



*Madeline's
Treasures*

*James Irvine Swinden
Family Collection*

Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens



Madeline's Treasures

James Irvine Swinden Family Collection

Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens

curated by James Irvine Swinden and Jean Stern

January 12 – April 7, 2024

in the Casa Art Gallery

Supporting Underwriter Traditional Fine Arts Organization

<< *Opposite: Michael Obermeyer, Mrs. Madeline Swinden, 10" x 8", Oil on board
Cover: John Cosby, Low Tide, Low Light, 30" x 40", Oil on canvas*

About California Impressionism

California Impressionism and California Plein Air Painting describe the artists who worked outdoors in California (the French Impressionists, who described this method as ‘en plein air,’ coined the term internationally) beginning in the late nineteenth century.

Their work became popular in Southern California and the San Francisco Bay in the early twentieth century. Considered to be a regional variation on American Impressionism, the painters of the California Plein Air School are also described as California Impressionists.

These artists depicted the unfettered California landscape — the foothills, mountains, seashores, and deserts of the interior and coastal regions. California Impressionism reached its popularity in the years before the Great Depression. The California Plein Air Painters generally painted in a bright, chromatic palette with “loose” painterly brush work that showed some influence from French Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.

Although the California landscape has changed in many ways, artists still practice this style today as a way to pay homage to the masters and capture the beauty of the ever-changing California landscapes.



About the Exhibition

James Irvine Swinden was born into an art appreciation family, his mother Joan Irvine Smith began The Irvine Museum Collection which features many Masters of the California Impressionism era.

Growing up with a love for the arts inspired him and his wife Madeline to begin a collection of living contemporary artists who in their own ways have become the new “Masters” of plein air painting in southern California.

These plein air paintings were collected by Madeline Martin Swinden and curated by James Irvine Swinden in memory of his late wife.

The couple collected these wonderful examples of contemporary California Impressionism while attending many of the California plein air invitationals held over the last quarter century. These paintings are being exhibited to the public for the first time at Casa Romantica.

Lovingly titled Madeline’s Treasures by James Irvine Swinden, Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Garden is honored and privileged to share this exhibition with our community.

Pictured: Cindy Baron, 6 O’Clock Pacific Time, 8” x 16”, Oil on board



Exhibition Catalog

(in alphabetical order)

Peter Adams	Jane Hunt
Michael Alten	Debra Huse
Ken Auster	Laurie Kersey
Cindy Baron	Jim McVicker
Zufar Bikbov	Clark Mitchell
John Budicin	Charles Muench
John Comer	Michael Obermeyer
John Cosby	Jesse Powell
Rick Delanty	Jeff Sewell
Aimee Erickson	Kevin Short
West Fraser	Matt Smith
Dan Goozé	Alexey Steele
Zoe Hadley	Sally Strand
Anita Hampton	

Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens
would like to especially thank James Irvine Swinden for
making this exhibition possible.

Peter Adams, *Roots of Antiquity*

Oil on board, 20 x 16 inches



Michael Alten, *So Cal Sunset*

Oil on board, 4 x 5 inches



Michael Alten, *Rising*

Oil on board, 9 x 12 inches



Ken Auster, *Good Morning Crystal Cove*

Oil on board, 15 x 18 inches



Cindy Baron, *Transitions*

Oil on board, 14 1/2 x 14 1/2 inches



Cindy Baron, *6 O'Clock Pacific Time*

Oil on board, 8 x 16 inches



Zufar Bikbov, *Made in A Shade*

Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches



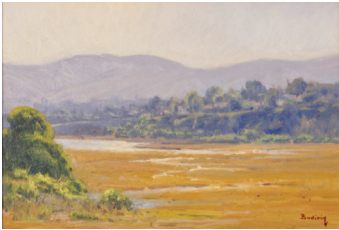
Zufar Bikbov, *Evening Lights*

Oil on canvas, 4 x 4 inches



John Budicin, *Morning on the Bay*

Oil on board, 8 x 12 inches



John Comer, *Beach Houses, Crystal Cove*

Oil on Masonite, 16 x 20 inches



John Cosby, *Two Harbors Morning*

Oil on board, 12 x 16 inches



John Cosby, *Low Tide, Low Light*

Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches



John Cosby, *Low Tide, Low Light - Study*

12 x 16 inches



Rick J. Delanty, *California*

4 x 4 inches



Aimee Erickson, *Dusk, San Juan Capistrano*

Oil on board, 4 x 4 inches



West Fraser, *Crystal Cove Village*

Oil on board, 16 x 20 inches



West Fraser, *California Dreaming*

Oil on board, 16 x 20 inches



West Fraser, *Wouldn't It Be Nice*

Oil on board, 28 x 30 inches



West Fraser, *Wouldn't It Be Nice - Study*

14 x 16 inches



Dan Goozéé, *Morning Shadows Crystal Cove*

Oil on canvas, 16 x 24 inches



Zoe Hadley, *Crystal Days*

Oil on board, 14 x 11 inches



Anita Hampton, *On a Clear Day*

Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches



Anita Hampton, *Gray Day at Crystal Cove*

Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches



Jane Hunt, *Dusk at Heisler*
Oil on board, 12 x 16 inches



Debra Huse, *Back Bay Spring Mountains*
Oil on board, 11 x 14 inches



Laurie Kersey, *Pink Ranunculus*
Oil on canvas, 8 x 6 inches

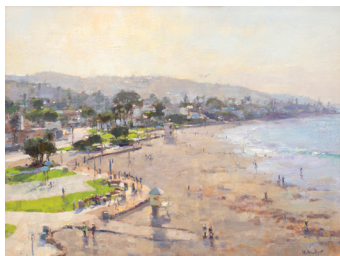


Kim Lordier, *Catalina Wild Side*
Pastel on board, 8 x 10 inches



Jim McVicker, *Main Beach Atmosphere*

Oil, 18 x 24 inches



Jim McVicker, *Late Glow at Main Beach*

Oil on board, 16 x 20 inches



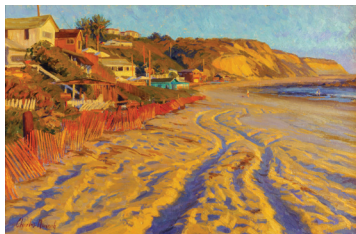
Clark Mitchell, *Barbara's Lake*

Pastel on board, 4 x 5 inches



Charles Muench, *Crystal Cove Patterns*

Oil on canvas, 20 x 30 inches



Michael Obermeyer, *Summer Sparkle, Abalone Cove*

Oil on board, 9 x 12 inches



Michael Obermeyer, *Summer Sunset*

Oil on board, 6 x 8 inches



Michael Obermeyer, *Early Morning*

Oil on board, 18 x 24 inches



Michael Obermeyer, *Pretty in Pink*

Oil on board, 14 x 18 inches



Michael Obermeyer, *Mrs. Madeline Swinden*
Oil on board, 10 x 8 inches



Jesse Powell, *Little Treasure Cove*
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 inches



Jeff Sewell, *Resting Moonlight*
Oil on canvas, 9 x 12 inches



Jeff Sewell, *Laguna Morning*
Oil on board, 4 x 4 inches



Kevin Short, *San Onofre*
Oil on canvas, 20 x 36 inches



Matt Smith, *The Island Calls*
Oil on linen, 7 x 14 inches



Alexey Steele, *Falling Shadows*
Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches



Sally Strand, *Orange Branch*
Oil on board, 8 x 6 inches



Artist Biographies

Peter Adams (*b. 1950*)

He received his training at the Art Center College of Design, Otis Art Institute, Instituto de Bellas Artes, San Miguel de Allende, and at the Lukits Academy of Fine Arts in Los Angeles. At the Lukits Academy, Adams spent seven years, from 1970 to 1977, in diligent formal training, including four years as the personal apprentice to the renowned classical painter of murals, landscapes, and portraits, Theodore N. Lukits (1897-1992). His studies led him to become fascinated with Asian objets d'art and antiques. He traveled throughout Asia and became the first American artist to paint unescorted through the People's Republic of China and he was the only American artist to travel and paint with the Mujahideen rebels in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. Today, Adams combines Eastern design concepts with the Western sense of depth through the atmosphere.

Michael Alten

A native of southern California, Michael has had a deep fascination with art since early childhood. He has had private instruction, attended the Los Angeles Academy of Art, and most notably, the Mission: Renaissance Instructor Academy. Michael has participated in numerous gallery shows, the Contemporary Masters, Artistic Eden exhibit at the Pasadena Museum of History, the Annual Laguna Beach Plein Air Invitational, the Less is More and Best of Plein Air shows sponsored by the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association (of which he is a member), and has sold many private commissions.

Ken Auster (*1949 – 2016*)

In his formative years in Long Beach, California, Ken grew up with his feet deeply planted in surf and sand. Caught up in the ground swell of the 1960s surfing culture, Ken plunged into both the sport and the art and graphics that came out of the new surfing craze. In the 1990s, Ken Auster moved into plein air painting, capturing immediate scenes in a painterly realist manner, but maintaining a strong graphic sensibility from his previous experience. The result was a painterly evocation of cityscapes, landscapes, interiors, and, of course, beach scenes that have an uncommon graphic and geometric strength.

Cindy Baron (*b. 1957*)

Cindy is nationally recognized in both watercolors and oils, painting the grand landscapes of the western mountains and coastal shorelines. Raised in South Bend, Indiana she has had the experience of living and painting all over the country. Her passion in the arts began with pastels, which then led to watercolors and in 2000 was awarded signature status of The American Watercolor Society. In 2019 she became a master signature member of Oil Painters of America, and is among a select group of artists that has received acknowledgment from her peers in both mediums. She has had the privilege of judging many award shows and has been featured in numerous publications.

Artist Biographies

Zufar Bikbov (b. 1974)

Zufar's interest in painting came early in life from the influence of his father, a well-respected specialist in engineering. His father's dream to become an artist could not be realized in post WWII Soviet Union during Stalin's regime. Zufar began drawing and painting classes at age nine. He was eleven when he painted his first plein air pieces, depicting nearby village cottages and a horse resting next to a carriage delivering pies to the local market. Zufar's landscape style leans towards Russian and Soviet-era Impressionism. For him, art is a continuous experimentation and growth area. More than a decade of traveling and painting in the US has brought his painting palette to a higher key and forged friendships all over the country. He continues to be active in the world of competitive plein air painting in the United States and has won numerous awards including the Irvine Museum Award and the Hudson Valley Art Association Gold Medal.

John Budicin (b. 1944)

Born in Rovigno, D'Istria, Italy, John moved to California at the age of 11, where he went to college, and continues to live today. After several years as a commercial artist and freelance illustrator, John Budicin took the opportunity to pursue his dream of becoming a plein air artist when his employer moved out of state. John loves to paint directly from nature so he paints outdoors almost every day. John painted many of his paintings close to his home in San Bernardino, California. John is not only a dedicated painter but also spends several weeks each year teaching workshops all around the US. John also taught a workshop in Umbria and Tuscany, Italy. John has also written several articles for art publications.

John Comer (b. 1948)

John Comer has been painting since he was a boy. His dedication to painting and surfing has been the driving passion of his life. A true waterman, he also spent many years sailing and fishing commercially. Comer's professional career began in 1968 with his first solo gallery exhibition and has been intermingled with sailing and painting voyages around the world. In recent years Comer has painted primarily in Baja California Sur producing work that deeply reflects his enduring relationship to the land and sea.

John Cosby (b. 1955)

John Cosby was born in Hollywood in 1955. At an early age, he began to draw and paint and was lucky enough to have been inspired by a grandmother who was an oil painter. Cosby started traveling at an early age. At 18 he was chosen as an advance man for the Executive Branch of the US Government, served under two Presidents, and traveled the world. He met many interesting people and saw many things but what most interested him were the great works of art he encountered. After leaving the White House, Cosby rebuilt an old classic sailing sloop designed by Nathaniel Herrishoff. He set sail up and down the eastern seaboard in the inland waterway for 3 years and began his art career. Upon his return to California, Cosby began painting the sea and landscape of coastal California.

Artist Biographies

Rick J. Delanty (*b. 1951*)

Rick J. Delanty is a winning California coastal and landscape artist, who brings his wonder and awe of God's Creation to canvas. Rick employs both oils and acrylics in the creation of his work. His intention is to reveal the splendor of quiet corners of the Earth, offering the viewer the opportunity to experience the wonder and peace of Nature. His impressionistic style brings not only the scenes of California to life but inspires the viewer with his concentration on creating mood and movement in every artwork. Rick conveys his own experiences in nature with bold, vibrant colors, intermingled with a subtlety and sensitivity that speak of peace, hope, and life.

Aimee Erickson (*b. 1967*)

Known for an engaging style and versatility in subject matter, Aimee Erickson is an internationally renowned oil painter and instructor who has given lectures and demonstrations at venues nationwide and abroad. A standout at plein air painting competitions, she has won Best of Show at Carmel, Sonoma, Olmsted, Laguna, and Pacific Northwest Plein Air art festivals. She has exhibited with international plein-air groups in China and Russia, is an inaugural member of Charlie Hunter's En Train Air expedition, and in 1997 painted the official portrait of Governor of Oregon Barbara Roberts. Her first book, *Plein Air Techniques for Artists: Principles and Methods for Painting in Natural Light*, was released in 2023 and is widely available. Erickson has a BFA in Visual Communication Design with an Illustration emphasis. She lives in Portland, Oregon, and carries a sketchbook.

West Fraser (*b. 1955*)

West Fraser was born in Savannah, GA. He is a true "Son of The Lowcountry", with deep roots dating back to 1695 in Dorchester S.C., to coastal Georgia's colonial plantation history. He came of age on Hilton Head Island, S.C. where he developed his love of the coastal environs that today still inspire him. One of the leading American artists in the representational and plein air tradition, he has built his career on richly painted, atmospheric vistas of cities, coasts, and landscapes throughout the United States and internationally. Fraser's work hangs in permanent collections of nine museums across the United States, and Bermuda, and is in the permanent collection of the White House Historical Association.

Dan Goozé (*b. 1943*)

Born in Astoria, Oregon in 1943, Dan Goozee received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with distinction from the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles. Besides his work as a fine artist, he has had a career creating visual art for motion pictures, film advertising, and theme parks around the world. Goozee has been a long-term consultant to Walt Disney Imagineering; he produced a nineteen-foot mural for Robert Mondavi's Golden Vineyard Room at Disney's California Adventure in Anaheim, California. As a fine artist, Goozé has won awards from Oil Painters of America, Watercolor West, California Art Club, and the California National Watercolor Society.

Artist Biographies

Zoe Hadley (b. 1960)

Zoe Hadley comes by her artistic talent quite naturally. As a native Californian, she follows in the path of her grandmother, Zoe Gibbons, a recognized California oil painter (d. 1960), and her mother, Zoe Smith, an accomplished portrait artist and respected teacher of art in Southern California (d. 1992). “Art” was spoken and clearly practiced in her home growing up. This legacy spawned a rich background for her own artistic journey. Since 1990, Zoe’s work has been exhibited in fine galleries and awarded many honors in juried shows. Her works are collected by many fine private and corporate collections both nationally and internationally.

Anita Hampton

Anita Hampton began her painting career as a portrait and still life artist prior to painting landscapes in plein air. Her first award was received from a painting of her grandparents in her early twenties during the Society of Western Artist exhibition in Fresno, California. Shortly after painting and exhibiting her plein air landscapes, she began receiving awards from National Art Organizations, Oil Painters of America, L.A.P.A., and California Art Club. She was invited to participate in the Trinchera Ranch Project in the summer of 2006. The work from this project, sponsored by Forbes Corporation and American Artist Magazine, was exhibited at the Forbes Museum in New York. Her paintings have been displayed at the California State Capital and the American Embassy in Madrid, Spain.

Jane Hunt (b. 1970)

Following her move from England to the US as a teenager, Jane Hunt received her B.F.A. in illustration from the Cleveland Institute of Art. After working as an illustrator for several years, Hunt eventually returned to her true love: landscape oil painting. The artist’s works have won over 200 awards. Hunt’s paintings have been featured in Fine Art Connoisseur, Southwest Art, Art of the West, Mountain Living, Luxe, Plein Air Magazine, Western Art & Architecture, American Art Collector, and many more. She’s represented by galleries across the US, as well as her native England. Now based in Colorado, she frequently paints plein air, and continues to be awed by the beauty surrounding her.

Debra Huse

Debra is an international, award-winning, impressionist oil painter. Painting primarily en plein air, she is acclaimed for her joyful use of color and bold brushwork. Her work has been featured on the cover of Southwest Art Magazine, in Art of the West, Plein Air, and Fine Art Connoisseur Magazines, and has been exhibited in over 25 museums. Her subjects range from land and seascapes to historic boats, farms, restaurants, and towns. Debra is inspired to share the working waterman’s lifestyle and history, which takes her to many historic harbors to paint. Huse has a working studio in a southern California boatyard and a sport fishing boat from which she paints California coastal-scapes.

Artist Biographies

Laurie Kersey (b. 1961)

Laurie Kersey's life as an artist began as a child in rural Ohio, where her dad trained and raced harness horses. She grew up in an artistic household and always loved to draw and paint. After an early art education at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and then a 15-year career in commercial art as an Art Director and Illustrator on the East Coast, Kersey relocated to San Francisco, studied painting at the Academy of Art University, and made the switch to fine art. She later taught painting and drawing in the Fine Art Department at the Academy. Though excited about painting myriad aspects of the natural world, including landscape and floral, a dominant theme in her work is horses. Having ridden for many years, she has come to realize that her hands-on experience with horses uniquely influences the way that she sees and paints them.

Jim McVicker (b. 1951)

Jim McVicker made his first on-location, plein air, painting in 1973. His influences then were the French Impressionists, mostly Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley. At the time Jim was working full-time and attending art classes at Chaffey Community College in Southern California. He is heavily influenced by his teachers he met once he moved to Northern California and by his wife who is also an artist. Over the years he has won many awards from the California Art Club and several plein air competitions.

Clark Mitchell (b. 1951)

Growing up in the shadow of the Rockies, Clark Mitchell very early discovered a love of the natural world. Given a set of fine old German pastels by his father when quite young, he quickly embraced the medium for its ease of handling, brilliance of color, and portability. He received a bachelor's degree in art from Colorado College in the seventies and moved to San Francisco to continue his studies at the Academy of Art College. Through personal exploration as well as study with artists Albert Handell, Skip Whitcomb, Michael Lynch, and Bill Hook, Mitchell has developed the talent to create both tightly rendered scenes as well as looser, more abstract suggestions. Mitchell left San Francisco with his partner over thirty years ago and moved north to the beautiful Sonoma County wine country. Painting expeditions throughout the state as well as across the country continue to provide challenge as well as inspiration.

Charles Muench (b. 1966)

Charles Muench is an artist living in between the Sierra Mountains and the high plains desert of Nevada. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts-with great distinction degree from San Jose State University. His work has been featured in several art magazines, especially his plein air work within the United States National Parks, won many awards from California and Southwest art organizations, and has been exhibited all over the American South and Southwest.

Artist Biographies

Michael Obermeyer (b. 1959)

A native of Southern California and now in his twenty-sixth summer at the Festival, Michael Obermeyer received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration at California State University, Long Beach. A twenty-year career in illustration included works for Disney Studios, the Anaheim Angels, McDonnell Douglas, Coldwell Banker, and the United States Air Force. Because of his illustration background, he is equally comfortable with the landscape and the figure. Many of his paintings are in the U.S. Air Force Historical Art Collection at the Smithsonian Institute and the Pentagon. Michael is the President of the prestigious California Art Club and is a Signature Member of the California Art Club and the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association. Currently, his paintings are showing at galleries in Carmel, Pasadena, Balboa Island, and Laguna Beach, where he is a regular exhibitor at the Festival of Arts. He maintains his studio in Laguna Beach, California.

Jesse Powell (b. 1977)

Jesse Powell was born in Los Angeles, California. He graduated from the University of Puget Sound with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in painting and drawing and went on to study in the Republic of Georgia. His influences include many of today's living artists, such as Matt Smith and Clyde Aspevig, along with many California and American impressionists. Jesse's work has received numerous awards, including second place in the 2013 Plein Air Salon, and the Irvine Museum Award at the 101st annual California Art Club Gold Medal Show. Jesse's paintings have been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including shows at The Autry National Center, The Irvine Museum, The Laguna Art Museum, and The Pasadena Museum of California Art.

Jeff Sewell (b. 1967)

Artist Jeff Sewell was born and raised in Southern California. Jeff is well known for his Paintings of California Scenery, although he spends many trips throughout the year traveling to paint the great Western scenery of Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. He paints predominantly "en plein air" and also enjoys developing works in his studio. Jeff studied art at USC and Irvine Valley College, yet finds his greatest influence is from the works of past master impressionists such as Edgar Payne, William Wendt, Joaquin Sorrolla, Maynard Dixon, and countless current living Impressionists. He is a distinguished Signature Member of the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association and an esteemed artist Member of the California Art Club.

Kevin Short (b. 1960)

Kevin A. Short is best known and recognized as being at the forefront of the modern scene painting movement. Born in San Diego in 1960, he grew up in Santa Barbara, where it gave him a love for the ocean. Years later, he formalized his studies in oil painting at the University of New Mexico, Pepperdine University, and ArtCenter College of Design. In addition to being featured in numerous publications, his own book, *Trestles*, has exemplified how artists can draw attention to land use and preservation. Kevin A. Short is a full member of the California Art Club.

Artist Biographies

Matt Smith (b. 1960)

Matt Smith was born in Kansas City, Missouri. At an early age, he moved to Arizona where he developed his lifelong connection to the Sonoran Desert and the great outdoors. In 1985, Smith earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting from Arizona State University. Somewhat frustrated with the abstract focus of the program at ASU he began looking to outside sources for inspiration and guidance. These sources included fellow artists, fine galleries, and museums. These days, Matt can often be found painting en Plein air from southern Arizona to the Canadian Rockies, from the California coast to the Rocky Mountains. His work has received many awards and published in countless publications.

Alexey Steele (b. 1967)

Alexey Steele is an award-winning visual artist with a background of the Russian representational school. Born in Kiev, Ukraine, he began art training at an early age in the studio of his father Leonid Steele, a renowned Soviet Union artist. Alexey attended the prestigious Surikov Art Institute of the Soviet Academy of Arts in Moscow. He moved to Los Angeles in 1990. Mr. Steele is best known for his large-scale figurative works in oil and on paper, portraiture, and plein-air landscapes. His works have been commissioned, exhibited, and recognized throughout California, Europe, and Asia. In 2019 Alexey Steele had been appointed the first Artist Laureate of Culver City, CA.

Sally Strand (b. 1955)

A native of Colorado now residing in California, Strand has been exhibiting professionally as an artist for close to 40 years. Strand was inducted into the Hall of Fame, the highest commendation of the Pastel Society of America, New York. She is the recipient of numerous top awards, including the PSA Master Pastelist distinction and the IAPS Master Circle Medal. Her solo exhibitions in galleries and museums include a one-person retrospective of pastel and oil paintings at the Bakersfield Museum of Art in California. Widely published in books and magazines internationally, her work is also represented in many private, corporate, and museum collections.



Plan Your Visit

LOCATION & PARKING

Casa Romantica Cultural Center
and Gardens
415 Avenida Granada
San Clemente, CA 92672

Parking is FREE in our lot.
Handicapped parking is available.

PUBLIC HOURS

Tuesday–Thursday | 10 AM–4 PM
Friday–Sunday | 10 AM–2 PM
Closed Monday

TICKETS & INFORMATION

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GENERAL ADMISSION

\$5.00 general admission
FREE to children under age 13
and active military with ID

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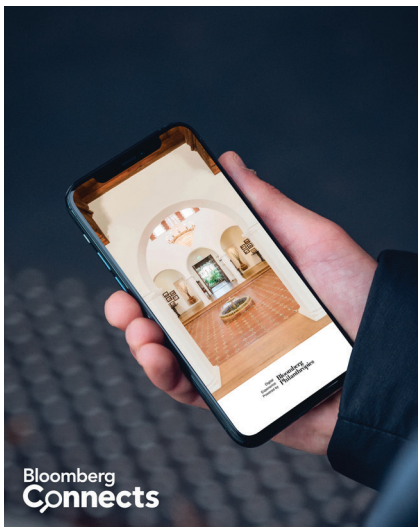


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MISSION STATEMENT

Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization and is the historic home of the founder of the City of San Clemente.

Casa Romantica provides programs for all ages in arts, music, history, and horticulture and is a premier Southern California cultural center.



 **CASA ROMANTICA**
CULTURAL CENTER AND GARDENS

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