PAINTING-Cugat-1935

Francesc Coradel Cugat (May 24, 1893–July 13, 1981)[[1]](#footnote-2) "Sleeping (Waiting) Elephant," CA, ca. 1925- 1935. Impressionist oil on canvas of a California hillside in the shape of sleeping elephant seals commonly found on the beaches of southern California in the 1920's and 1930's. Verso: handwritten on the stretcher bars is "'Sleeping (Waiting) Elephant', CA, Francesc Coradel Cugat". The custom, wide, *plein air* style wood and gesso frame, is covered in gold leaf. Ex Nicholas Angelo Fine Art, 4089 Ute Highway, Lyons, CO 80540.

Cugat was born in Barcelona, Spain on May 24, 1893, and in 1903 the Cugat family emigrated to Cuba. About 1911-1912 Cugat studied art at Rheims and at l'École des Beaux Arts in Paris, but in 1913 with the impending World War I Cugat emigrated to Chicago. There, under the tutelage of Cleofonte Campannini, he created distinctive, visually dramatic theatre posters for Chicago Opera Association personalities including Lucien Muratore, Rosa Raisa, Giacomo Rimini and Nellie Melba.[[2]](#footnote-3) Then in 1921 Cugat left Chicago for New York City where on November 28, 1922, he married the painter Ruth Wadler Cugat (b. New York), the sister of Lucille Lortel, founder of the White Barn Theatre.[[3]](#footnote-4) In 1924 and early 1925 he painted the famous "Celestial Eyes" that became the book jacket art for F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.[[4]](#footnote-5) Later in 1925 he moved to Hollywood where his brother, Xavier, was a band leader. His impressionistic paintings of landscapes and abstract portraits and urban scenes were exhibited in Spain, Hollywood, and New York. He was technical color advisor on sixty-eight Hollywood films and was a set designer in Hollywood for Douglas Fairbanks. He died in Westport, Connecticut.

Cugat was a member of the Painters & Sculptors of Los Angeles. Cugat's exhibitions included Stendahl's (Los Angeles), 1924, 1926; Andersen Galleries (NYC), 1929; Little Gallery (San Diego), 1929; East-West Gallery (San Francisco), 1929; Gallery of Modern Art (New York City), 1942. Cugat was a member of the Salons of America and was exhibited widely through them.

1. U.S.Social Security Records [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. *Theatre Magazine*, Volume 27 edited by W. J. Thorold, Arthur Hornblow, Perriton Maxwell, Stewart Beach; 1918, p. 278; San Francisco Chronicle, 7-21-1919, p.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Greene, Alexis. 2004. [*Lucille Lortel : the queen of Off Broadway*](http://www.worldcat.org/title/lucille-lortel-the-queen-of-off-broadway/oclc/54029297&referer=brief_results). New York : Limelight Editions. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Tate, Mary Jo (2007). *Critical companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald: a literary reference to his life and work*. New York : Facts On File, p. 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)