

About the art and artists

Blue Trees, 2001, mixed media/rice paper

Richard Amend (b.1949) in his creative process aims to capture stillness, a singular moment and a particular quality of light or what he calls “Intensely observed yet detached views of moments in psychological time.” Crossings and points of passage are thematic in his exploration of expressionistic pattern painting; and windows, doorways, road crossings and openings in the forest are recurrent elements in his work.



Ventura Pier and the Holiday Inn, 1989, collage and acrylic

Gayel Childress (b. 1940), an Ojai artist, is known for her innovative use of color, sense of whimsy and energetic flair for experimentation. Her goal, she says, is to capture the spirit of her subject matter, which can range widely from landscape to figurative to still life to abstract.

Mojave, c.1986, oil on paper

Dorothy Hunter (b. 1929) describes her current work as “abstract impressionism,” drawing influence from abstract modernists Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko but retaining her primary inspiration from the impressionist landscapes of nature and the variations of season, weather and light. In her shift to oils, she retained key watercolor techniques, such as thinning her oil paint into semitransparent washes, an interest in delicate and often mysterious transparencies reinforced by her Asian years living in Okinawa. “I become a tool which manipulates the brush, while some other force within me creates the painting,” says the artist. “It is a very mystical experience.”



Green Bird at La Posada, 2002, acrylic on canvas

Sherry Loehr (b. 1948) is best known for a remarkable aesthetic style she calls “Contemporary Realism” that employs a unique approach to the traditional still life by creating fascinating background patterns achieved through stenciling, collage, and texturing. These imaginative backgrounds provide an exquisitely modern contrast to the classic realism of the painting’s subject, creating a rich and dramatic visual feast.

The Ojai artist found inspiration for Green Bird at La Posada while walking past the Posada Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where the beauty of a branch of crab apples struck her. She also notes that Posada comes from the word “posa,” meaning “well,” a place people gather to refresh themselves. “I think that art too functions this way, giving people an opportunity to pause and refresh themselves.”

Two Men and a Pumpkin, 2003, oil on canvas

Gail Pidduck (b. 1950) holds a deep appreciation for croplands and rural open spaces, influenced by her childhood on a Santa Paula citrus ranch in Santa Paula and former employment by Burpee Seed Company. Known for portrait and still life work, she most recently has focused on creating plein aire paintings depicting the California she knows, one that honors the landscapes and people of Ventura County’s agricultural environment.



Yellow Rose for Teiko II, 1999, pastel, charcoal, and 22K gold leaf on paper

Hiroko Yoshimoto (b. 1943) throughout her career as artist and teacher has explored the relationship between intangible thoughts and feelings and tangible, visual forms. Part of her “Offering Series” the yellow rose is representative of the artist’s late mother and symbolizes “farewell,” with its flat shapes and gold-leaf drawings referencing medieval prayer books and altars.