

Diverse Themes

Nearly 200 representational works of art will be on view at California Art Club's 106th annual Gold Medal Exhibition.



Founded in 1909, California Art Club promotes and celebrates the painting traditions of the Golden State by hosting exhibitions and providing educational opportunities for its members. The organization's signature event is its *Gold Medal Exhibition*, which marks its 106th edition April 9 to 30 at the Autry Museum of the American West. Displayed will be nearly 200 representational paintings and sculptures in a variety of subject matters.

"The un-themed nature of the *Gold Medal Exhibition* provides artists with the freedom to explore the subjects that capture both their hearts and their minds," says Elaine Adams, executive director and CEO of the California Art Club. "As a result the *Gold Medal* works of art continually reveal deeper meaning due to these significant connections. When these connections are depicted with craftsmanship, sensitivity and integrity, the works reveal soul-searching on the part of the artists and add an intriguing dimension with which audiences can experience their artwork."

Included in this year's show will be artists such as Peter Adams, Juliette Aristides, Brian Blood, Eric

Bowman, Warren Chang, Dennis Doheny, Adrian Gottlieb, Dean Larson, Carol Peek, Alicia N. Ponzio, Kate Sammons, Mian Situ, Patricia Watwood, Aaron Westerberg and William Wray.

Doheny and Bowman will both exhibit landscapes for the *Gold Medal* show. Doheny's painting *West Swell* and Bowman's *Twilight's Brief Moment* capture the land at two distinct times of day—early morning and the day's end.

Of his work, Doheny says, "On an early morning walk around the tip of Soberanes Point in Big Sur, I was greeted by a rising sun and a rising swell. The impact of both really caught my attention."

Bowman's piece was inspired by a plein air sketch he did in Sonoma, California. "I later studied up on twilight time and discovered there are three levels to it: civil twilight, nautical twilight and astronomical twilight," he says. "This painting depicts nautical twilight after the pinkish color of the Belt of Venus disappears into the Earth's shadow—my favorite time of the evening sky."

Figurative pieces on view will include Chang's *Checkers at Custom House Plaza*. "The Custom

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Visitors gather at the Autry Museum of the American West for the *Gold Medal Exhibition*.

2
Dennis Doheny, *West Swell*, oil on linen, 30 x 36"

3
Kate Sammons, *Harvest*, oil, 24 x 30"

4
William Wray, *Princess of Van Nuys*, oil, 36 x 24"

5
Warren Chang, *Checkers at Custom House Plaza*, oil, 34 x 40"

6
Eric Bowman, *Twilight's Brief Moment*, oil on linen, 18 x 18"



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6

House, built in 1827, is the oldest building in historic Monterey," Chang says. "It attracts a gathering of drifters and homeless and this painting depicts them at a leisurely activity. In essence, an updated scene of Mack and the boys, derived from the pages of John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*."

Sammons' painting *Harvest* is one of the still lifes in the exhibition. "*Harvest* is a painting about food, but was inspired by the elegance and restraint I admire in early Dutch still lifes," she says. "Commonplace food items were given a respect and reverence that we rarely see today in a culture that celebrates photos and video of restaurant food and chef's plates. The painting incidentally reflects an older attitude, which is nice because it makes me think of how far we've come and how much we have to appreciate."

Along with the art, there will be a number of events and educational programming for visitors to experience. The ticketed Artists' Gala Reception will take place April 8 at 6 p.m., allowing attendees the chance to meet exhibiting artists and preview the show. The demonstration and discussion "Giving Life to Fascinating Figures" happens April 9 from 1 to 3 p.m. with artists Alexey Steele and Béla Bácsi, while a lecture and tour led by Jean Stern titled "The Art of Looking at Art" will be held April 22 from 1 to 3 p.m. Then on April 30 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. will be the Early California Paint/Sculpt-Out where artists will blanket the Autry grounds and paint models dressed in early California period costumes. ●