

Celebrating California

Art Gallery at Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village
May 21- September 30

Paintings by John Wullbrandt

Artist John Wullbrandt exhibits recent paintings that celebrate the richness and diversity of the Great State of California.



California Condor at Painted Cave 120"x 60"

Native Americans have lived in what we now know as California for thousands of years. Artist John Wullbrandt is able to trace his roots back to the Canalino band of Chumash living in what is now Santa Barbara. There, high in the mountains, are mysterious rock paintings. Carbon dated pigments confirm that In the center of the well known "Painted Cave" off San Marcos Pass is the image of a solar eclipse that took place on November 24, 1677. This is where the artist has chosen to begin his "Celebration of California".

Soaring in the sky beyond the cave is an endangered California Condor. The shadow of an adult Condor measuring 9'3" stretches out across the canvas at full scale.



Saint Barbara 84"x 72"

The artist's first European ancestor to arrive in 1792 on a Spanish supply ship was Jose Medina, Santa Barbara's 2nd school teacher. He would have found the Santa Barbara Mission dominating the Spanish Colonial pueblo. Established December 4, 1786, built with Chumash labor and named for the patron Saint Barbara, it is known as the "Queen of the Missions". Here the statue from the high altar is raising her chalice and descends to the fountain built in 1808. The water is sourced from a spring in the rocky arroyo above, possibly the one that is adorned with the Canalino pictograph John has dancing in the foreground.



Royal Welcome 18"x 24"

Westlake Village is home to the Dole Food Company found adjacent to The Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village, the quintessential destination of health and hospitality. The Artist's hometown of Carpinteria is known for it's booming floral industry and nearby Santa Barbara hosts an "Annual Orchid Show" that exhibits some of the area's most exotic collections.



The Golden State 38\"x 38\"

This nickname refers to more than the California Gold Rush that began at Sutter's Mill in Colma, California on January 24, 1848. The State is universally recognized as both romantically rooted to the past and the epicenter of new technologies. Blessed with some of nature's most impressive geology, flora and fauna, California is a vibrant mix of natives and non natives. Growing up in Carpinteria, California in the 1950's John's father had painted a map on the wall facing the dinner table. Fond of taking the family on uncounted road trips, he would paint in a symbol representing each destination upon their return. The artist's career has taken him around the globe and he has now returned to live near his hometown and has rendered the Golden State in this painting with a trompe l'oeil magnifying glass focusing on the local area.



California Natives 38"x 38

The State flower, California Poppy, is part of a spring bouquet along with Lupin, Sage, Yarrow, Fern, Larkspur and the eye-catching Matilija Poppy. The wildflowers appear to spill out over a trompe l'oeil leather frame tooled with a circle of Oak leaves and acorns.



Spring Evening on Westlake Blvd. 120"x 60"

A short drive south of Westlake Village on Westlake Blvd. one encounters vistas that might jog memories of the many motion pictures and television episodes filmed in this area including "Robin Hood", "Tarzan", "Gunsmoke" and "Bonanza". Coastal breezes sweep nine miles through the picturesque canyons from Malibu on the Pacific Ocean. In this painting, the artist applies a "cinemascope" approach.



Playing the Ace 38"x 38"

This playful piece of traditional trompe l'oeil shows the ace of hearts held over the Central Coast on a map of California's many tourist regions. Framed with oak patterned faux bois is an old red lantern and lasso.



Los Burros 38"x 38"

The artist has captured his two donkeys "Paris and El Paso" standing in the pasture high above the blue Pacific on La Granada. California Poppies and Lupin fall through the faux leather frame.

John's great, great, great Grandmother arrived in Santa Barbara, "Alta California" (now California) from Sonora, "New Spain" (now Mexico) as a child in a leather satchel hung over a burro.



Into the Sun on La Granada 14"x 11"

Today the artist lives and works on the family's historic cattle ranch on a mountain called "La Granada". The herd, part of family tradition for many generations, is pictured here near the main gate of El Rancho Botello following the Spring roundup.



Lone Cow at Superior Flats. 24"x 18"

Each year the tradition is repeated. Chip, Joe, Emma, Dave, Dennis, Gus, Tony, Shane, Rileigh, Sarah, John and whoever has the day off cowboy up and drive the cattle along Chismahoo Trail and across Coyote Creek to Superior Flats, high above Lake Casitas near Ojai, California. This isolated grazing allotment in the Los Padres National Forest provides a season of water, grass and endless beauty. In return, the cattle help maintain the fire break.



Sunset Along Westlake Blvd. 84"x 66"

North on what became known as El Camino Real, Captain Gaspar de Portola and his party of Spanish explorers and missionaries camped near a Chumash village where we find Westlake Village today. Father Juan Crespi, the chaplain of this early expedition penned "We are on a plain of considerable extent and much beauty, forested on all parts by live oaks with much pasturage and water". Settled by Spaniards on large land grants, "Alta California" came under Mexican rule in 1821. At the center of two Mexican land grants (Rancho El Conejo and Rancho Las Virgenes) the Westlake Village area became cattle ranches and eventually a favored location of the film industry.



Best in Show 38"x 38"

Another Trompe L'oeil painting with a nod to the "805". This blue ribbon piece on faux bois is surrounded by the brands from the region's ranches. Holister Ranch, Santa Barbara Mission and the artist's beloved El Rancho Botello are among those represented. The spurs are from the family collection. The toy horse recalls our youth and an old horseshoe is tacked up for good luck.



Chismahoo 52"x 38"

On the Ventura /Santa Barbara County line Chismahoo trail rises from Rincon Canyon to offer stunning views of the Santa Barbara Channel. At the end of this long, dusty and sometimes treacherous dirt road is the artist's studio. From this lofty realm, a vista of the fertile Carpinteria Valley is enjoyed.



Exotic Oasis 38"x 38"

In 1989, John's longtime mentor and patron David Murdock transplanted him onto the Island of Lana'i, fondly known as "The Pineapple Island". As "Artist in Residence" for Castle and Cooke", John was commissioned to paint much of the art found at The Four Seasons Resort Lanai. Later he painted towering murals in the atrium of Dole World Headquarters in Westlake Village, California along with 12 murals that illustrate Dole's history and global operations. Meanwhile the pineapple, universal symbol of hospitality, has become a favored subject for the artist.



Golden Song at Sunset 38"x 38"

California, Hawaii and other exotic destinations share the description "paradise". This painting is a romantic composition at the end of the day. The last of evening light is casting a golden glow in this dreamscape.



Viva California! 120"x 60"

Long after the Chumash were discovered thriving on the western edge of the new world, following Hernando de Soto's temporary settlements in 1541 and Juan Bautista de Anza's 1775 expedition and colonization, Alta California came under Mexican rule in 1821. A short time later, California followed Texas and became a republic. The Bear Flag was first raised at Sonoma, California, June 14, 1846. Designed by William Todd on unbleached cotton with an imitation of the lone star of Texas, the flag is dominated by a native grizzly bear and emblazoned with the words "California Republic". California became the 31st State to fly the Stars and Stripes on September 9, 1850. Finally in 1911 the State Legislature adopted the Bear Flag as the official State Flag.
Long live California!
Viva California!

The Art Gallery at Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village

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