



*Inland
Southern California*

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The mansion had two stories that were finished, and a very large third story that, typical of many such houses of the time, had rough board floors. Our children and the children of the Nielsen family who lived there loved to go up and play in that empty upper floor. There were many opportunities to paint the mansion, and to take notice of many details of the house, both indoors and outdoors.”

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Janet and I have lived in many places in Southern California; during the mid-1960s, we lived in the tiny town of Piru, in Ventura County. High on a hill above the town and surrounding orange groves, this grand old mansion could be seen for miles. It was built in 1890 by David C. Cook, a wealthy publisher of Sunday school tracts and other religious literature, who came to the area for his health in 1887 from Elgin, Illinois. Proclaiming the area “a new Garden of Eden,” he planted groves of various fruit trees and devised a means of drying the fruit so he could ship it all over the country.

The stone and brick tower housed the library and its beautifully fashioned bookshelves with owls carved on the upright posts. The great room, where people might be entertained, featured a ceramic tile floor. Many windows looked out over the valley below. Alas, the grand old house was damaged in an earthquake in 1971, and during repairs a painter’s torch set it ablaze and it burned to the ground, leaving only the stone and brick tower. A new and modern house, faintly reminiscent of the old mansion, now stands in its place.

David C. Cook Mansion. 1966. Watercolor, 29" × 20"



“Among nature's most delicate and strikingly beautiful creatures are the butterflies. The western tiger swallowtail, often mistakenly called the monarch, is one of my favorites, though I have used several types in designs. How amazing that a lowly worm is transformed into such a lovely and fragile creation. In this print I also show the chrysalis enclosing the pupa, that sheltered state of being before the butterfly becomes fully formed.”

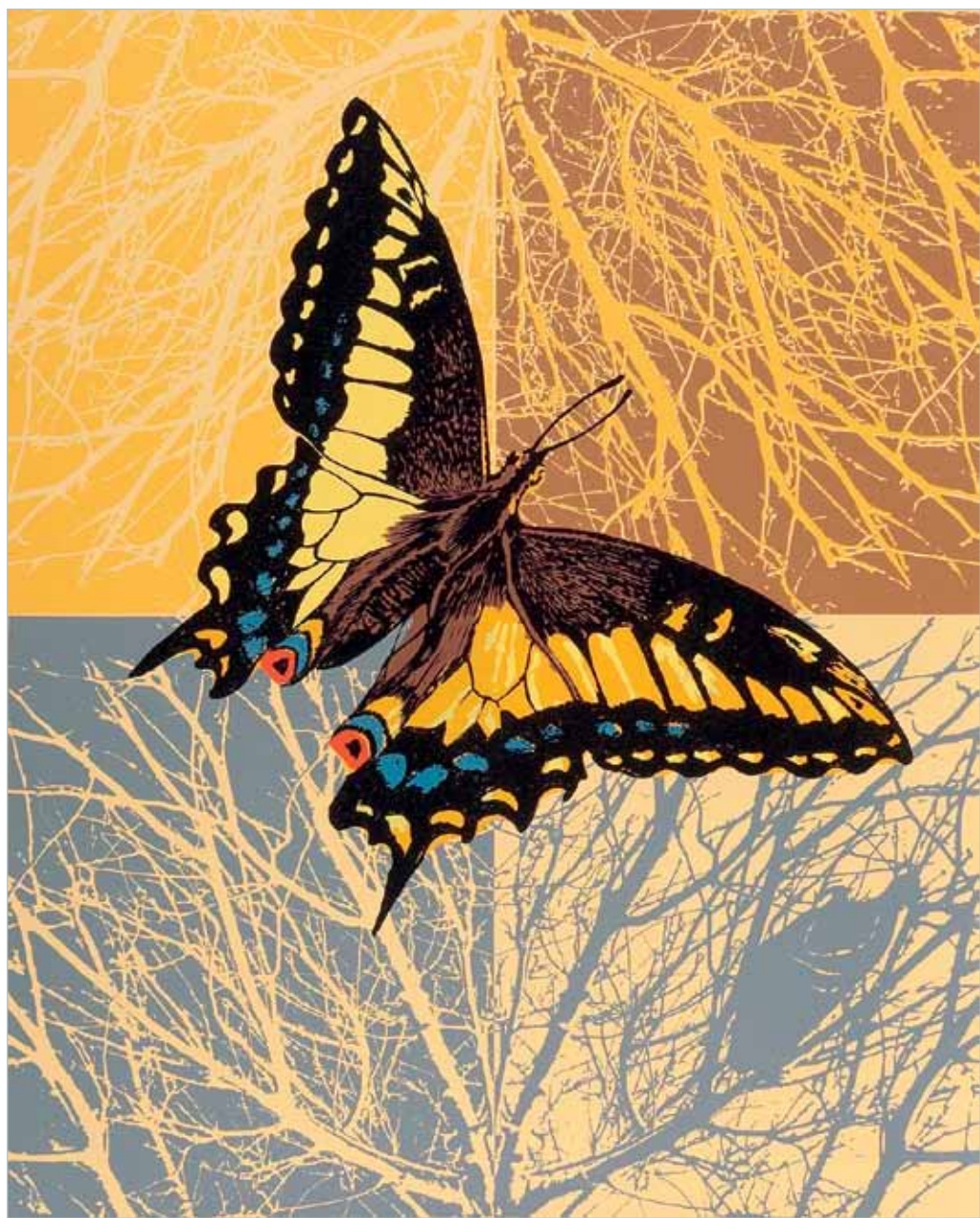
This is the largest edition of Janet's serigraphs, with a total of 216 prints, and the only serigraph included in the book. In this fine-art form of silk-screening, stencils are adhered to tightly stretched silk, (or similar material mounted on a frame) and special inks are squeegeed through the silk onto paper to make the design. To create this image, Janet used thirteen stencil screens, carefully registered, and printed color upon color.

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She formed the image of the branches from a photograph of an apple tree in our backyard. The same branching image is used four times, in both negative and positive mode. The photo of the branches was enlarged onto high-contrast lithographic film, which was then developed and exposed upon the light-sensitive gelatin surface of the silk screen. Janet made the chrysalis (in the lower right quadrant) of cut paper and exposed it in the same manner, on one of the light-sensitive silk screens.

The butterfly image required five stencils, for black, brown, blue, yellow, and red. She made the stencil for the black by hand-painting the design on a sheet of polyester film, which was then exposed on a light-sensitive screen. Each of the other screens for the butterfly was crafted by painting water-soluble glue as a block-out directly upon a fresh silk screen, leaving clear the area where the ink would come through onto the paper. Again, as with the branch images, the stencils had to be precisely registered and printed one on top of another to form the complete design. *New Life* won awards from 1975 to 1980 in several exhibits where it was entered.

New Life. 1975. Serigraph, 15" × 21"

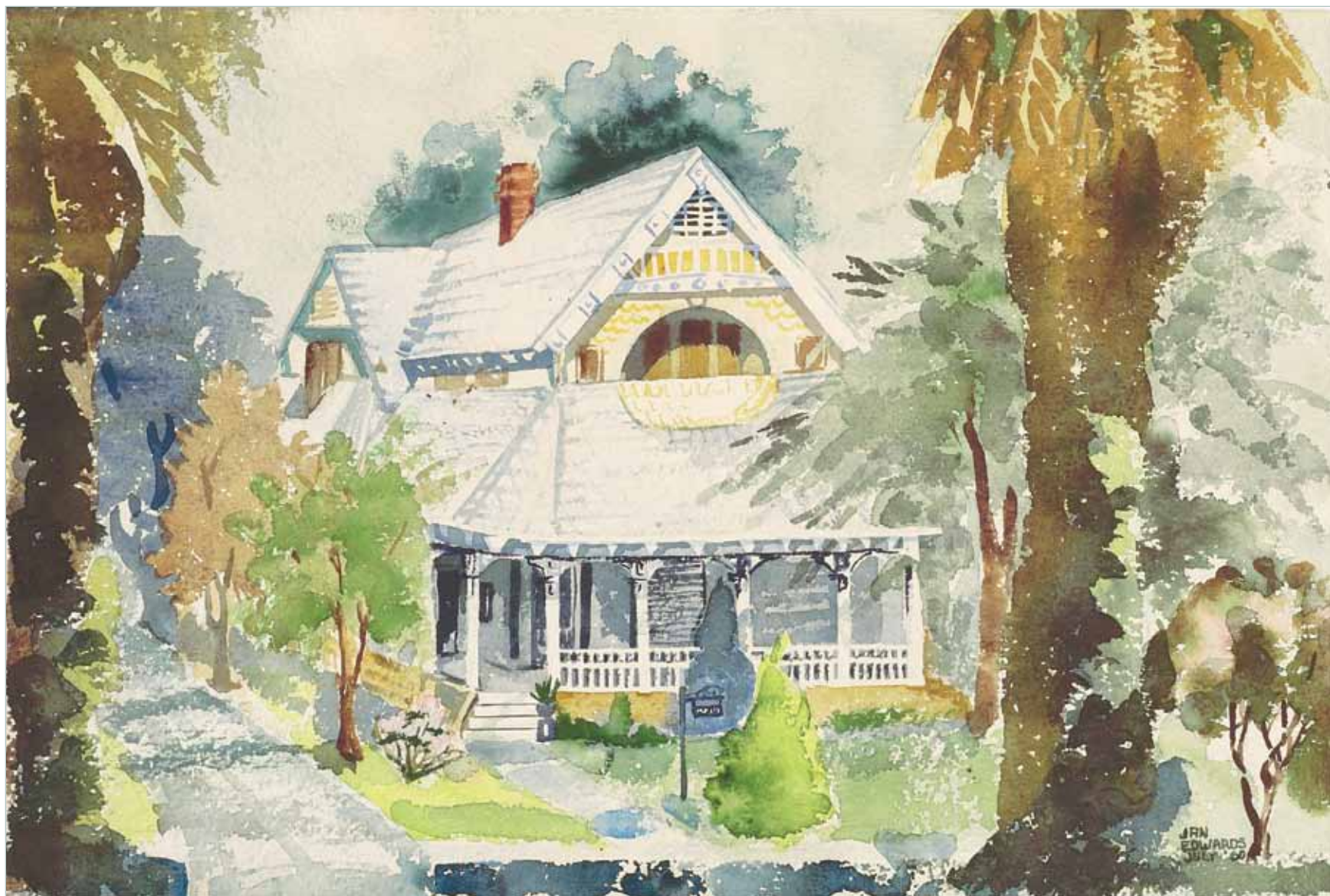


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I chose a spot across the street from the Talbert house to do the basic sketch. This rather 'loose' watercolor style allows the viewer's eye and imagination to fill in the finer details. Much as we liked their gem of a house, we liked the Talberts even more. They happened to be members of the church where Fred was first assigned as associate pastor, so we came to know them well.”

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Dr. Myron “Mike” Talbert located the office of his medical practice in the front part of this house, where he lived with his family. As a gift of appreciation for being our family physician, Janet painted a watercolor of their house. Displayed in their home over five decades, the painting became so beloved that every one of the grown children wished they could have it in their own homes. With the artist’s permission they had some very fine copies made of it, and so now we have one as well.

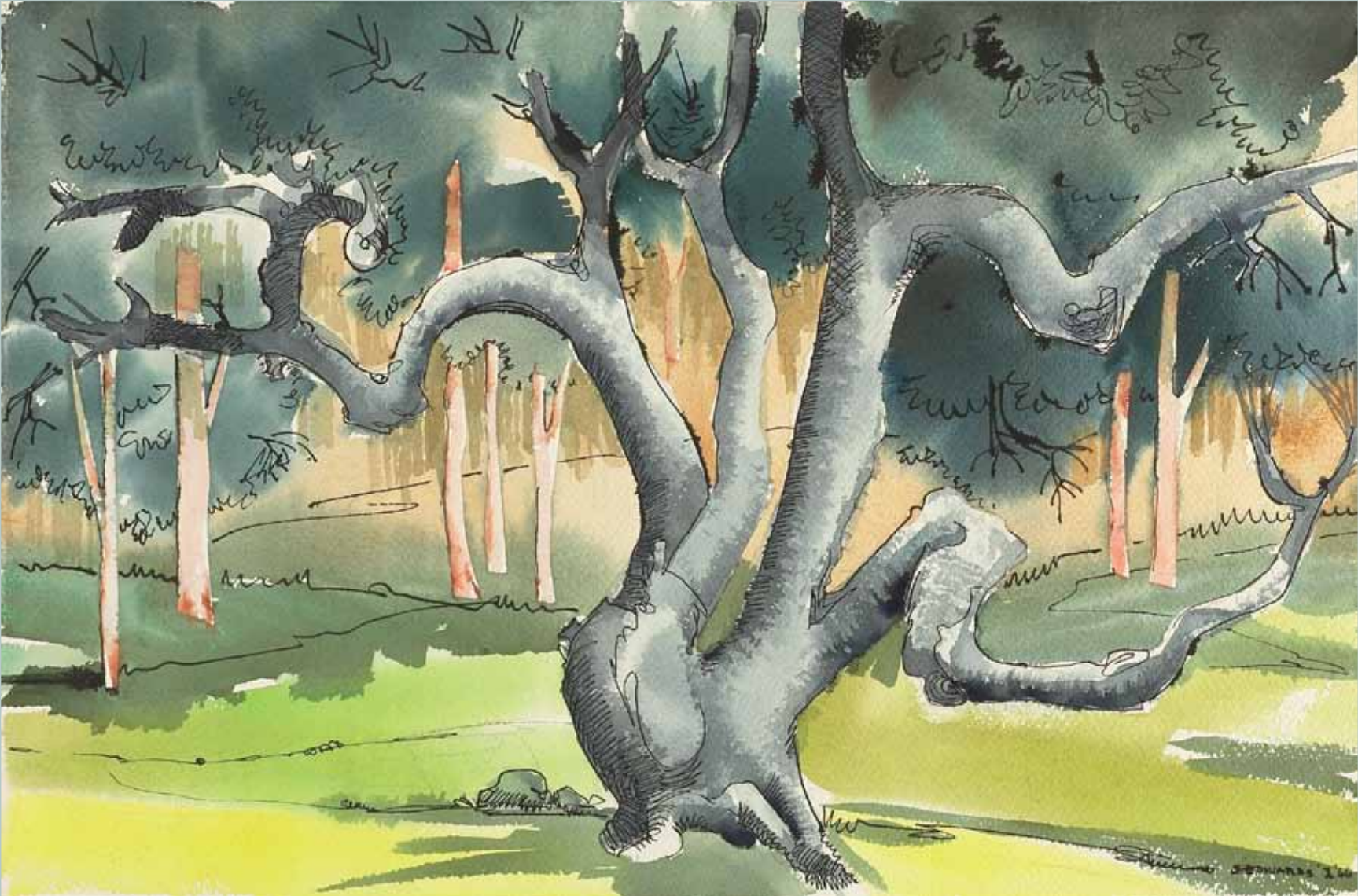


“We drove to this lovely park called Kenny Grove, in Fillmore, California, not far from where we were living at the time. It was a good place to have a picnic lunch on a warm day, and to let our young children play. The children especially liked this graceful sycamore tree, with a long low limb just right for climbing. I did several watercolor paintings that day, but this is the only one I still have.”



We are pleased that this tree and the park remain there, having not been given over to some other purpose. We all need such a quiet and peaceful place from time to time, with graceful branches extending outward to invite us to sit in the shade and enjoy nature awhile.

Sycamore Tree in Kenny Grove. 1966. Watercolor, 20 1/2" × 13 1/2"



“We visited *The Kilns* on a beautiful sunny day, sat outdoors and sketched the house, the flowers, and the arbor, and took many photographs. While other houses now exist across the road and nearby, this country home still has the feeling of a retreat, which is just what the author wanted.”

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Built in 1922 not far from Oxford, England, near the site of an old brickyard kiln, this peaceful place stood alone when Clive Staples Lewis moved there with his brother Warren in 1930. A prolific writer, now known best for his *Chronicles of Narnia* series for young readers, C.S. Lewis lived here until he died in 1963.



This is the only non-California design included with this collection. The Kilns is owned and operated as a study center by the C. S. Lewis Foundation, which is headquartered in Redlands, California, so it makes sense to feature it. Many of Janet's designs have been used to support local, not-for-profit groups, and the ones sold to benefit this organization are distinguished from those purchased through our own art shows and through galleries by a colorful *remarque*, the small hand-drawn design in the lower left corner.

C. S. Lewis' Home, 'The Kilns,' Oxford. 1999. Etching with embossing, 9" × 7"



1/500



C. S. Lewis' Home, 'The Kilns', Oxford

Janet Edwards ©1999

“This was my first large etching design using the theme of the palm trees that inhabit the San Bernardino Valley. Looking up along these narrow, lonely roads, their height seems to reach the sky. We took picture after picture of the scene, later processing the images and enlarging some onto lithographic film, which became the basis for this composition. The edition sold out very quickly, and so many people asked if there were going to be more that I began a whole series of palm designs.”

We often discuss how to title a design, ruminating over several names before settling on the one that's right. We were amused that the rows of palms topped with fronds brought to mind soldiers wearing tall bearskin hats, formations of which we had seen in the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. *Palm Sentinels* seemed the perfect choice for these rows watching over us from on high.

Apparently we are not the only ones captivated by those presiding palms. While visiting her parents in Northern California, Janet received a call from Margaret Clark, professor emerita of art education of the University of Redlands. The mayor of our town wanted to take this etching as a gift to the mayor of our sister city, Hino, Japan. His trip was imminent. “Is there any way I can get one?” she asked. Janet referred her to a friend with our house key, and directed her to a framed print in a closet. She found it, took it to the mayor, and it was on the plane with him within hours, thereafter prominently displayed in the office of the mayor of Hino. The work does get around.

Palm Sentinels. 1982. Etching with embossing, 20" × 13"



4/50

Palm Lantana

Janet Edwards 1992

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Images seen in reflections or shadows can add immensely to the main subject of a design. We miss so many interesting things by not taking the time to look carefully at all aspects of a scene or a piece of art. Learning to look and to take in as many details as possible is an important part of both creating and appreciating art.

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This is Janet's first large format etching of the long rows of palms set against the massive San Bernardino Mountains. Water standing in the furrowed field from the recent rain offered the perfect opportunity to work on an embossed reflection. She produced embossing on the designs previous to this one from a hand-carved matrix made of shellac-hardened mat board. Janet experimented with this design by employing a light-sensitive metal plate, with the image inverted and exposed to portray a reflected image of the trees. The plate was left in the acid bath a long time to “bite” the metal deeply enough to create an embossed image when it went under the pressure of the etching press.

Palms After the Rain. 1985. Etching with embossing, 25" × 8"



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Palms after the Rain

1880

I used six etched plates to create this montage of the palms and mountains. All the images are from photographs we took, enlarged upon lithographic film, then exposed upon light-sensitive etching plates. The trickiest part is to keep all the plates properly aligned and evenly spaced, to make a perfect print as it goes under the press roller. If one plate becomes tipped, it means inking them all over again, and having wasted an expensive sheet of etching paper.

Quiet lanes between palms lining the orange groves, a subdued view of the mountains, long, long rows in a rainwater reflection... To achieve this, two of the upper plates, the first and third from the left, were kept in the acid long enough to cut the palm images well below the smooth surface of the plate. Not inked in the usual way, the two plates were placed level on the table and colored ink rolled across their surface, so that the flat, inked surface would print while the deeply bitten palm images would be embossed and white against the colored background.

The second image from the left shows two lithographic film images joined together as one and exposed and developed on a light-sensitive etching plate. In the image to the right, a car coming from a distance and the outline of a stop sign lend some perspective on the height of these trees. In the horizontal image of palm rows against the background of misty mountains, large wheels carry the sprinkler system across the planted field in the foreground, and water from recent rain reflects the palms.

Palm Vista. 1989. Etching with embossing, 23 1/2" × 15 1/2"



17/10/1917

Palm Vista

Spent the evening 11/10/17



One cannot live in the inland area east of Los Angeles and not be constantly aware of the mountains.

In this, one of my larger designs, the palm trees form a foreground for the massive snow-capped mountains that dominate the valley. The title for this design borrows a phrase from the alma mater of nearby University of Redlands, '...where the mountains tall and grand like an inspiration stand ...'



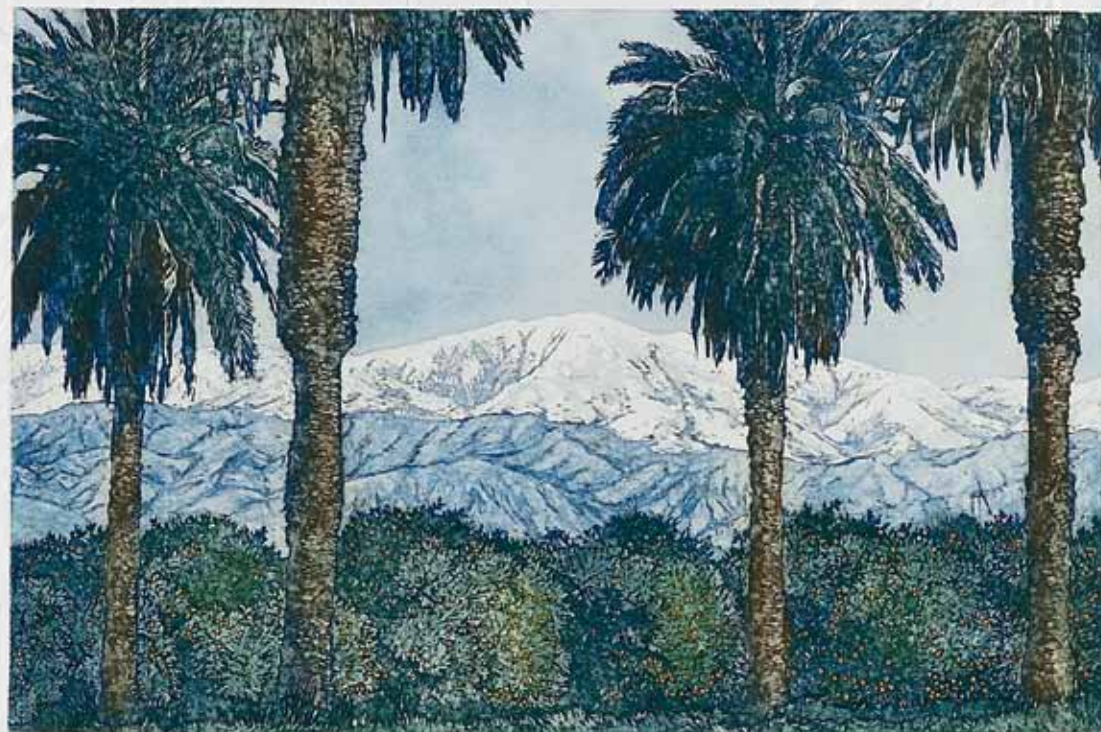
This most prominent peak is Mount San Bernardino, with an elevation of 10,649 feet. Though not as high as its neighbor Mount San Geronimo (11,503 feet), it appears more spectacular due to its proximity to the valley floor. Mount San Bernardino is also the location of the survey point that first established property boundaries in Southern California. Called the "Initial Point," this intersection of true north–south and east–west direction lines became the marker for all future cadastral surveys in the lower half of the state on November 7, 1852, when California had been a state for only two years.

18

Such base and meridian lines were necessary for establishing townships, but California was judged so big that it needed three such initial points, on Mount Diablo, Mount Pierce, and Mount San Bernardino. Colonel Henry Washington, deputy surveyor, led twelve men on a four-day hike through very rough terrain, and at an elevation of 10,300 feet, established the Initial Point in the San Bernardino Mountains. It is the intersection of these two lines, the meridian line south to the Mexican border and the base line west to the Pacific Ocean, from which all public and private property in Southern California is measured.

This initial point is the highest one in the nation and the most difficult to reach. It has never been changed. Base Line Street in San Bernardino and adjacent cities is precisely aligned along the east–west line from the initial point, so that when driving east along that street you find yourself pointed directly toward Mount San Bernardino.

The Mountains Tall and Grand. 1992. Etching with embossing, 23" × 17"



after a sketch by Paul

The Mountains: Palm and Grass

Paul Elvén 1900

“While land development has eliminated many of the vistas of palm trees and orange groves, this scene remains as viewed here, though the place where I sat to sketch it is now retirement housing. The area is considerably less rural than in the past, yet longtime residents can still see the mountains and smell orange blossoms in the springtime.”

To the right side of the palm trees, just over the top of the orange tree, you can see a wind machine, such as used by many orange growers to protect their trees and crops on frosty nights. Some of the wind machines are powered by electric motors and others by gasoline engines, but all turn aircraft-type propellers that blow air across the trees as the machine rotates slowly on its axis. The principle is that warm air rises, and the wind machines bring some of that warmer air down from above and spread it across the grove. On a very cold and otherwise still night, the drone of the wind machines can be heard a long distance away.



1900

"Palms to Peaks"

Just Claude L. 1900