

IN TRIBUTE: THE STEPHEN B. CHASE COLLECTION at THE LIVING DESERT ZOO AND GARDENS

An esteemed interior designer and art collector, Steve Chase (1941-1994) pioneered a sophisticated yet playful approach to design that would come to define the California lifestyle. A dedicated member of the local community, Chase was a passionate supporter of The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, Desert Aids Project, and the Palm Springs Art Museum. In honor of the 25th Anniversary of the Steve Chase Humanitarian Awards, and in recognition to his tremendous support of the museum, selections of contemporary artworks gifted to the museum are on view on the third floor.

While Chase's primary interest focused on collecting contemporary art, he also had a strong interest in historic California Impressionism. This installation highlights five of the forty-nine California *plein air* paintings he gifted to The Living Desert, where other works are on public display in the Stephen B. Chase Administrative Building. California Impressionism, focused on the state's natural and diverse terrain. With the techniques and colorful palette of French Impressionism, California painters developed a distinctive version of the western landscape leading some historians and writers to observe that the longer people lived in the state, the more they are influenced and remolded by the authority of the land itself. Nowhere is this phenomena more realized than in the extreme environment of the California desert. Here, artists Rinaldo Cuneo, Conrad Buff, Jean Mannheim, and Frank Coburn among many other artists endured the remote, harsh terrain of the desert around Palm Springs to capture its unique, exotic beauty and translucent light.

Conrad Buff

American, born Switzerland, 1886-1975

Palm Springs. ca. 1928

oil on canvas laid on canvas

On loan from the Stephen B. Chase Collection at The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens

L2018.122.2

Frank Coburn

American, 1862-1938

Tahquitz Waterfall, Palm Springs, California. ca. 1928-1938

oil on cardboard

On loan from the Stephen B. Chase Collection at The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens

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Frank Coburn

American, 1862-1938

Tahquitz Creek. ca. 1928-1939

oil on cardboard

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Rinaldo Cuneo

American, 1877-1939

Desert Landscape. n.d.

oil on canvas

On loan from the Stephen B. Chase Collection at The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens

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Jean Mannheim

American, born Germany, 1863-1945

California Mountains and Dunes, Coachella Valley. n.d.

oil on board

On loan from the Stephen B. Chase Collection at The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens

L2018.122.3