

THE COLLECTION

California Dreaming

The Art, Music and Stories of an Era

The California Dreaming era of the mid-1960s through the early 1970s was a remarkable period of musical innovation, experimentation, and cultural change. From Laurel Canyon and the Sunset Strip to Haight-Ashbury and Monterey, California became a center of creative possibility whose influence continues to resonate.

Music has influenced my artwork from the beginning, particularly the music, musicians, and cultural events that emerged from California during the 1960s and early 1970s. Many of these paintings were created with those sounds and stories already in mind. I explored their energy and emotion through color, texture, movement, and unexpected forms.

As my historical writing and research expanded, I began recognizing how these individual works could be part of a larger story. California Dreaming grew from that connection between my original musical inspiration and the people, places, and cultural movements I was studying. Six months spent traveling throughout California in 2026—exploring Laurel Canyon, Haight-Ashbury, Monterey, and other landmarks—made those connections much more personal.

The paintings are abstract interpretations, not literal records of particular events. California Dreaming now brings together the music that originally inspired much of my art, the history I continue to investigate, and the new perspectives that travel has given me. The result is a collection rooted in the era from the beginning, with a story that has grown richer over time.

VIEWING EXPERIENCE

A second dimension

Every featured painting in this selection is 3D enhanced. I create this effect through the interplay of physical texture and carefully selected colors. Each original stands on its own as an abstract painting; with the appropriate 3D glasses, its layers can appear to separate, revealing an additional sense of depth.

This immersive experience is my tribute to the visual experimentation of the psychedelic era. A pair of 3D glasses accompanies every original painting, so collectors can experience this additional dimension in their own homes. Prints and merchandise reproduce the imagery, but not the physical texture that contributes to the original works' 3D effect.

IMPORTANT FOR GALLERY REVIEW

The full 3D effect is best experienced in person with the appropriate glasses; conventional photographs cannot adequately convey it. The distinctive experience of an original should not be assumed to transfer to a print or other reproduction.

The images in this portfolio are presented straight-on, without visible frames, to preserve the work's composition and color. Framing and materials are noted in the individual specifications.

FEATURED WORK 01 / 08

In My Movie



3D ENHANCED

30 × 30 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas | Framed | Award winner

I have always loved how music can spark the imagination. ***In My Movie*** grew from that playful, improvisational energy: outlined figures, TV-like shapes, and bursts of color invite viewers to discover stories of their own. Much of my artwork has been influenced by the creative freedom of California music, and this piece shares that spirit of experimentation. As California Dreaming took shape, I saw how naturally its open-ended imagery belonged within the larger story I was telling about an era that encouraged people to think differently.

FEATURED WORK 02 / 08

Good Vibrations



3D ENHANCED

48 × 36 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas | Framed | Award winner

Good Vibrations comes directly out of my lifelong enthusiasm for music and the inventive sounds of California. I wanted the colors, shapes, and movement to carry the buoyancy and rhythm I associate with a great song. The painting is not a literal picture of a particular performance; it is my response to the excitement of musical experimentation. As my research deepened, I came to appreciate even more how that energy helped define an extraordinary period of California music history.

FEATURED WORK 03 / 08

Champions Compose



3D ENHANCED

30 × 48 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas | Framed | Award winner | Exhibited in Miami

I have long been fascinated by the way musicians combine distinct talents and ideas to create something entirely new. That musical spirit informs ***Champions Compose***, where color, texture, and overlapping gestures build into a larger whole. My later research into California bands gave me a deeper appreciation for the creative exchanges and collaborations behind the songs. Today the painting connects both to the musical inspiration I brought to the canvas and to the stories I have since explored more fully.

FEATURED WORK 04 / 08

Ode to Laurel Canyon



3D ENHANCED

36 × 48 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas | Framed

California music and the creative world of Laurel Canyon were already part of the inspiration behind my paintings. ***Ode to Laurel Canyon*** captures that fascination through layered textures and shifting color rather than a literal landscape. Years of writing and research, followed by time spent exploring the Canyon myself, have made its original title even more meaningful to me. I now see the work as a tribute not only to the music but to the personal connections and unexpected collaborations that flourished there.

Peace and Love



3D ENHANCED

20 × 24 × ⅞ in. | Acrylic on canvas paper | Matted and framed under tempered glass

Peace and Love reflects the optimism and expressive freedom that drew me to the music and culture of the California era. Its energetic marks and contrasting colors suggest movement, possibility, and the excitement of breaking with convention. Studying the period more closely has also made me conscious of the distance between its ideals and its sometimes difficult realities. That fuller understanding now informs how I talk about the painting, while its immersive 3D effect pays tribute to the experimental visual spirit of the time.

Warning Sign



3D ENHANCED

18 × 24 × ⅞ in. | Acrylic on canvas paper | Matted and framed under tempered glass

Warning Sign draws on the restless, sometimes unsettling side of the musical and cultural era that has long interested me. Its dark field and searching marks suggest tension rather than easy celebration. As my research expanded, I came to understand more deeply the contradictions that existed alongside the period's extraordinary creativity. I do not intend the painting as a depiction of one event; for me, it speaks to the warning signs that can appear even in moments of great optimism.

FEATURED WORK 07 / 08

Impossible Dream



3D ENHANCED

30 × 30 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas | Award winner

Impossible Dream grew from the same musical optimism and freedom of imagination that have inspired much of my abstract work. I enjoy giving forms and colors a life of their own, leaving room for viewers to discover different possibilities. The more I have studied California's music and counterculture, the more that original title has resonated with me. So many of the era's songs and creative experiments were animated by a belief that the world could be different—even when the dream proved difficult to realize.

FEATURED WORK 08 / 08

Troubadour Times



3D ENHANCED

30 × 30 × 1½ in. | Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas

The music and creative community associated with Los Angeles have long been part of my fascination with the California era. ***Troubadour Times*** draws on that world through three contrasting bands of color and a heavily textured surface, rather than attempting to portray the club literally. Researching the Troubadour and spending time in California have deepened my appreciation for the musicians and songwriters whose paths crossed there. The painting now carries both my original musical enthusiasm and a much richer sense of the stories behind it.

SELECTED SOLD WORKS

In private collections

These works show the range of my abstract practice and the collector interest it has found in the United States and abroad. They are presented as a record of previous sales and are not available for purchase.



I've Seen That Movie Too

Private collection · United Kingdom



Outreach

Private collection · Germany



Menagerie

Private collection · Germany



Cloud Figures

Private collection · California, USA



Psychobabble

Private collection · Canada



Monterey Pop

Private collection · Florida, USA

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Garry Scott Wheeler

I am an abstract acrylic artist and writer whose paintings have long been influenced by music, especially the bands, songs, and events that shaped California in the 1960s and early 1970s. My California Dreaming project brings that original artistic inspiration together with music history, storytelling, and firsthand exploration.

After a career in technology and entrepreneurship, I returned to creative interests that had been part of my life for decades. Travel, music, and the histories behind great songs and performances inform my work. My paintings move between spontaneous, colorful forms and richer layers of texture. Many can be experienced in an additional way through 3D glasses.

My artwork has been selected for two extended exhibitions at Southwest Florida International Airport. My painting Champions Compose and several of my other works were exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Miami. I also held a major exhibition at the Art Ovation Hotel in Sarasota, where I sold several paintings, including I've Seen That Movie Too to a couple visiting from the United Kingdom. My work has found collectors in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada.

California Dreaming continues to evolve through artwork, original articles, and my ongoing exploration of the era's music and cultural history. Each new discovery brings another perspective to the paintings and the music that first inspired them.





Selected exhibitions, awards & recognition

- 2025 — Art of the Americas exhibition, Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, Florida.
- 2024 — major exhibition, Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, Florida; multiple paintings sold.
- 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 — two extended Art in Flight exhibitions, Southwest Florida International Airport.
- 2024 — Phoenix International Prize winner, Venice, Italy.
- 2023 — International Leonardo da Vinci Award, Milan, Italy.
- 2025 — featured in Art Leaders of Tomorrow: Defining the Future of Art, Contemporary Art Curator Magazine.
- 2024–2025 — exhibition selections and award recognition, Marco Island Center for the Arts.
- Work collected in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada.

CONNECT

California Dreaming unites paintings inspired in large part by California music and events with the stories, historical research, and places I have come to know more deeply over time. The original inspiration remains; the creative vision connecting these works continues to grow.

Garry Scott Wheeler

California Dreaming Creative | The Art, Music and Stories of an Era

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California Dreaming Gallery Portfolio — October 2026