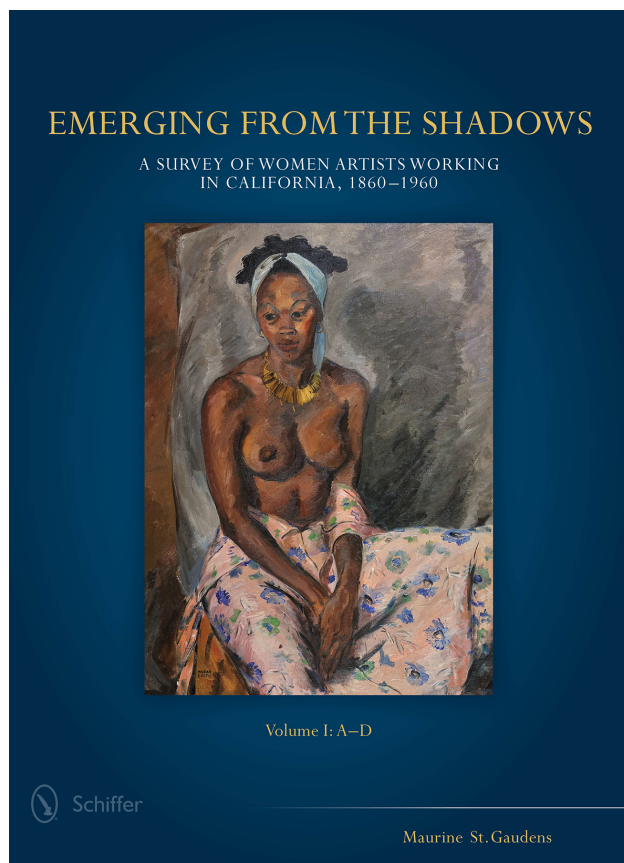


Emerging from the Shadows: A Survey of Women Artists Working in California, 1860-1960

by Maurine St. Gaudens. Schiffer, December 2015. 4 vol. ill. ISBN 9780764348617 (vol. 1); 9780764348624 (vol. 2); 9780764348860 (vol. 3); 9780764348877 (vol. 4), \$59.95 each.

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Rebecca Kohn, Associate Librarian, San Jose State University Library, rebecca.kohn@sjsu.edu



Maurine St. Gaudens' work as a fine art conservator is the foundation of this magnificent resource. Her in-depth knowledge of artwork held in private collections provides an unparalleled exploration into women making art in California during a century of incredible social and technological change. Her examination of artmaking from 1860-1960 also provides a fascinating investigation into a century of art techniques, tools, and color. This work provides an important window into outcomes of artmaking during a time of major westward expansion in the United States.

St. Gaudens' introduction explains her criteria for how she selected artists to include and her goal of bringing forward artists who have not been previously well documented. Researchers in art history

should prepare to have their horizons significantly expanded by the list of artists presented in this set and the images of their works. Students seeking context and perspective on women artists in the western U.S. will find a trove of biographical and thematic paths to explore. The organization and layout of each entry is consistent, with a full page image, signature detail, and additional images accompanying biographical and artistic history of each artist. Each entry includes the bibliographic and personal sources consulted. St. Gaudens' tenacity and thoroughness as a researcher is evidenced by the inclusion of a photograph or illustration of the artists in many of the entries. With such an incredible array of information, the author made the

sensible choice to arrange the entries alphabetically by name rather than trying to situate artists into specific genres or other categories.

St. Gaudens' entries provide important details on how women artists of California participated in the artistic life of their communities by documenting their membership and participation in art clubs and shows. She also documents how artists supported themselves and their families by including information about their careers as illustrators, teachers, animators, and gallery owners. Readers will be likewise impressed with St. Gaudens' descriptions of the artworks and methods as well as the clarity of her writing.

This beautifully produced and well researched set of books will have a profound impact on how women artists are understood and researched in the future. St. Gaudens' shows that the primary sources to document the work of women artists exists and thus the participation of women in the history of art can no longer be overlooked. Her thorough investigation demonstrates that a much broader understanding of womens' role in artmaking is necessary and available to truly know the history of visual culture. St. Gaudens achieves her simultaneous goals of providing information about a significant body of artists while throwing open the doors of inquiry for deeper investigation. The photographs of the artworks are of excellent quality, and many of the artworks are privately owned, providing a valuable look into items not previously accessible to a wide audience.

The set is exquisitely illustrated and printed in a well-designed four volume format that will hold up to heavy use in a reference or personal collection. Very well priced for the quality of the intellectual content and presentation of visual information. This title is essential for all academic libraries and public libraries with strong collections in art, women's history, and history of the western United States.