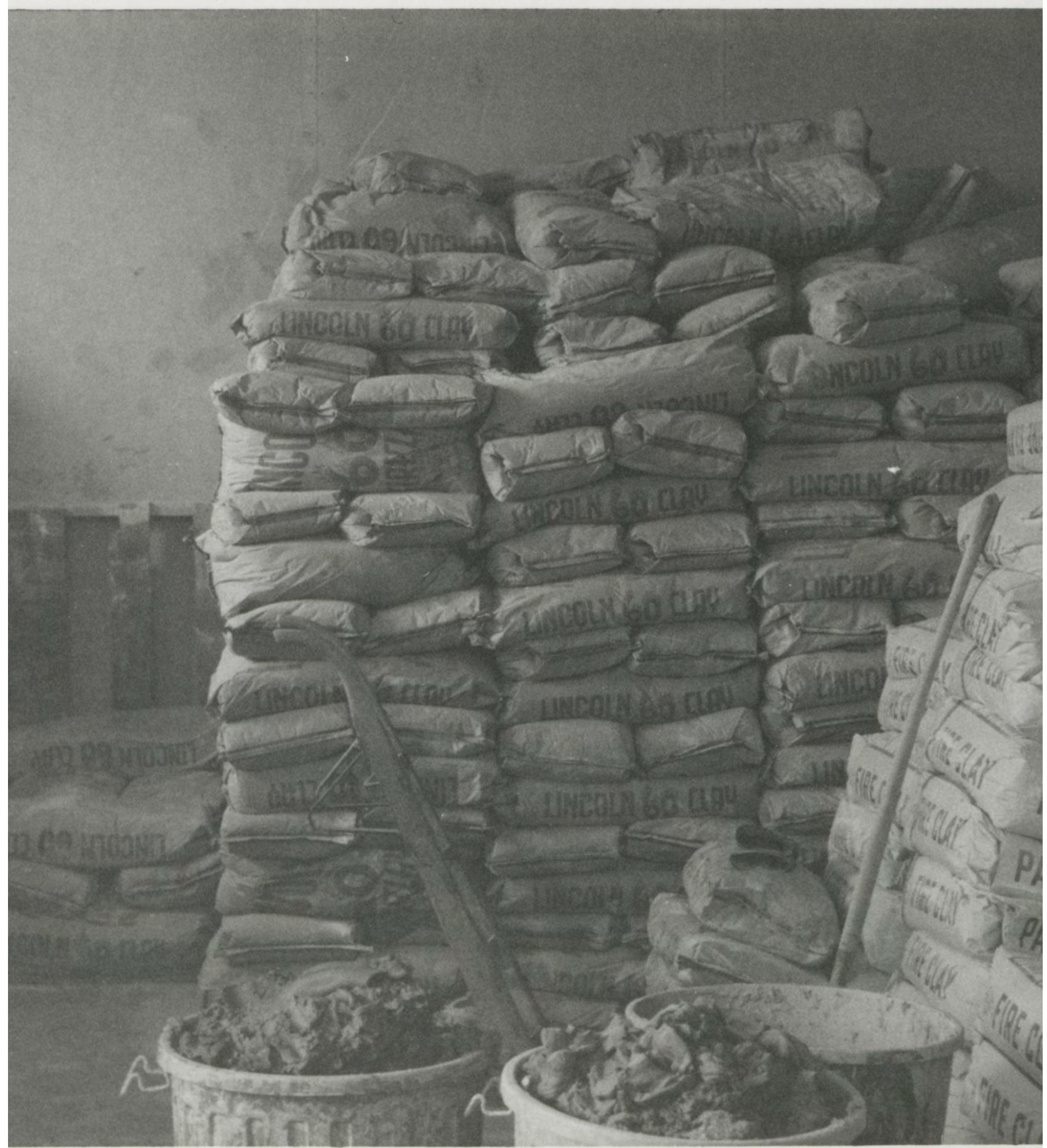


L





From The Earth



From The Earth

Edith Heath | Emily Carr

Jay Stewart, Jennifer Volland, and Bruce Grenville

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY, VANCOUVER

Table of Contents

Director's Foreword	1
Introduction	3
Photo Essay	4
From the Earth: Edith Heath Emily Carr	6
1. California Clay & Early Experiments — <i>Jay Stewart</i>	8
2. Gump's & Hand-Thrown to Production —	14
3. Coupe & Original Glazes —	19
4. Bright New Colours & Spray Glazes —	25
5. Two-toned Porcelain-lined & Exposed Clay Edge —	29
6. Oil on Paper Paintings	34
7. Charcoal and Oil on Paper	46
8. Forest Paintings on Canvas	52
Biographies	58
Edith Heath in Context	59
1. Barge	61
2. Factory	62
3. UBC Vancouver	67
4. Marketing Heath Ceramics	70
5. Heath Ceramics Ashtrays	75
6. Conover Displays	79
7. Timeline (slideshow)	83

Selected Bibliography	85
Contributors	86
Acknowledgments	87
Colophon	88



Director's Foreword

Edith Heath and Emily Carr are unlikely companions in an exhibition and yet they shared a [their] [our] gallery space as if they were old friends with a wealth of mutual interests. Their individual commitment to the land and their recognition of its fundamental importance to all aspects of life on the west coast is their most immediate and compelling point of intersection. For both artists the land was a real and tangible presence that deeply affected the subjects they chose, the tools they used, and the objects they made. Seen together in the same space, their works share a generous conversation where each acknowledges the other's world vision while articulately rendering the specificity of their own time and place.

The exhibition *From the Earth: Edith Heath and Emily Carr* was originally conceived as part of the Gallery's ongoing series of exhibitions committed to the documentation and contextualization of the art of Emily Carr. Carr's paintings and drawings are a highly respected and beloved part of the Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection, and the Gallery has maintained a longstanding program of exhibitions that bring new insights to her art. The opportunity to bring Carr's paintings and works on paper into dialogue with Edith Heath's ceramics came about through a casual conversation with Jay Stewart (one of the exhibition's co-curators) who has an intimate knowledge of the work of both artists. Stewart recalled a conversation she had with Edith Heath about the life and work of Emily Carr in which she mentioned Carr's technique of tasting clay in order to determine its mineral content and, ultimately, its suitability for use in ceramics. Edith Heath agreed that this was a time-tested and pragmatic way of selecting suitable clays in the local landscape. This simple affirmation of the primacy of the materials, intimately connected to the land, opened the door to further discussions on other shared values and purposes in their

lives and works, and ultimately led to this exhibition. Edith Heath had many links to Vancouver and this region, especially during the period of her annual visits in the early 1950s when she taught at the University of British Columbia summer school. Heath is renowned as a key figure in the emergence of mid-century ceramics on the West Coast and we are delighted to have this opportunity to share her work with our members and visitors in Vancouver.

We thank the co-curators Jay Stewart, Jennifer Volland and Bruce Grenville, for bringing their unique perspectives on the art of Edith Heath and Emily Carr to this exhibition and publication. Both Jennifer Volland and Jay Stewart have had long-standing, individual curatorial relationships with the Vancouver Art Gallery, collaborating as guest curators on key exhibitions at the Gallery since the late-1990s. We are delighted to bring them together, with the Gallery's senior curator Bruce Grenville, to realize this important exhibition. We are grateful for their many contributions that made this exhibition possible. Michael Lis of Goodweather Studio played a key role in the exhibition's design, producing a remarkable mise-en-scène that united the work of two great artists in a very pleasing and informative space. Gallery staff tracked the hundreds of individual and institutional loans that comprised the Heath component of the exhibition. This is the largest exhibition of Heath ceramics to date and the Gallery registrars, Jenny Wilson and Amber McBride, and conservators, Tara Fraser and Beth Wolchock, applied their ever-rigorous methodology to this unique project. The Gallery's graphics team led by Martin Chester produced and installed the many text and images in the exhibition, and Angie Milligan thoughtfully designed the Edith Heath timeline. The installation team led by Jim Stamper skillfully recreated the unique display cabinets (from the original 1959 design of

Luther Conover) for the exhibition, built specialized ceramics mounts, and composed the lighting that brought all of the works to life. This unique co-publication was designed by Michael Lis and produced by Stephanie Rebick in her capacity as Director of Publishing and Content Strategy at the Gallery. The excellent photography which documents the exhibition was produced by Ian Lefebvre, Blaine Campbell and Rachel Topham. We are grateful to each and every one of our staff and colleagues for their diligence and care in producing this exhibition.

We are thankful for the many individual and institutional lenders to the exhibition who shared their love of Edith Heath's ceramics with our members and visitors. The Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection is an integral part of the Environmental Design Archives at UC Berkeley. Extensive loans from its comprehensive collection of artifacts, ceramics, and archival photographs made this exhibition possible. Former EDA curator Chris Marino's oversight on these loans was essential and greatly appreciated. Reference archivist Katie Riddle and curator emerita Waverly Lowell were also instrumental in the process. Selected loans from the Brian & Edith Heath Foundation and Heath Ceramics allowed us to represent unique early ceramics, and a wealth of loans from

individual collectors, including Catherine Bailey and Robin Petracic, Allan Collier, Bill Janyk, Julie Muñiz, the Estate of Marion and Gordon Smith, Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair, Tasha Sutcliffe, Chris and Jody Vajda, and Joni and Stephen Vajda, allowed us to convey Heath's vision for the abundance of ceramics in everyday life.

The Brian & Edith Heath Foundation manifests its commitment to scholarship and the dissemination of the art and ideas of Edith Heath through its generous support of the exhibition and publication. We are profoundly grateful for the vision and commitment of the Heath Foundation. We are equally grateful to our other Major Supporters, Kimberly Cudney and Fraser Phillips, who, together with our Major Sponsor: Mosaic Forest Management, Major Community Partner: Poly Culture North America, and the generous support of The McLean Foundation, made this exhibition possible.

Finally, we extend our deep appreciation to the Board of Trustees of the Vancouver Art Gallery for their continued commitment to the Vancouver Art Gallery and our ambitious and interdisciplinary programs.

Anthony Kiendl, Vancouver Art Gallery

Introduction

Edith Heath and Emily Carr: From the Earth brings together the work of two artists who had a mutual understanding of the land as the source and meaning of their art. Both found a deep inspiration in the landscape—its colours, light, materials—returning again and again to sites that inspired their creativity and defined their practices.

This exhibition and digital publication builds on an ongoing program that offers opportunities to consider the art of Emily Carr in a different light. Past exhibitions have focused on directly shared histories or on stylistic affinity, while others have pointed to the significance of Carr's influence on modern and contemporary artists. Emily Carr and Edith Heath never met, but they do share a common identity as modernist women who lived on the West Coast and struggled to build careers in the creative arts that spoke to the specificity of their time and place.

Edith Heath was born in Ida Grove, Iowa in 1911 to a settler family from Denmark. She was trained as a teacher and studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago during the mid-1930s. She moved with her husband Brian to San Francisco in 1942 and studied ceramics at the California School of Fine Arts for two years; this is the same school that Emily Carr attended in 1890–93. While studying, Heath also taught art at a progressive co-operative school. During this time the Heaths spent weekends exploring clay pits in California, and Edith Heath conducted independent research on clays, glazes and their chemistry. This commitment to place and process shaped her practice for the remainder of her life. The works selected for this exhibition date from Heath's early professional career, from the mid-1940s to the late 1950s. It was during this

time that she began her annual summer journeys to Vancouver—at first to teach ceramic design and chemistry at the University of British Columbia (1951 and 1952). Soon the trip became a pilgrimage that included Vancouver and Aspen, the site of the legendary International Design Conference, which brought together progressive thinkers and makers in the fields of design and commerce.

Emily Carr was born in Victoria, BC in 1871 to a settler family from England. In 1890, while still in her late teens, she travelled to San Francisco to attend the California School of Design, the same school where Heath studied in the early 1940s. She studied there for three years before returning to Victoria, where she taught children's art classes, saving enough money to go to England and continue her art studies there from 1899 to 1904. Upon returning to the West Coast, Carr resumed her travels to coastal Indigenous communities where she documented what she feared to be disappearing cultures. Deeply shaped by her education within colonialist traditions of landscape and documentary, she struggled to reconcile her training with her personal experience of the communities, landscape and history. The works she produced at this time were predictable, so much so that Carr conceived of a plan to travel to France in 1910. She hoped to engage with the new ideas and techniques in art that were emerging there. In less than a year she and her art underwent a radical transformation that set the stage for new ways of looking and making. The works selected for this exhibition and related publication reflect Carr's transformed style and date from the 1930s.

Jay Stewart, Heath Foundation

Photo Essay

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut consectetur faucibus ullamcorper. Fusce pretium ligula in erat efficitur lacinia. Nam sed facilisis arcu, et mattis nisi. Nam sit amet feugiat dui, consequat pulvinar lectus. Nulla mattis tempus arcu, sed lobortis diam tempor nec. Suspendisse non eros eget arcu suscipit placerat. Aenean et mattis metus. Nam gravida convallis metus ut laoreet.

Phasellus et fermentum eros, sed hendrerit augue. Praesent et sollicitudin neque, at efficitur diam. Fusce vestibulum interdum velit non rutrum. Vestibulum ante

ipsum primis in faucibus orci luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia curae; Quisque condimentum, mi ut posuere sodales, dolor diam laoreet mauris, vel euismod velit eros sed ante. Maecenas purus justo, bibendum vitae magna in, commodo sodales tortor. Vestibulum a molestie justo. Vivamus sed lorem quis risus vestibulum tristique luctus eget sapien. Sed nunc purus, suscipit sed imperdiet tristique, vestibulum at tellus. Nullam quis elit eget dui egestas efficitur.

From the Earth: Edith Heath | Emily Carr



1. California Clay & Early Experiments — *Jay Stewart*

..... 8



2. Gump's & Hand-Thrown to Production —

..... 14



3. Coupe & Original Glazes —

..... 19



4. Bright New Colours & Spray Glazes —

..... 25



5. Two-toned Porcelain-lined & Exposed Clay Edge —

..... 29



6. Oil on Paper Paintings

..... 34



7. Charcoal and Oil on Paper

..... 46



8. Forest Paintings on Canvas

..... 52



Edith Heath, California clay pieces Photo:



Edith Heath, California clay pieces Collection of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation. Photo: Blaine Campbell



Edith Heath, California clay pieces Collection of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation and a Private Collection. Photo:
Blaine Campbell



Edith Heath, California clay pieces Collection of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation. Photo: Blaine Campbell

1. California Clay & Early Experiments

Jay Stewart, Curator, Heath Foundation

Artist	Edith Heath
--------	-------------

Edith Heath's affinity for and fascination with her surrounding landscape informed her art. In 1943, she and her husband Brian spent weekends driving around California looking for clay deposits. With many clay-mining operations closed during World War II, the couple found defunct clay pits and gathered materials. They collected brick clays from Niles Canyon in the San Francisco Bay Area; white clay from Tesla, California; talc from Southern California; and eventually high refractory fire clays, which are used primarily to produce fire brick, from Ione, in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

At the time, most clays used in dinnerware were processed to the point that they were white rather than the natural colour and texture of the state's iron-rich clay. Heath rebelled against white clay—what she referred to as “gutless”—and instead embraced the inherent variation found in California clay.

Alongside her explorations in the natural environment, Heath enrolled in a ceramic chemistry class at the University of California Extension program and spent time in her kitchen studio testing the properties of various ceramic materials. Heath's research on clay bodies led to pioneering changes in the ceramics industry. In choosing a less processed California fire clay for her clay body, she produced less material waste. Also, in her clay body she implemented a eutectic system—a process whereby a mixture of substances melts at a lower temperature than that of any of its individual constituents—which resulted in lower energy use during firing. Such environmentally conscious practices ensured both product and process had a strong connection to the earth.

California materials would remain an integral part of Heath's manufacturing philosophy and the California landscape a constant source of inspiration.

These five pieces show Edith Heath's early experimentation with clay bodies, using California clays

with metallic oxides as colourants. This experimentation led to the clay body Heath formulated in 1945–46 for Heath Ceramics dinnerware; it used Dosch clay for texture and manganese dioxide for colour. When glazed or stained, the clay body “shines through,” giving the ware its characteristic speckle. Heath wanted her dinnerware to reflect its origin, and although this approach defied the norms of the day, it ultimately helped shape the aesthetics of California ceramics.

I was looking for a clay that nobody knew anything about, that had unique properties that I could utilize and develop, that would be expressive of the region. I began to work with California clays that had certain properties that I could do something with, that would then turn out to look like something that nobody else had ever made. (Heath, Oral History, p. 72)

Edith Heath had her first solo exhibition of ceramics in 1944 at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, featuring 82 pieces of hand-built and hand-thrown work. The handmade pieces in this display are representative of Heath's work during this period. They demonstrate the evolution of Heath's vision, first working with what she had available—clay, her hands, a rolling pin and fabric—before experimenting on a potter's wheel and, within five years, transitioning to more mechanized production.

I wanted to make an extension in my medium scientifically and aesthetically and socially. There were never enough hours in the day to do all the things I could fantasize about. (Heath, Oral History, p. 77)

Three hand-thrown salad plates show Heath's early glaze experiments; she sought to create glazes to highlight the colour and texture of her Dosch fire clay and manganese clay body. Copper and iron oxides added to the glazes on

the first plate make a range of transparent to opaque greens and pinks; cobalt and chrome oxides added to the glazes on the second plate make a range of transparent to

opaque blues and blue-greens; and manganese and yellow stain added to the glazes on the third plate make a range of transparent to opaque purple-browns and yellows.



Installation of ceramic pieces on a Conover cabinet. Photo: Rachel Topham



Heath Ceramics dinnerware sets Photo: Blaine Campbell



Heath Ceramics cup and matching plate Photo: Blaine Campbell



Set of dinnerware in Aubergine glaze Photo: Blaine Campbell

2. Gump's & Hand-Thrown to Production

Artist	Edith Heath
---------------	-------------

GUMPS

Edith Heath's 1944 solo exhibition at the Legion of Honor caught the eye of Bill Brewer, a buyer for the San Francisco retail company, Gump's. Due to the dearth of European imports during World War II, he was scouting high-quality ware for the store. Brewer consigned almost all the pieces in the exhibition, and to ensure an ongoing supply of ceramics, he offered Heath a studio at 565 Clay Street for \$50 a month. The ceramicist's informal, yet elegant, hand-thrown dinnerware service dovetailed nicely with Gump's preferred aesthetics of the time. Heath became one of a group of local designers and craftspeople who supplied Gump's with quality handcrafted works. The collective force of these creative individuals helped shape post-war tastes in the Bay Area and beyond.

The dinnerware—plates, bowls, cups, saucers and a few accessories—was offered in soft blue, pale green and warm beige. While these pieces were prototypes of what would become the eponymous Coupe line, they stand apart from the later production ware. The Gump's pieces are thinner, with a matte finish, more variation in colour and prominent speckling. The connection to the earth is evident, and highlighting this connection became a standard refrain in the marketing language for Heathware. A Gump's brochure features a photograph of Heath throwing a pot on the wheel with text that emphasizes the materiality of the dinnerware, formed from "honest, unadulterated clay."

In my thinking about the relationship between material and the finished results, the finished results should reveal the origin. In other words, when you look at a piece, you

should be aware this is clay, it's not plastic. (Heath, Oral History, p. 222)

HAND-THROWN TO PRODUCTION

In 1947, Heath Ceramics moved to its first Sausalito factory, introducing industrial production strategies using jigger wheels and slip casting and transitioning away from hand-thrown ceramics. Heath believed that handmade didn't always equate beauty, and likewise, machine-made didn't always equate to junky. She tested these hypotheses in her work of the time, ultimately creating ceramic pieces that could be produced in larger quantities while still maintaining the qualities of the handmade.

The works here demonstrate this transition. Edith Heath exhibited a hand-thrown teapot, with a silver handle crafted by the silversmith Franz Bergman, at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1947, winning the Louise S. Ackerman Award in Decorative Arts. The teapot was later described by Heath as the prototype of her production teapot, which she launched in 1948. A similar teapot, along with the matching tea bowls and saucers shown here, was exhibited that year at the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts. A set of plates in the same Aubergine glaze also accompanied the tea set. Although these plates were made on the jigger wheel, Heath decorated them by hand.

Shapes created for reproduction must be powerful enough to withstand criticisms rarely hurled at a craftsman's freshly drawn shape. Their beauty must reflect a clarity of vision so transcendent as to appeal to the mind and hearts of a fickle world. (Heath, c. 1980)



Dinnerware in the four original glazes: Sand, Shining Sand, Sage and Blue. Photo:



Dinnerware in the four original glazes: Sand, Shining Sand, Sage and Blue. Photo: Blaine Campbell



Dinnerware in one of the four original glazes: Shining Sand. Photo: Blaine Campbell



Dinnerware in one of the four original glazes: Sage. Photo: Blaine Campbell



Dinnerware in one of the four original glazes: Sand. Photo: Blaine Campbell

3. Coupe & Original Glazes

Artist	Edith Heath
---------------	-------------

COUPE

The original line of Heath California dinnerware, later known as the Coupe line, included a place setting comprised of three plates, a dessert bowl, a teacup and a saucer, complemented by two serving bowls, a creamer and sugar bowl set, salt and pepper shakers, and a platter. It quickly expanded to include casseroles, bowls, platters, ashtrays and other accessories in a variety of sizes that catered to a new, informal West Coast lifestyle. The introduction of this line marked the transition from solely hand-thrown ware to more industrialized production using jigger wheels and slip casting. Seventy-five years later, the Couple line is still in production—a testament to its durability and simple, enduring forms.

ORIGINAL GLAZES

When factory production began in 1947, Heathware was available in four glazes reminiscent of Heath's hand-thrown line for Gump's—Sand, Shining Sand, Sage and Blue. The palette reflected the colour and texture of the California landscape and complemented indoor-outdoor

living. Edith Heath rigorously tested her glazes, asking customers to share what they thought of each experiment. Her intention was to visually integrate the glazes with the clay, reflecting its warm tone and unique speckle. Two more glaze colours—Aqua and Apricot—were introduced along with Heath Ceramics' line of tabbed casseroles in late 1947. The glazes expanded the company's palette yet retained Heathware's quintessential speckle and earthiness.

I designed Heath dinnerware so it could be used in the oven, out of a sturdy material with edges that minimize chipping, in colours and textures that become a part of the fabric of contemporary architecture and life—sturdy for everyday use, yet sufficiently sophisticated for more formal occasions. (Heath, Qualities of Contemporary Design)

Collections of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation, Heath Ceramics, Catherine Bailey and Robin Petracic, Allan Collier, Bill Janyk, Estate of Marion and Gordon Smith, Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair, Tasha Sutcliffe, and Joni and Stephen Vajda



Sets of dinnerware in colourful glazes Photo: Blaine Campbell



Side view of eight new colours installation Photo: Blaine Campbell



Dinnerware in spray glazes displayed on a Conover cabinet during the exhibition. Photo: Blaine Campbell

4. Bright New Colours & Spray Glazes

Artist	Edith Heath
---------------	-------------

BRIGHT NEW COLOURS

As the product line expanded in the late 1940s, Heath formulated brighter glazes that reflected a new period for the growing company and the lively party culture of the day. Advertisements for two sizes of ashtrays listed the existing dinnerware colours along with the new Currie, Gunmetal and Green Lustre glazes. Verde, Currie and Rock Red brought an increased saturation of colour to the line, while Gunmetal and Green Lustre introduced an elegant metallic look.

Heath dinnerware is designed for the contemporary home—for indoor and outdoor living—designed for durability and function, pleasant whether used on the patio or for formal ware. (c. 1960)

SPRAY GLAZES

Between 1949 and 1951, Heath Ceramics introduced three new glaze combinations. Each was glazed with Sand or Apricot, then over-sprayed on the edges with a darker glaze, creating a gradient effect. This unique application process using a handheld spray gun illustrates Heath's creative use of tools meant for mass production. The resulting blend of colours reflects the California landscape, as do the glaze names—Sea and Sand, Mountain Blue and Brownstone.

Collections of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation, Heath Ceramics, Catherine Bailey and Robin Petracic, Allan Collier, Julie Muñiz, Tasha Sutcliffe, Chris and Jody Vajda, Estate of Marion and Gordon Smith, and Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair



Two-toned porcelain-lined dinnerware pieces in White/Sand, Gold/Apricot and Pumpkin/Brown Photo: Blaine Campbell



Two-toned porcelain-lined sauce serving dish in Gold/Apricot glaze. Photo: Blaine Campbell

Two-toned porcelain-lined dinnerware in Brown/Blue glaze Photo: Blaine Campbell



Two-toned porcelain-lined dinnerware in Gold/Apricot and Brown/Blue glazes Photo: Blaine Campbell

5. Two-toned Porcelain-lined & Exposed Clay Edge

Artist	Edith Heath
--------	-------------

TWO-TONED PORCELAIN-LINED

Though Heath began experimenting with porcelain-lined ware as early as 1949, she did not use the technique in production until the two-toned glazes—White/Sand, Gold/Apricot, Pumpkin/Brown—were released with the buffet service in 1955. She continued her fascination with the interaction between clay and glaze. A porcelain slip applied to the interior of the ware blocked the effect of the manganese in the clay body, creating two distinct colours from the same glaze.

EXPOSED CLAY EDGE

The Turquoise/Brown combination was the first to use an exposed clay edge; this became a defining feature of

Heathware. Turquoise/Brown accompanied the existing two-toned patterns released a few years prior and was advertised alongside pieces from the buffet service. Not only did the colourful palette lend itself to entertaining, so too did the expanded offering of oversized and versatile serving pieces, such a large 15 ½-inch platter, a huge party bowl and a pouring bowl with ladle for gravies and batters.

Designing for industry means thinking about many... many-of-a-kind for many people. If the many are to be enjoyed for a long time, they must be well made, with the best possible shape, color, texture, and a certain aura.

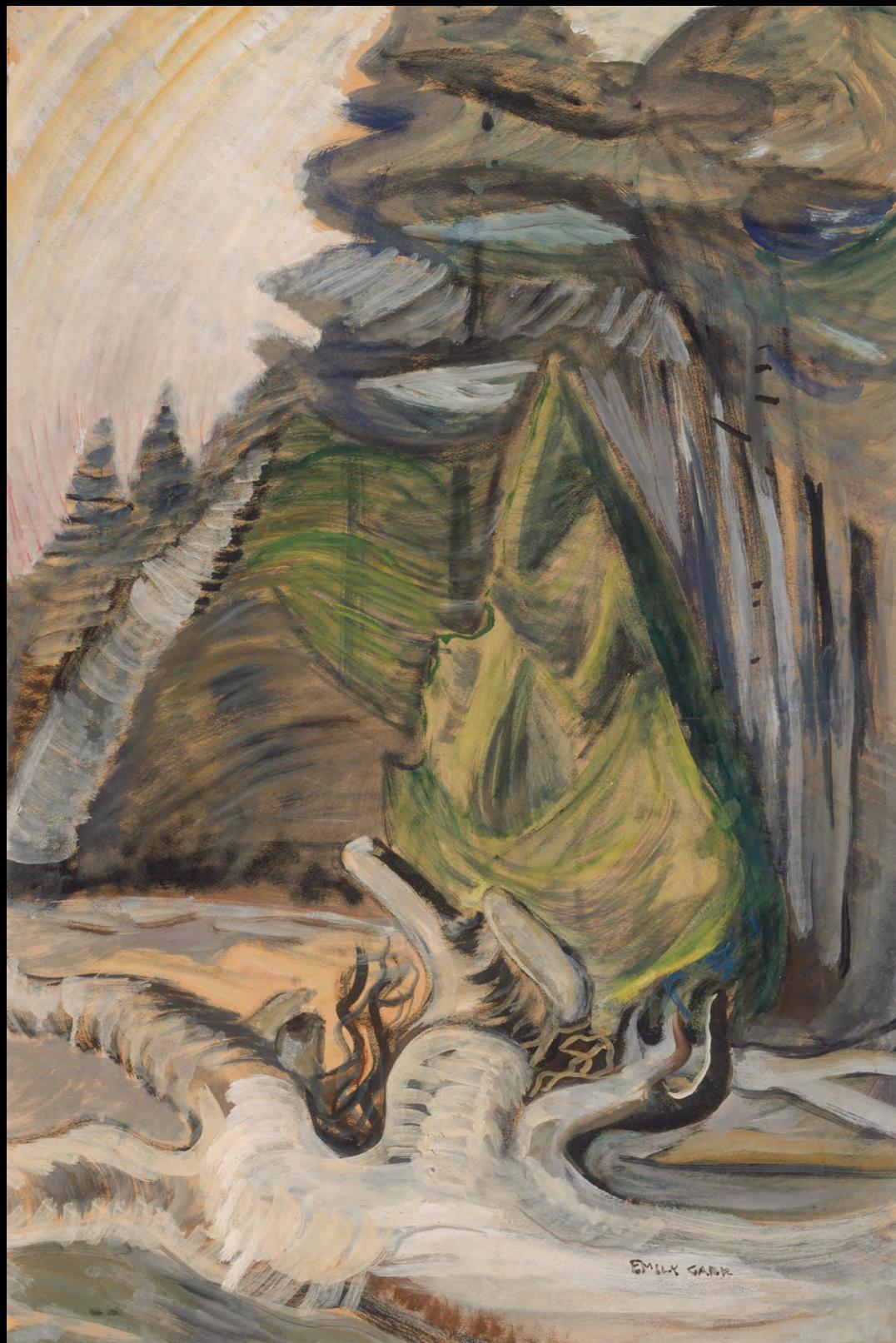
Collections of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation, Heath Ceramics, Catherine Bailey and Robin Petracic, Allan Collier, Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair, and Tasha Sutcliffe



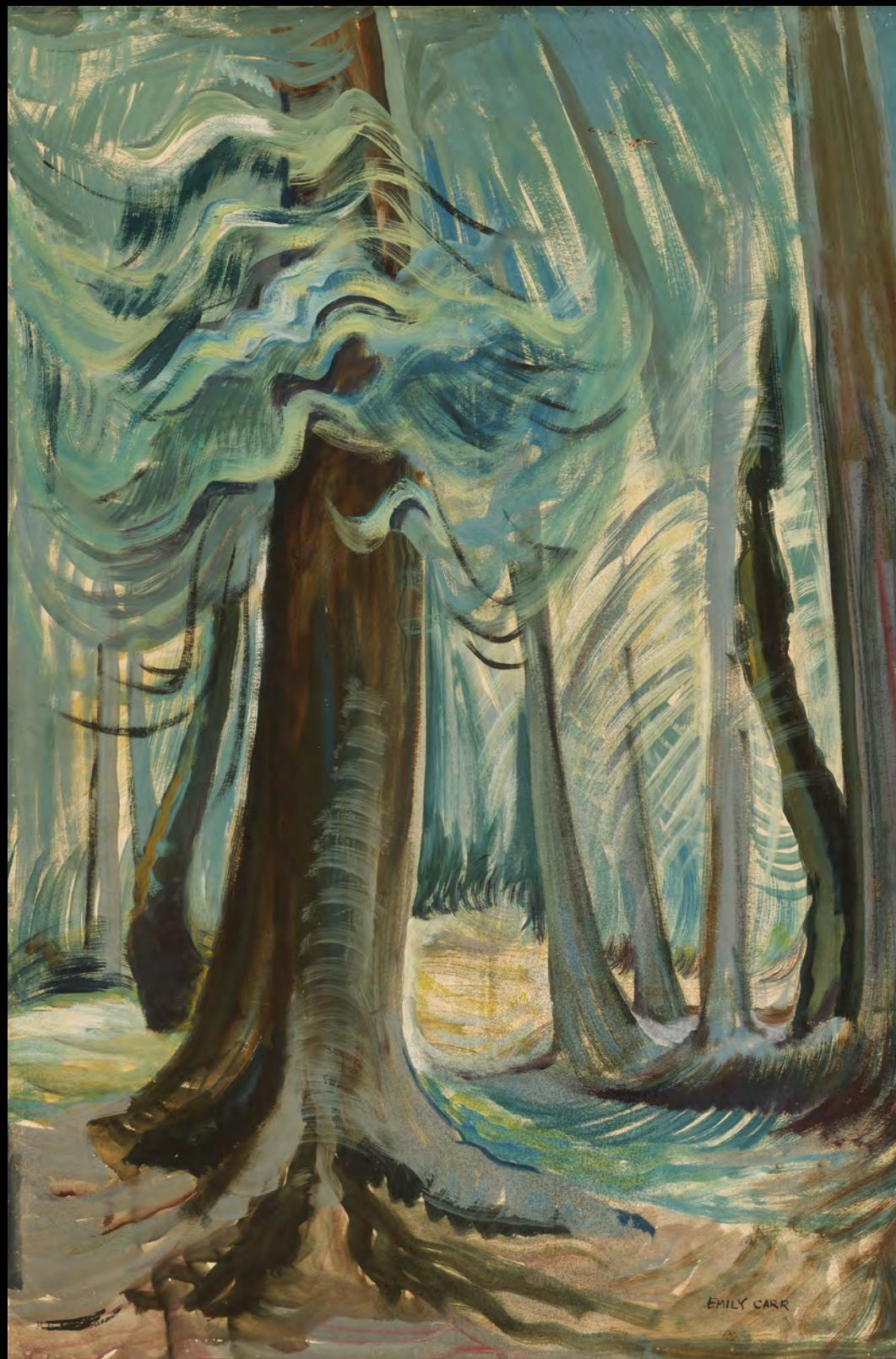
Formalized Trees, Spring, c. 1933 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



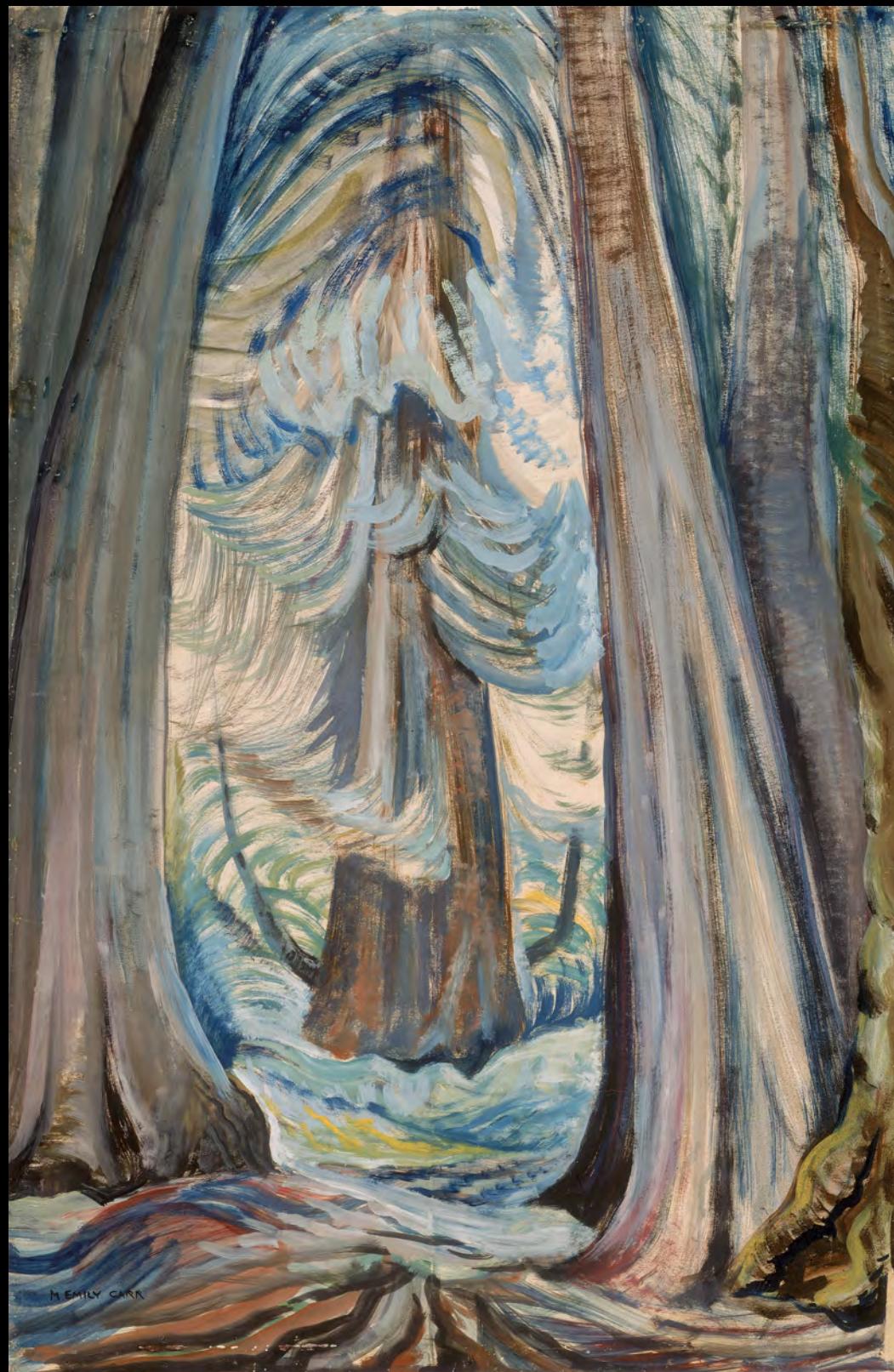
Untitled, 1931–1932 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



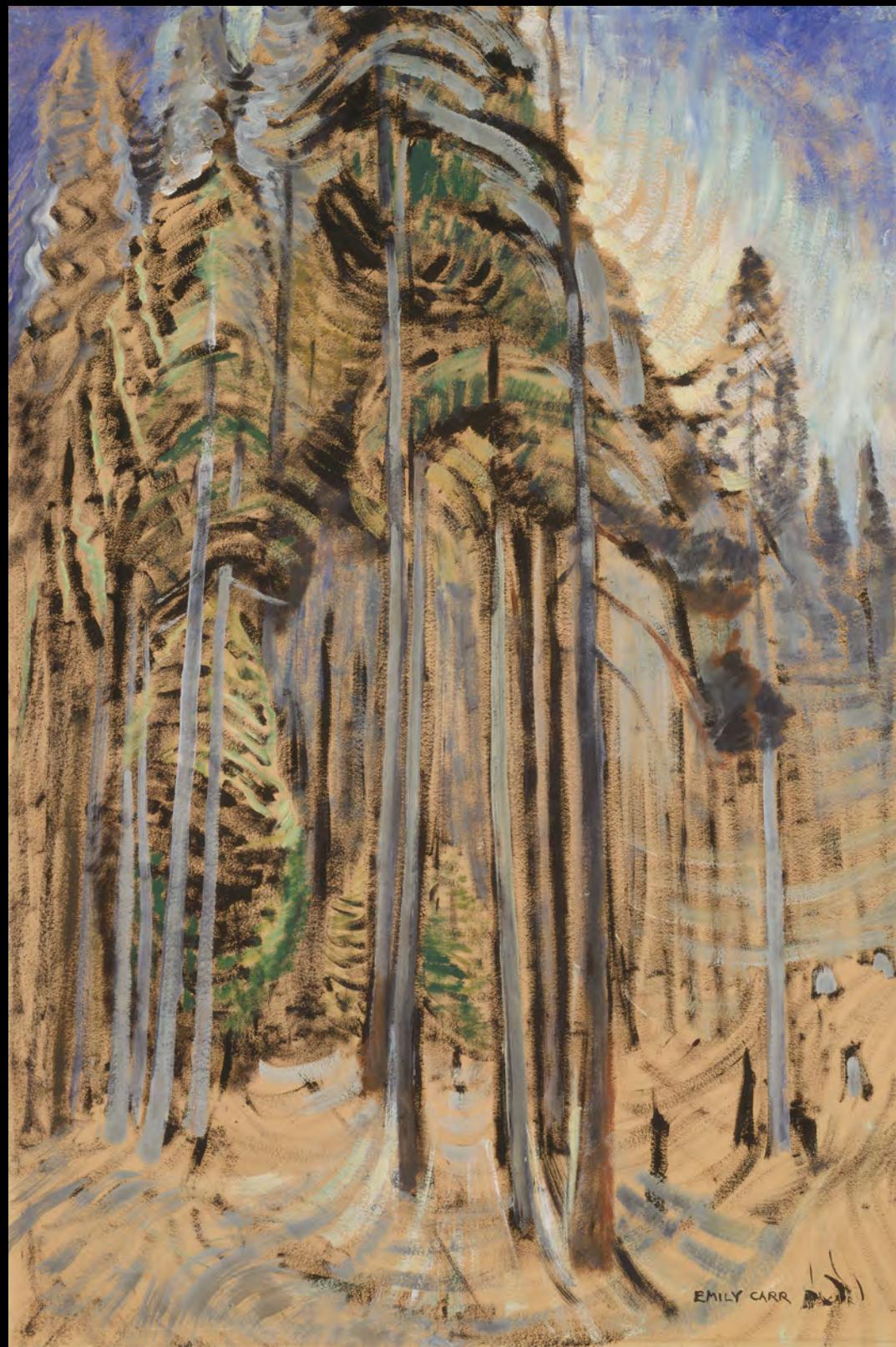
Untitled, 1931–1932 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



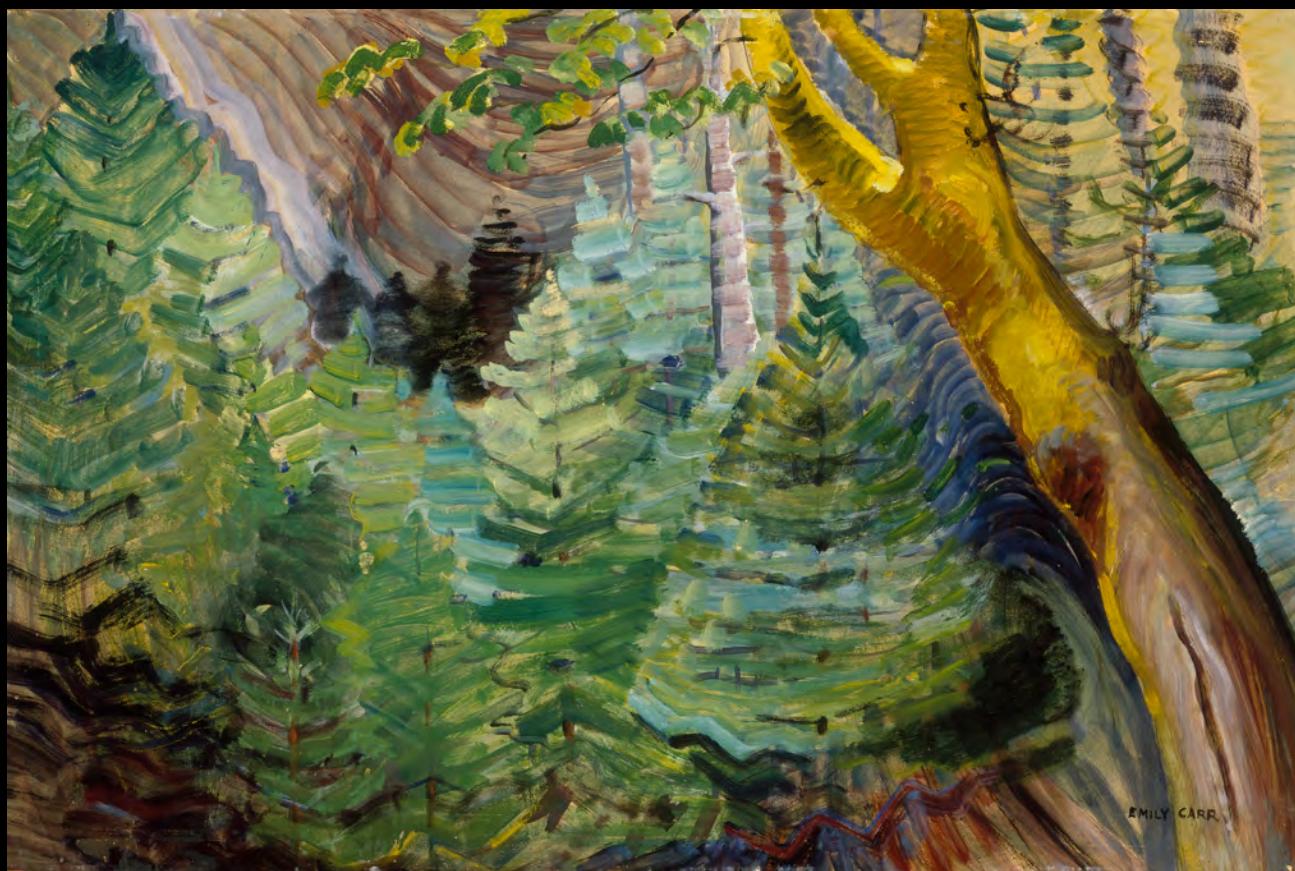
Deep Forest, Lighted, c. 1935 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Three Cedar Trunks, c. 1937 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Forest Edge and Sky, c. 1934 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Young Pines and Old Maple, 1937–38 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust

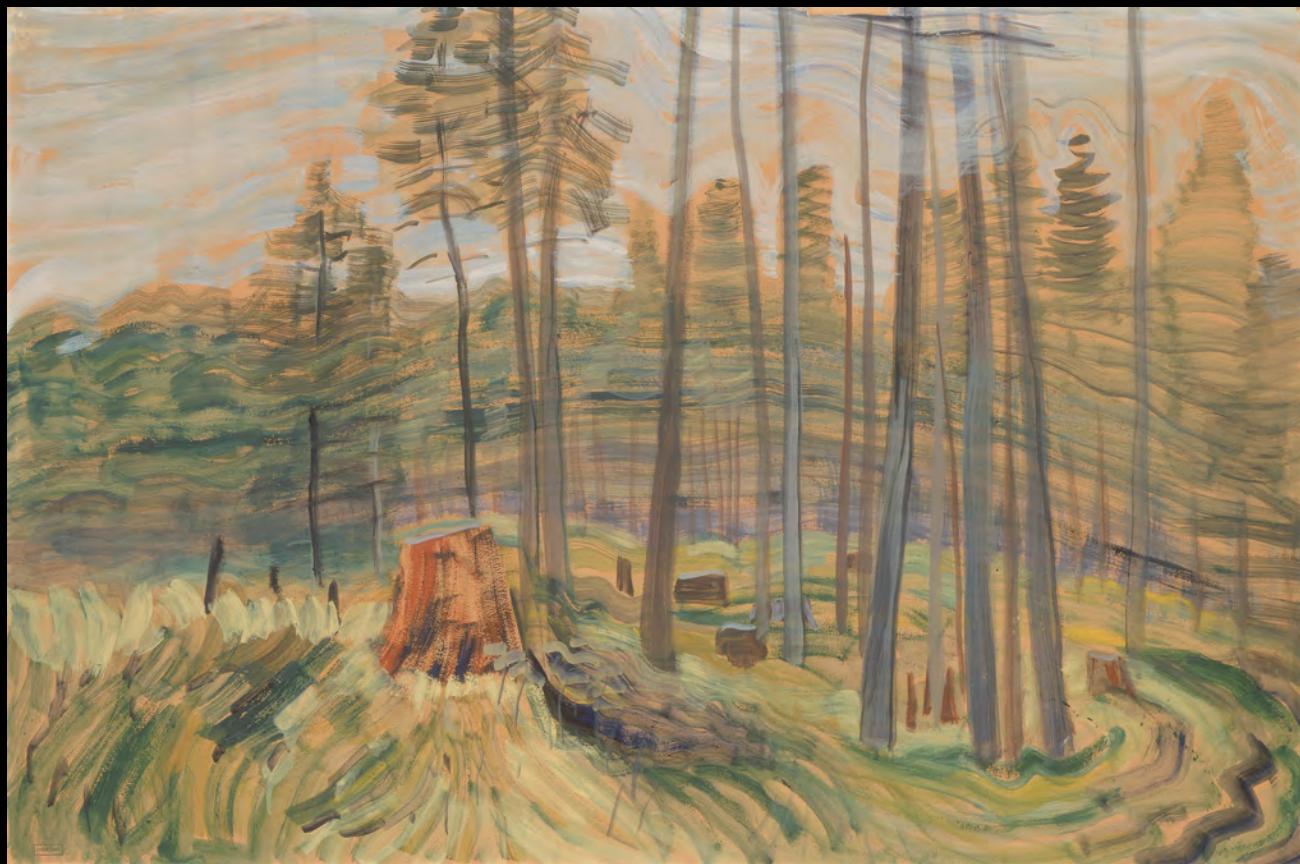


Untitled, 1933–34 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust

Path Among Pines, c. 1930 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Untitled, 1938–39 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Untitled (Forest), c. 1936 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust

6. Oil on Paper Paintings

Artist	Emily Carr
--------	------------

In a private journal entry from September 1935, Emily Carr described her intimate vision of the forest as an overwhelming physical presence, a joyous world of light, colour and shape:

"Nothing is crowded; there is living space for all. Air moves between each leaf. Sunlight plays and dances. Nothing is still now. Life is sweeping through the spaces. Everything is alive. The air is alive. The silence is full of sound. The green is full of colour. Light and dark chase each other. Here is a picture, a complete thought, and there another and there... There are themes everywhere, something sublime, something ridiculous, or joyous, or calm, or mysterious. Tender youthfulness laughing at gnarled oldness. Moss and ferns, and leaves and twigs, light and air, depth and colour chattering, dancing a mad joy-dance, but only apparently tied up in stillness and silence. You must be still in order to hear and see." (Emily Carr, 1935)

When Emily Carr resumed her interest in painting in the early 1930s, she turned her attention to the forest

landscape. She was, by this time, no longer interested in simple documentary images of the forest. Rather, she wanted to produce a thing that took on the character and form of the forest itself. This was achieved through the use of materials that shared a fluidity, translucency and sense of movement that closely matched her experience in the woods.

Describing her new technique to the curator at the National Gallery, Carr wrote, "It is a kind of sketching medium I have used for the last 3 or 4 years. Oil paint used thin on paper... It is inexpensive. Light to carry and allows great freedom of thought and action." (Emily Carr, 1937)

Her new materials—heavy construction paper, white house paint, oil paints, charcoal and gasoline—allowed for the swift production of evocative images. She could work on-site, in the forest, at a scale and with a sense of spontaneity that mirrored forest life.



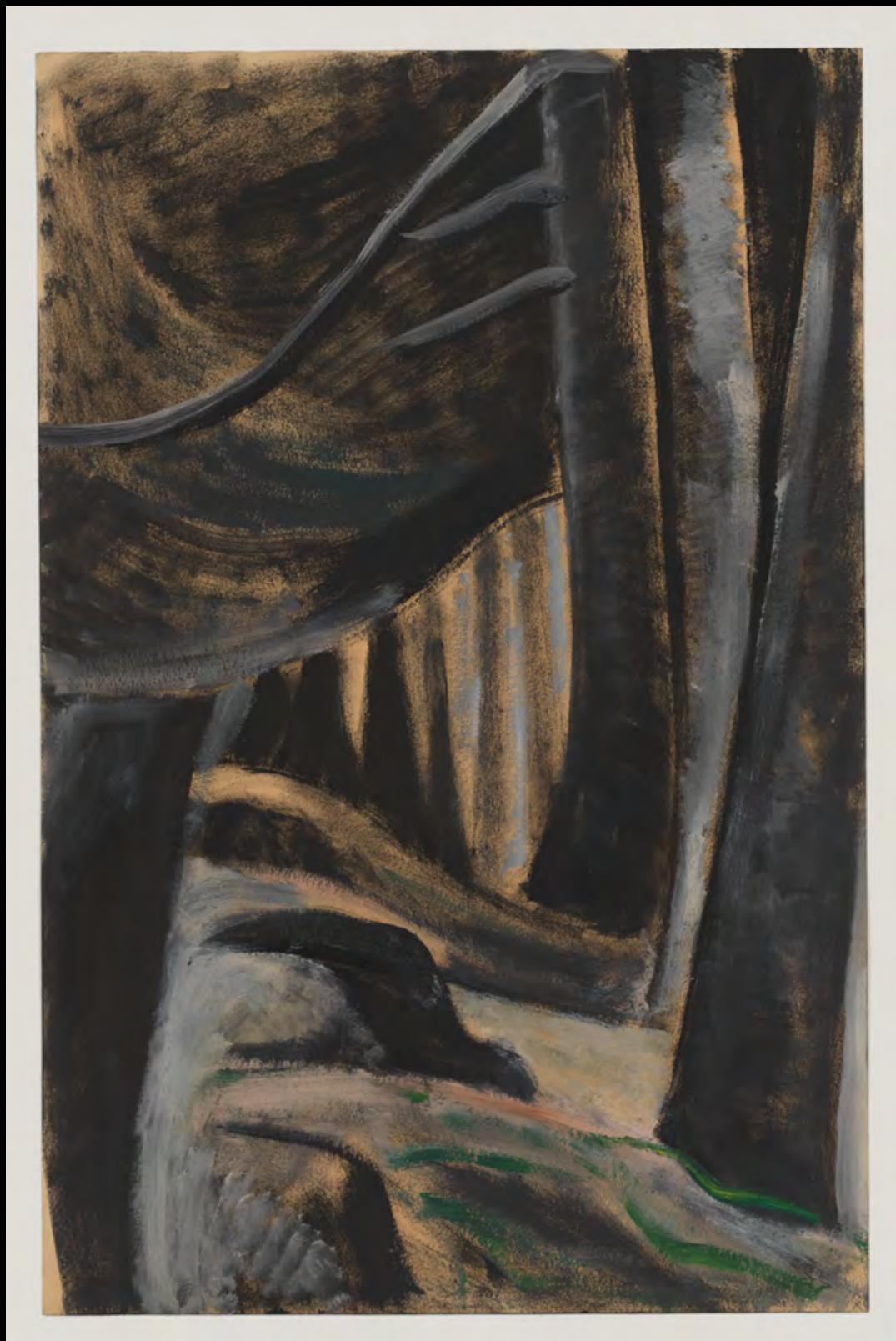
Untitled, 1931–32 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



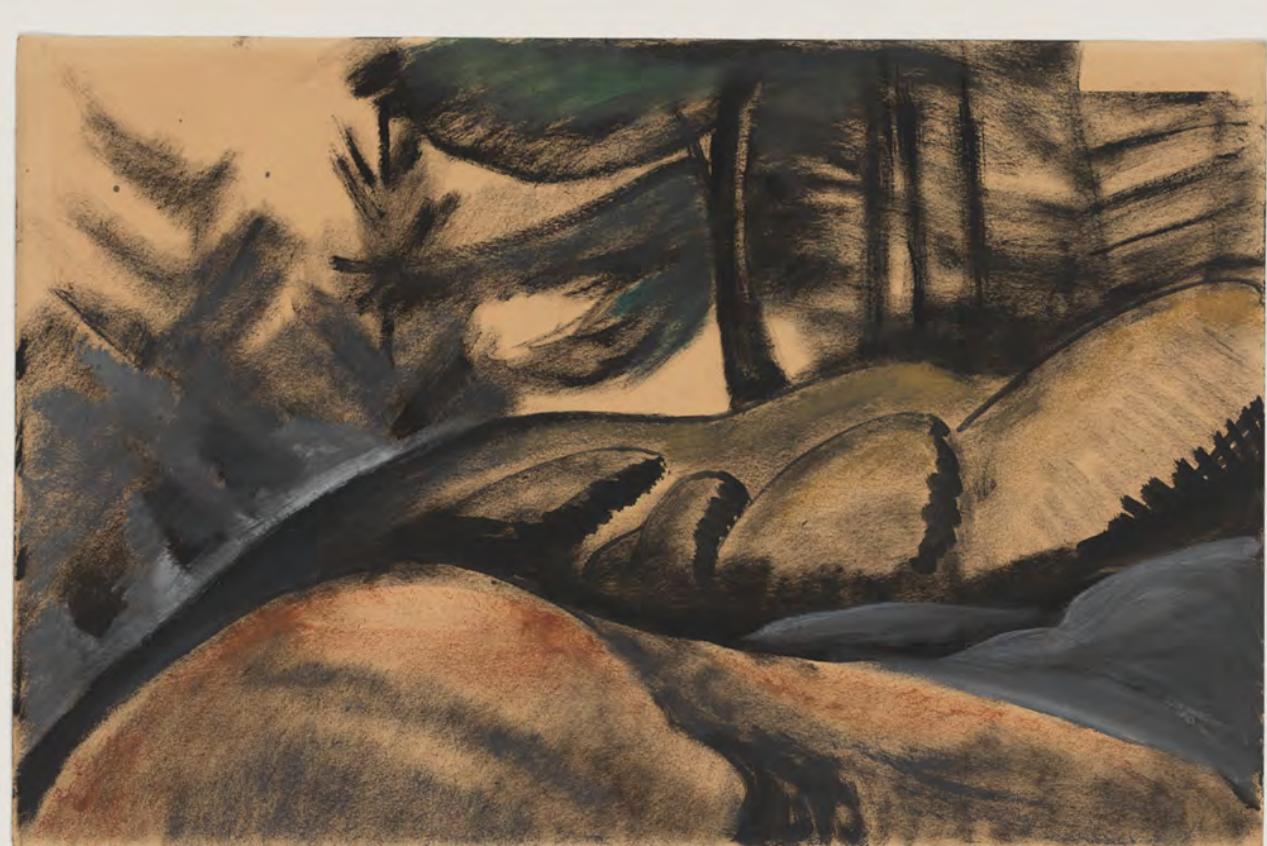
Untitled, 1931–32 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Untitled, 1931–32 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Untitled, 1931–32 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Untitled, 1931–32 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust

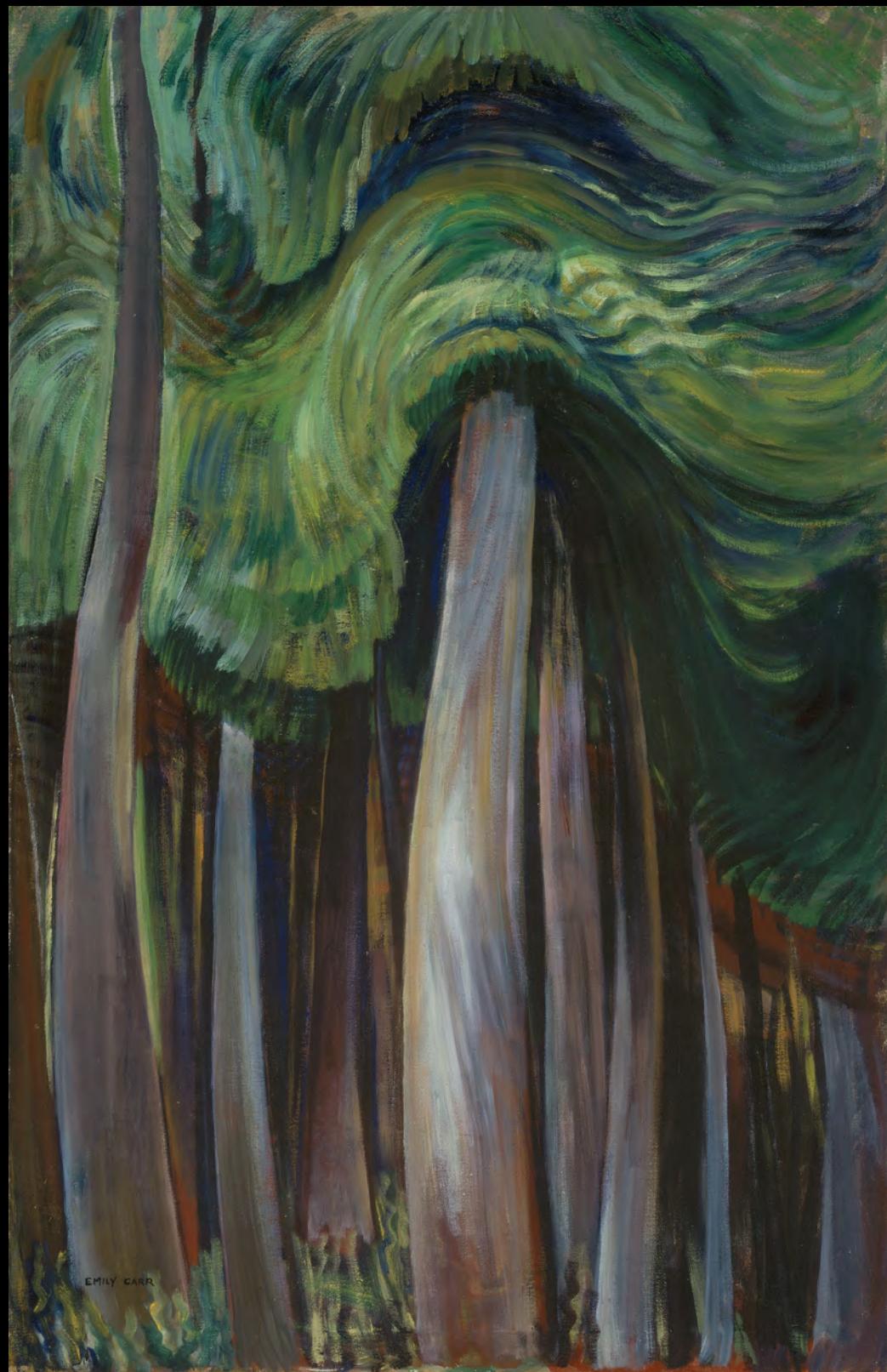
7. Charcoal and Oil on Paper

Artist	Emily Carr
--------	------------

Throughout her career, Emily Carr often used charcoal and graphite on paper to quickly capture a subject, or to experiment with form and composition. This allowed her to set aside the complications of colour and to focus on the fundamental shapes and rhythms that defined her subjects. In the 1930s, when Carr added gasoline-thinned oil paints and white house paint to her charcoal drawings, she invented an exciting new medium that combined the dry, muted qualities of charcoal and the expressive fluidity of paint. The results are uniquely compelling. The forest is

alive with an energy that emanates from within the land, the trees and the sky and is transmitted directly through the brush to the paper.

"To gain freedom I saw I must use broad surfaces, not stint material nor space... I brought cheap paper by the quire. Carrying a light, folding cedar-wood drawing board, a bottle of gasoline, large bristle brushes and oil paints, I spent all the time I could in the woods." (Emily Carr, late 1930s)



Forest, 1931–33 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



The Little Pine, 1931 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



A Rushing Sea of Undergrowth, 1935 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Among the Trees, 1936 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust



Sea Drift at the Edge of the Forest, 1931 Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust

8. Forest Paintings on Canvas

Artist	Emily Carr
--------	------------

Emily Carr's forest paintings on canvas don't share the same sense of translucency and fluidity that she achieved in the charcoal and oil on paper paintings seen elsewhere in this exhibition. Carr's paintings on canvas offer, as one might expect, a studied representation of the Vitalist presence of the forest, land and sky. These paintings—large, cumbersome and demanding—were produced in the studio and based on the sketches done earlier in the forest.

The intense fluidity of gasoline-thinned paint and translucent symbiosis of paint and paper, in the sketches,

were replaced by studied compositions, rhythmic brushstrokes and abstracted shapes when transferred to canvas. The paintings on canvas offer remarkable images of the forest that suggest the embodiment of a spiritual presence there. But it is, nonetheless, an abstract language that sheds the material world in favour of transcendence. Emily Carr clearly valued both aspects of her art—the material and the transcendent—as each offered a different insight into the forest and both reflected her intense desire to find herself at home in that place.

Biographies

Edith Heath was born in Ida Grove, Iowa, in 1911 to a settler family from Denmark. She was trained as a teacher and studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the mid-1930s. She moved with her husband, Brian, to San Francisco in 1942 and studied ceramics at the San Francisco Art Institute (formerly California School of Fine Arts) for two years. While studying, Heath also taught art at a progressive cooperative school. During this period, the Heaths spent weekends exploring clay pits in California, and Edith Heath conducted independent research on clays, glazes and their chemistry. This commitment to place and process shaped her practice for the remainder of her life. The works selected for this exhibition and publication date from Heath's early professional career, from the mid-1940s through the late-1950s, and document a period of rapid artistic evolution. In 1951, she began her annual summer journeys to Vancouver, first to teach ceramic design and chemistry at the University of British Columbia, and then as a summer pilgrimage that also included a stop at the legendary International Design Conference in Aspen, Colorado. Like many of the other progressive thinkers and makers who participated in that annual event, she would leave a lasting impression on the field of design.

Emily Carr was born in Victoria, BC, in 1871 to a settler family from England. She studied at the San Francisco Art Institute (the school that Edith Heath would later attend) from 1890 to 1893, and later at the Westminster School of Art in London and the Académie Colarossi in Paris. While in France, she was influenced by the Fauvists' vibrant color palettes and sensorial responses to nature, and she incorporated these techniques into her own work. Carr's radical new style was not well received when she returned to Vancouver in 1912. Without support for her work, she earned a living by running a kennel and building a small boardinghouse referred to as "The House of all Sorts;" Carr's experiences would later become a collection of stories, first published in 1944, that won her recognition for her writing. By that time, awareness of Carr's painting had grown, due in part to her association with the Group of Seven. The works selected for this exhibition and publication date from the 1930s. They emerged after a long hiatus from painting when Carr, inspired by a reinvigorated engagement with the forest, initiated a fruitful period of intense experimentation with new materials and techniques.

Edith Heath in Context

In the Vancouver Art Gallery's presentation of *Edith Heath and Emily Carr: From the Earth*, the curators incorporated supplemental content into the exhibition as a way to introduce Heath to Canadian audiences. That content is presented again here for those interested in taking a deeper dive into Heath's life and work. An illustrated timeline documents key moments from Heath's life and the history of her now 75-year-old company, Heath Ceramics. The Barge offers an intimate glimpse into the private residence of Brian and Edith Heath, itself a quintessential example of California ingenuity and lifestyle. The Factory provides insight into the Sausalito buildings that have housed Heath Ceramics and their innerworkings of production. UBC traces Heath's connection to British Columbia and her lasting influence on West Coast design. Marketing demonstrates how Heath Ceramics appealed to a post-World War II audience interested in a more relaxed and informal dinnerware. Ashtrays highlights one of the most recognizable, and for a time profitable, item offered by Heath Ceramics. Finally, Conover Cabinets reveals how the exhibition utilized a design from the 1959 factory as a central display feature for Heath's ceramics.



1. Barge

..... 61



2. Factory

..... 62



3. UBC Vancouver

..... 67



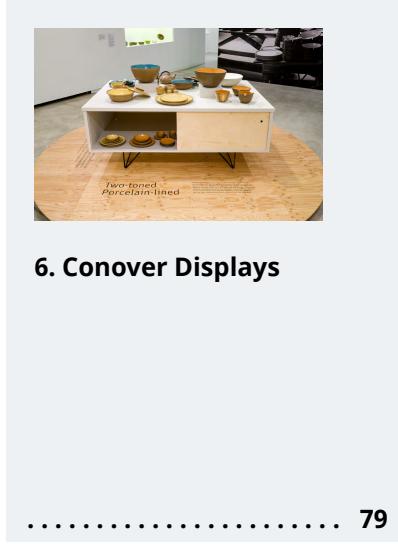
**4. Marketing Heath
Ceramics**

..... 70



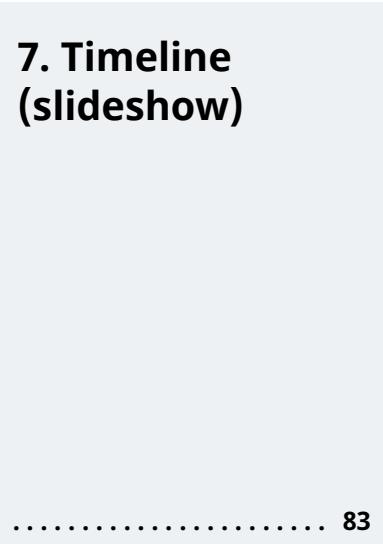
**5. Heath Ceramics
Ashtrays**

..... 75



6. Conover Displays

..... 79



**7. Timeline
(slideshow)**

..... 83

1

Barge

In 1948, the Heaths, with friends Eral and Kenny Leek, bought the Dorothea, an old potato hauler that they called “the Barge,” for \$2,850. Eral and Edith designed and built a duplex on the scow, with back-to-back fireplaces on the wall separating the two apartments. It floated on the Sausalito waterfront until, in 1951, the two couples moved the Barge to a waterfront acreage in nearby Tiburon. The Leeks and their children moved to Mill Valley in the late 1950s, and the Heaths continued to enjoy co-living over the next four decades, inviting various friends and family to stay for prolonged visits.

Robert Royston and Edith Heath collaborated on the landscape design. From the start, the patios and deck featured Heath’s projects in clay, with ceramic screens, benches and tabletops and tiled ground. Likewise, Heath filled the home’s interior with one-of-a-kind and “seconds” Heathware. With its orientation to the outdoors and the organic development of its surrounding property, the Barge reflects the quintessential California lifestyle so aligned with Heathware.

“We live over a bit of the Pacific at the edge of San Francisco bay... In August of ‘80 it will be thirty years of watching the waters lap the shore. In winter, the water is turbulent flotsam is dashed against the pilings on which our dwelling rests. Our dwelling, a river-scow for our ‘basement’... Above 2 somewhat luxurious spaces with 2 kitchens and w baths, hi fi system, hundreds of books—from the modern museum—and paintings, pots, hand-blown glass from Venice and California. Artifacts from around the world. American Indian rugs—as well as Mexican and Yugoslavian. A fireplace faced with Heath tile. Shelves filled with Heath dinnerware—dating from 1944 onwards—samplings of my creations over the years.” (Edith Heath)



Photograph of exhibition set up with the Heath Ceramics Factory display Photo: Ian Lefebvre



Photograph of exhibition set up with the Heath Ceramics Factory in the background Photo: Rachel Topham

**Heath Ceramics first Sausalito factory Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection, Environmental Design Archives,
UC Berkeley**

<https://youtu.be/OoVnw89MzB/>

**Slideshow of archival images of the Heath Ceramics factories Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection,
Environmental Design Archives, UC Berkeley**

2. Factory

In 1947, Heath Ceramics moved across the Bay to Sausalito. The factory, on the top floor of Mason's Garage at 791 Bridgewater, marked Edith Heath's transition from solely hand-thrown ware to more industrialized production using jigger wheels and slip casting. Six years later, the Heaths purchased land on Gate 5 Road in Sausalito in anticipation of a future expansion. That time came in 1959 when Heath, in collaboration with the architectural firm Marquis and Stoller, designed a new factory; so significant was Heath's role that her name was included on the plans. Her strong ideas about the space were socially- and efficiency-minded. The building featured the first United States industrial application of Tropdek, manufactured by Berkeley Plywood Company. Tropdek, a lightweight, trough-shaped roofing system, required little support to be structurally sound, allowing for an open and flexible

floor plan. Heath designed the factory floor to perfectly fit the company's workflow, with each step in the production of dinnerware located close to the next, forming an efficient production loop around an interior court. This layout also provided a view of the bay or one of the two Robert Royston-designed courtyards from each employee's workstation. Today, Heath Ceramics carries out production in a similar fashion, a testament to Heath's original vision.

"Most of the time we are too busy shaping clay and compounding glazes to be aware of our idyllic panorama, but somehow perhaps unconsciously its influence comes through the clay—in that the dinnerware is a simple, unassuming, earthy expression containing within it some of the inherent beauty of nature." (Edith Heath)

Telegram inviting Edith Heath to teach in the Extension Department of the University of British Columbia, January 31, 1951

Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection, Environmental Design Archives, UC Berkeley

Edith Heath and unidentified students working with a scale during her second summer workshop located in the new UBC pottery facility, 1952 © University of British Columbia Archives [UBC 3.1/1561]

3. UBC Vancouver

Edith Heath taught ceramic chemistry workshops at the University of British Columbia in the summers of 1951 and 1952. Vancouver potter Mollie Carter had studied clays and glazes with Heath in Sausalito for five weeks in 1947 and returned home determined to advance the state of Vancouver pottery through improved instruction and the promotion of modern design and chemistry.

At the time, the Vancouver pottery community was struggling to overcome a lack of suitable local clays,

equipment and technical training. Heath's workshops in ceramic chemistry and basic skills kick-started the development of studio pottery in Vancouver, which gained national prominence over the next few years. Heath also brought to the workshops her highly evolved modern design sensibilities, based on simple shapes and natural colours; this dissemination of Bay Area craft traditions to British Columbia helped define and promote a West Coast aesthetic.

**"Heath California Dinnerware" brochure, 1947 Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection, Environmental Design
Archives, UC Berkeley**

**"Heath Pottery Bullocks Wilshire" brochure, 1945–46 Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection, Environmental
Design Archives, UC Berkeley**

**"Heath Buffet Service" card, 1955 Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection, Environmental Design Archives, UC
Berkeley**

**Edith Heath arranging dinnerware on the factory floor, ca. 1955 Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics Collection,
Environmental Design Archives, UC Berkeley**

4. Marketing Heath Ceramics

The language describing Heath Ceramics products has remained remarkably consistent over the life of the company; simple, functional, durable, versatile, distinctive, graceful and contemporary are all words that appear repeatedly in marketing brochures and press materials. Revolutionary at the time for its departure from both the aesthetics and applications of traditional dinnerware, Edith Heath's Coupe line quickly became a modern classic, synonymous with an easygoing lifestyle that emerged in post-war America. Undoubtedly, part of the enduring appeal of the stoneware was Heath's commitment to the

primacy of the clay, which gave her work an organic quality, one that always referenced the earth, nature and the California landscape.

"It was a challenge to meet the needs of a national market with a product that retained Heath's original intent—to remind people that dishes are made of materials of the earth—that earth is good—that shape and texture and colour may be so satisfying as to need no embellishment."
(Edith Heath)

**Ashtrays, various dates. Heath Ceramics California clay and manganese body. Collection of the Brian and Edith Heath/
Heath Ceramics, Environmental Design Archives, UC Berkeley and Allan Collier. Photo: Ian Lefebvre**



Ashtrays, various dates. Heath Ceramics California clay and manganese body. Photo: Blaine Campbell



Different models of ashtrays by Edith Heath Photo: Blaine Campbell

5. Heath Ceramics Ashtrays

Artist	Edith Heath
--------	-------------

Brian Heath adapted the ashtray from a cereal bowl, adding notches along the rim to securely hold a cigarette while the smoker wrote or answered the phone. The V-shaped notch also extinguished a cigarette before it burned through and fell outside the ashtray.

Heath Ceramics introduced small and large ashtrays in 1947. Their immediate popularity spurred the development of the individual and jumbo sizes, and Edith Heath designed a canister and lighter as ancillary pieces to complete the set. Not officially part of the original 1947 dinnerware line, the ashtrays allowed Heath to experiment with glazes, making them available in many more colours.

Promoted as "the famous Heath ashtray," the products were the cornerstone of the company's business, making up 25 percent of sales. In 1964, the US Surgeon General issued a landmark report linking cigarette smoking with dangerous health effects. Edith and Brian stopped smoking, and the production of ashtrays began to decline.

Collections of the Brian and Edith Heath/Heath Ceramics, Environmental Design Archives, UC Berkeley and Allan Collier



One of the recreated Conover cabinets for the exhibition. Photo:



One of the recreated Conover cabinets for the exhibition. Photo:



One of the recreated Conover cabinets for the exhibition. Photo:

6. Conover Displays

Luther W. (Bill) Conover (b. 1913; d. 1993, Larkspur, California), a Sausalito-based furniture designer known for his work in metal and wood, designed and fabricated the showroom cabinets for the purpose-built Heath Ceramics

factory in 1959. His cabinets were re-created for this installation; an original set of wrought iron supports were used on the Exposed Clay Edge and Two-toned Porcelain-lined display cabinet.

7. Timeline (slideshow)

ID

import image of timeline

Selected Bibliography

The following links, books and other exhibitions are related to both Emily Carr and Edith Heath, and recommended for further reading and research.

- Baldissera, Lisa. 2015. *Emily Carr: Life & Work*. Toronto: Art Canada Institute. Carr, Emily. 1946. *Growing Pains: The Autobiography of Emily Carr*. Toronto: Oxford University Press. doi: (<http://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0380039>). Carr, Emily. 1953. *The Heart of a Peacock*. Toronto: Irwin Publishing. (<https://www.fadedpage.com/showbook.php?pid=20211039>). Carr, Emily. 1966. *Hundreds and Thousands: The Journals of Emily Carr*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company. (<https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/bcbooks/items/1.0380423>). Carr, Emily. 1972. *Fresh Seeing*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company. (<https://www.fadedpage.com/showbook.php?pid=20200801>). Durant, Jessie and Emily Vigor (curators). "The Legacy of Edith Heath." *Edith Heath: A Handful of Clay*. University of California, Berkeley. May 22, 2014–September 19, 2014. (<https://exhibits.ced.berkeley.edu/exhibits/show/edithheath>). "Emily Carr." in Google Arts and Culture. (<https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/emily-carr/m01qjpm?hl=en>). Emily Carr Biography (<https://www.fadedpage.com/search.php?author=Carr,%20Emily>). Emily Carr Timeline. (<https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/visit/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/emily-carr-timeline>). Gordon Shearer, Julie and Germaine LaBerge. 1995. Tableware and Tile for the World, Heath Ceramics, 1944-1994. Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley; Berkeley: Bancroft Library. "Heath Ceramics: The Making of a California Classic" May 23, 2019. in Artbound, produced by KCET, video, 54:58. (<https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/episodes/heath-ceramics-the-making-of-a-california-classic>). Klausner, Amos. 2006. *Heath Ceramics: The Complexity of Simplicity*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books. Volland, Jennifer (curator). *Edith Heath: A Life in Clay*. Oakland Museum of California. January 29, 2022–October 30, 2022. (<https://museumca.org/exhibit/edith-heath-life-clay>). Volland, Jennifer and Chris Marino, eds. 2021. *Edith Heath: Philosophies*. Vancouver: Information Office; Berkeley: Berkeley Design Books.

Contributors

Jay Stewart is the Trustee of the Brian and Edith Heath Foundation. She knew the Heaths from the time of her birth to their deaths; at their request, she assisted with their personal affairs in their later years. Since Edith Heath's death in 2005, Stewart has devolved the Heaths' estate, placing their extensive archives at the Environmental Design Archives at the University of California, Berkeley and assembling a study collection of Heath Ceramics' products. With her husband, Peter Macnair, Stewart is a peripatetic curator, consulting on the material culture and ethnology of First Nations of the Northwest Coast. Exhibitions and publications include *To the Totem Forests: Emily Carr and Contemporaries Interpret Coastal Villages* (Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1998), *Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 1998), *Listening to the Ancestors: The Art of Native Life in the Pacific Northwest* (National Museum of the American Indian, 2000–2006) and *Raven Travelling: Two Centuries of Haida Art* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 2006).

Jennifer M. Volland is an independent curator and writer based in Southern California. Since 2014, she has been researching the life and work of ceramicist Edith Heath. In addition to her role as co-curator on *Edith Heath and Emily Carr: From the Earth*, she has been involved in numerous projects related to Heath and Heath Ceramics. She served as a consulting curator on *Edith Heath: A Life in Clay* (Oakland Museum of California, 2021), a co-editor of and contributor to the book *Edith Heath: Philosophies* (2020), and a consulting producer on the award-winning

documentary *Heath Ceramics: The Making of a California Classic* (KCET Artbound, 2019). Her past projects include *Cabin Fever* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 2018), *Frank Bros.: The Store That Modernized Modern* (University Art Museum at CSULB, 2017) and *Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life* (Vancouver Art Gallery, 2013). She received her Master of Arts in Architecture from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Bruce Grenville was the Senior Curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery from 1997 to 2022. During that time he organized many thematic group exhibitions including *The Imitation Game: Visual Culture in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (2022); *Cabin Fever* (2018), an historical survey of the cabin typology in North American architecture and visual culture; *MashUp: The Birth of Modern Culture* (2016), an exhibition and publication focused on the history of mashup culture from 1912 to the present; *Massive Change: The Future of Global Design* (2004), a survey of contemporary design, conceived and presented in collaboration with Bruce Mau Design and the Institute Without Boundaries; and *Home and Away: Crossing Cultures on the Pacific Rim* (2003), a look at the work of six artists who share a history of emigration and diaspora on the Pacific Rim. He also organized numerous solo exhibitions for artists including Carol Sawyer, Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Michael Lin, Fiona Tan, Stan Douglas, Franz West, Wang Du, Gathie Falk, Dominique Blain, Komar and Melamid, Arnaud Maggs, Christos Dikeakos, Ruth Cuthand, Mary Scott and Jack Goldstein.

Acknowledgments

Colophon