She has also authored and published two books. Lewis resides in Laguna Niguel.



## **DR. HARRY LIEBERMAN**

### **Huntington Gardens Reflections**

Oil on canvas

#### **Selected by Senator Carol Liu (SD 25)**

Harry Lieberman began his career in art at the prestigious High School of Music & Art in New York City. During a summer in Paris, he learned how to translate city scenes into watercolors. Thereafter, he worked primarily with watercolors until the middle 1990s, when he converted to oils. He paints representational landscapes and still-lives.

Lieberman has taken workshops with M. Stephen Doherty, Ross Merrill and, in 2002, a 10-day intensive course with American landscape painter Scott Christensen. His work has been influenced by JMW Turner, Claude Monet, the artists of the Hudson River School and American Impressionist artists, such as Edgar Payne.

Lieberman's paintings were included in the 2002 Western Landscape and Wildlife Exhibit in Casper, Wyoming and at the 75th Grand National Exhibition of the American Artists Professional League held at the Salmagundi Club in New York City the following year. His work has been featured in the Arroyo Collection in South Pasadena and Historic Lighting

in Monrovia. He had a one-man show at Bistro 45 in Pasadena in 2005, at Pasadena Playhouse in 2007 and at SoPas Gallery in South Pasadena in September 2008. He and his wife, Ellin, held five annual South Pasadena Art Benefits to aid patients at Childrens Hospital in New Orleans.

His paintings are in private collections in California, Texas, Connecticut, Minnesota, New York, Maine, Toronto, Canada and St. Petersburg, Russia.







## RICHARD RICO

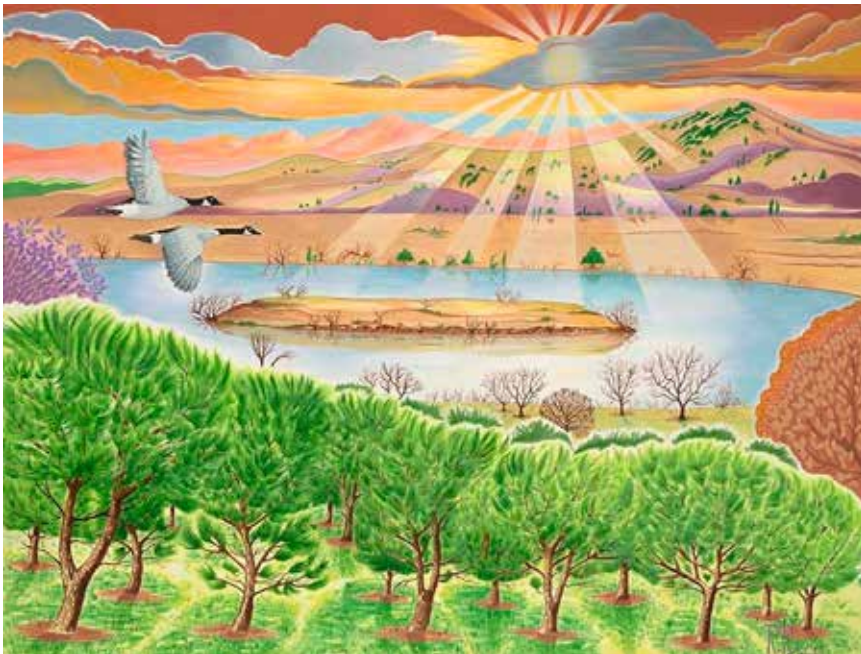
### Lagoon Valley, Solano County

Acrylic on canvas

#### Selected by Senator Lois Wolk (SD 3)

Richard Rico is a native and lifelong resident of Vacaville. He is the retired publisher of the community's daily newspaper, *The Reporter*, which was owned by his family for more than 70 years. Rico grew up with the paper and became involved with virtually every aspect of newspaper publishing.

Graphic design fed Rico's artistic side, which led to his exploration of the unknown world of art in the early 1990s. He was unschooled, but started sketching and painting watercolors. His work eventually expanded to include acrylics, growing from small still lifes to large landscapes. Rico has exhibited in area art shows and galleries, including the Vacaville Museum. For six months, he was featured in a gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



## TRISHA SHERMAN

### When it rains

Acrylic on canvas

**Selected by Senator Richard D. Roth (SD 31)**

Trisha Sherman was born in Denton, Texas in 1987 and grew up in Midland, Texas. At the age of eight, she became fond of arts and crafts, particularly painting and fashion design. Sherman eventually moved to Moreno Valley, California to work on receiving her bachelor degree in Fashion Design.

Currently, Sherman is attending the Art Institute of California - Inland Empire, focusing on fashion design. After graduating, she has plans of placing her designs in a boutique in her hometown, as well as in Los Angeles. While attending the Art Institute, she has received 14 awards of outstanding volunteer work within her community in Moreno Valley, Riverside and Redlands.

Sherman also teaches an art program at Music Changing Lives, a non-profit art and music enrichment program. There she tutors and directs an innovative program for at-risk youth.

She loves connecting with her passion of creating, whether it be painting or designing. Creativity, inspiration and passion are Sherman's concept keys in her daily life of pursuing self-direction.



## ARTURO TELLO

### Evening Song, This Land is Your Land

Oil on canvas

**Sponsored by Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson (SD 19)**

Carpinteria landscape painter Arturo Tello was born in 1954 in Tulancingo Hidalgo, a town near Mexico City. He had formal training as a figure painter at San Jose State University, but his innate feeling for the land drew him inexorably toward depicting the shifting light and natural forms of his adopted country's coastline and bluffs.

Tello's strong belief in the importance of preserving open spaces led him to form the Oak Group. Affiliated around the late American landscape painter Ray Strong, this group of landscape painting friends works to celebrate and preserve the natural environment through their paintings.

Tello is the gallery director at the Palm Loft Gallery in Carpinteria and his work is represented by the Easton Gallery in Montecito.



## JOSEPH TODOROVITCH

### The Outing

Oil on linen

**Selected by Senator Connie M. Leyva (SD 20)**

Joseph Todorovitch is a contemporary painter who has always looked to the past to understand the future of his painting. Introduced to the idea of skilled draughtsmanship at an early age, he has been immersed in figurative art and has forged a body of imagery in California for the past twelve years. By embracing fundamental principles of picture making, he works to develop paintings that are harmonious and innovative.

While primarily figural, his paintings aim to create a visual field of atmosphere, space and light, occasionally evoking subtle narratives within the viewers. They draw people in from a distance and keep them investigating with technical nuance and poetry at the surface. While he believes painting should be challenging to himself and the audience, he says “a work of art should evolve intuitively from a marriage of experience and expression.”

Working in California, Todorovitch aims to explore and express the present and future with paintings and sculpture that acknowledge the rich tradition of representational art.



## DENISSE VON BORSTEL

### Caras y gestos

Acrylic on canvas

**Selected by Senator Ben Hueso (SD 40)**

Denisse Von Borstel is a visual artist from San Ysidro, California.

She received her Bachelor of Visual Arts in La Paz, BCS, Mexico in May 2014.

Von Borstel currently resides in San Ysidro, where she continues to paint.



**MIN W**

**On the Hunt**

Oil on canvas

**Selected by Senator Ed Hernandez, O.D. (SD 22)**

Min W was born in China, immigrated to the U.S. in 2008, and became a naturalized citizen in 2012. Her exposure to the art world began at a very early age, thanks to the encouragement of family and relatives.

W attended Hunan University and received her Bachelor of Arts degree, concentrating on all aspects of painting, photography and interior design. She embraced all styles and media, including watercolor, oil, acrylic and Chinese Brush watercolor. She produced landscapes, abstracts, murals and impressionistic works. After two years working in art and interior design, and assisting in the renovation of China's Shenzhen International Airport, W returned to school and received her Master of Arts degree from Guanzhou Graduate School University.

In 1999, W was selected as one of four outstanding female artists to be featured at the annual Provincial Art Gallery exhibit in Shenzhen. This tribute resulted in wide media coverage in the news, television, as well as a book, which featured their works and honored their dedication and outstanding contributions to China's art world.

W has exhibited her paintings in numerous solo and juried group exhibits, and has received honors and awards for excellence in the U.S., England and China.

Many of her students have been honored in national and international student competitions; as a result, they have attended some of the finest art universities. W has been recognized for her art instruction; in addition, she received the Chinese National Teachers Award, based primarily on her students' achievements in art.

Min W is a member of the Monrovia Association of Fine Arts and the San Gabriel Fine Arts Association.







## ESTHER J. WILLIAMS

### Shoreline Reflections

Oil on canvas

**Selected by Senator John M. W. Moorlach (SD 37)**

Esther Williams's involvement in art has spanned over fifty years. She was born in Binghamton, New York in 1944. She focused on art throughout her early education by drawing with any medium she could grasp between her fingers. When she was 8, she designed a poster for a California Department of Motor Vehicles contest; it won her first place statewide. While in her senior year of high school, Williams was offered a scholarship to the California College of the Arts in Oakland. Instead, she married and had two sons. By 1980, she began formal studies in art at Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) in Dryden, New York, where she studied architectural design and fine art. She received her A.A.S. degree, then spent another year studying art and art history at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. In 1983, Williams moved to Los Angeles to study fashion design at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising.

In trying to balance many roles, including single motherhood, Williams felt the need to take a long sabbatical. Living in Washington D.C., she retained her creative spirit by studying the masters in museums. She returned to California in 1987, remarried, and had two daughters.

Williams is a member of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association, the Southern California Plein Art Painters Association and the California Art Club. She has accelerated her awareness of the plein air movement in California, as well as the French impressionistic style, by continuing to paint among modern signature and established artists. Williams has entered many juried exhibitions and won various awards. She is represented by Whim Home and Hamilton Oaks Winery in San Juan Capistrano and the Catalina Art Gallery in Avalon.

Esther Williams is not related to the swimmer/movie star Esther Williams, but she was a trained lifeguard and water-safety instructor in college. She has also acted in several television shows as an extra.







# California State Senate Contemporary Art Collection



CALIFORNIA STATE CAPITOL

July 2015 - September 2016