

Josephine Crease

1864-1947

Josephine Crease, daughter of Lady Sarah Crease, was born in New Westminster, while her father was attorney-general of the colony, and settled in Victoria with her family in 1869. Like all her siblings she inherited a love of art and a proficiency in sketching and watercolours from her mother, a skilled artist.

In 1889-1891 Josephine, together with her sister Susan, studied art at King's College, London, and later took lessons from Samuel Maclure and Sophie Pemberton back in Victoria.

From 1900 to 1909, Crease, with Margaret Kitto, organized local sketching parties, and was among the founding members of the Island Arts and Crafts Society (IACS), in which she shared the majority view of art as synonymous with the British watercolour landscape tradition. A devoted Society member, she served on its executive and committees and as Honorary President.



1 Royal Museum of BC Archives, F-02805



Crease was a fine watercolourist, with a style that was neat and manageable. Unlike her few contemporary progressive artists such as Emily Carr, she chose to paint gentle vistas of tamed landscape rather than the provinces' wild mountains and forests. However, she was equally capable of painting interior scenes, as at Government House, and her impressions of the changing scenes in the city of Victoria are of archival interest. She exhibited with the Society's annual exhibitions from 1919 to 1941, with the BC Society of Fine Arts and at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Josephine's death in 1947 marked the end of a strong family connection with the IACS. Pentrelew, the Crease family home since 1875, had long been a frequent meeting place for local artists. Her mother Sarah, brother Lindley and sister Susan had all been keen Society members, and she had contributed her organizational skills since its inception. As an influential figure in the community, she had also made a profound impression on the local art scene and helped pave the way for later art institutions such as the Art Gallery.



Cowichan Canoe

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