

Title: Women and the Labor Movement in California

Artist: Eva Cockcroft

Date: 1991

Location: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, 6120 South Vermont,
South Los Angeles

Medium: acrylic

Sponsor: self-sponsored

Theme: honors women workers and organizers.

Featured:

Dorothy Healey (far left):

Rose Pesotta (born in 1896) (center left): An anarchist and labor activist, she was vice-president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. One of eight children to Jewish shopkeeper parents, she came to the United States from the Ukraine in 1913. She became involved in the resurgence of the garment workers industry, women's labor colleges, and labor activism. She led the 1933 Los Angeles dressmakers strike.

Charlotta Bass (c.1874-1969) (center): publisher of *The California Eagle* (1912-1951). When *The California Eagle* shut down in 1964, it was one of the oldest black-owned and operated newspapers in the United States. It was started in 1879 in Los Angeles to assist new black residents. Under the leadership of Bass and her husband, a veteran journalist from Kansas, the paper launched a more militant campaign against discrimination and segregation, often joining forces with other African American papers nationwide. Bass was the Progressive Party's candidate for Vice President in 1952.

Dolores Huerta (born 1930) (center right): United Farm Workers Union co-founder. Born in a small mining town in New Mexico, she is the mother of 11 children. She met Cesar Chavez while active in a grassroots civil rights group in Stockton, CA, called the Community Services Organization (CSO). In 1960 she founded the Agricultural Workers Association. She was instrumental in the passage of legislation allowing voters the right to vote in Spanish. She resigned from CSO in 1962 when it rejected a request from Chavez to organize farm workers. She then moved to Delano with her then seven children, and with Chavez formed the National Farm Workers Association, predecessor to the UFW. She is currently the UFW's First Vice-President Emeritus.co-founder of the United Farm Workers Union and currently its Vice President Emeritus.

Luisa Moreno (1907-1992) (center right): Agricultural workers' leader. She was born in Guatemala City in an upper class family. She came to the United States in 1916 to attend the college of the Holy Name in Oakland, California. She returned to Guatemala after completing her education and working for several newspapers and publishing a book of poetry. She returned to the U.S. in 1928, and became active as a labor organizer after seeing the appalling segregated conditions faced by minorities in New York City. During the 1930s she unionized blacks and Latina cigar rollers and other tobacco workers in Florida, cane workers in Louisiana. She was elected the first woman and the first Latina member of the California Council of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, a newly formed alliance of unions devoted to organizing unskilled workers. In 1937 she moved to San Diego to help the fish and cannery workers organize unions in the tuna industry. In 1950, harrassed and threatened by government anti-communist witch-hunters, Moreno and her husband left the United States first for Mexico, then Guatemala. She never returned.

Eva Cockcroft (1936-1999) was a writer and art historian as well as an artist. Born in Vienna, Austria, she came to the United States as a baby when her parents fled the Nazi takeover. She studied art at Cornell and Rutgers universities, and began painting murals in New Jersey in 1972. She was involved in the painting of more than 25 murals, primarily in New York City and New Jersey, before moving to Los Angeles in 1989. She also painted murals in Nicaragua and Berlin. She painted more than a dozen murals in the L.A. area. She taught art and art history at Cal State Long Beach and UC Irvine.

She was the co-author (with John Pitman Weber and James Cockcroft) of **Toward a People's Art: the Community Mural Movement** (1977, revised 2nd edition in 1998). She also co-edited (with Holly Barnet-Sanchez) **Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals**.