

HENRIETTA SHORE IN POINT LOBOS AND CARMEL:

SPIRIT OF PLACE, ESSENCE OF BEING

by

MINA TOCHEVA STOEVA

(Under the Direction of Janice Simon)

ABSTRACT

Shore's visual vocabulary developed from Impressionism towards more stylized, abstracted forms in her 1920s work, and after 1930 culminated in the textured, detailed and almost tactile drawings produced in Carmel, California.

This thesis focuses on the impact that Carmel had on her personal and artistic life. A detailed analysis of Shore's images of the Monterey Peninsula establishes the connection between her extended visual narrative of the locale and the tradition of written ecocentric narratives. I will consider the Theosophical and transcendental ideas that Shore expressed in her work and relate them to Lawrence Buell's theory of ecocentric narrative. By unveiling the subtleties of such a narrative and the process of its creation, the present analysis will further our understanding of Shore's deeply emotional and spiritual attachment to the Monterey Peninsula. More than merely depicting a peculiar landscape, Shore's late drawings reveal her preoccupation with current literary and philosophical trends, while simultaneously creating an intimate reflection of the artist's self.

INDEX WORDS: Henrietta Shore (1880-1962), Carmel, Point Lobos, landscape, transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson, place, ecocentric narrative, Theosophy, self-portrait, American modernism, Johann Wolfgang Goethe

HENRIETTA SHORE IN POINT LOBOS AND CARMEL:
SPIRIT OF PLACE, ESSENCE OF BEING

by

MINA TOCHEVA STOEVA
BA, Oglethorpe University, 2002

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2004

© 2004

Mina Tocheva Stoeva

All Rights Reserved

HENRIETTA SHORE OF POINT LOBOS AND CARMEL:
SPIRIT OF PLACE, ESSENCE OF BEING

by

MINA TOCHEVA STOEVA

Major Professor: Janice Simon

Committee: Evan Firestone
Romita Ray

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
December 2004

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to my parents, Blagodatka and Tosho Stoev, who have encouraged and nurtured my passion for art from the start; and to my boyfriend, Christopher Porell, whose unwavering love and understanding helped me get through the most difficult times during the last two years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor, Professor Janice Simon. I owe her a major debt for directing me to the art of Henrietta Shore and for encouraging me to pursue the topic that I selected. Professor Simon's expertise in the field of Modern American Art was instrumental in fleshing out my ideas and constructing my argument. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to work with her.

I have also profited from discussion with the other two members of my committee. Both Professor Evan Firestone and Professor Romita Ray took time to comment and give me feedback.

I also want to thank my aunt and uncle Vanya and Hristo Hristov for their invaluable advice and support and for being my favorite "surrogate family" during the past six years and forever. I feel especially indebted to my aunt Vanya for teaching me how to express myself in writing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
1 BEGINNINGS, INSPIRATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES	6
2 CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA: SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC MILIEUX	30
3 SHORE AND THE AMERICAN MODERNS	48
4 THE SHORE OF POINT LOBOS AND CARMEL	67
CONCLUSION.....	113
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	117
APPENDICES	122
A MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS OF WORKS BY HENRIETTA SHORE	122
B F.V.MÜLLER, ORIGINAL GERMAN TEXT.....	123
C J. W. V. GOETHE, “THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PLANTS”	124
D JOHN MASEFIELD, “THE PASSING STRANGE”	127

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Laura Muntz Lyall, <i>Madonna with Angels</i> , 1912. Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.	23
Figure 2: Henrietta Shore, <i>The Promenade, Center Point, Toronto</i> , ca. 1911. Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa	24
Figure 3: William Merritt Chase, <i>Prospect Park, Brooklyn</i> , ca. 1887. Oil on canvas. The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton.....	24
Figure 4: Henrietta Shore, <i>Cypress Trees, Point Lobos</i> , ca. 1930. Oil on canvas. Collection of Anthony Hollinrake, Toronto	25
Figure 5: Robert Henri, <i>Laughing Child</i> , 1907. Oil on canvas. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York	26
Figure 6: Henrietta Shore, <i>Head of a Girl</i> , ca. 1902. Oil on canvas. Collection of Anthony Hollinrake, Toronto.....	26
Figure 7: Henrietta Shore, <i>Trail of Life</i> , ca. 1923. Oil on canvas. Collection of Richard Lorenz, Berkeley.....	27
Figure 8: Henrietta Shore, <i>Women of Oaxaca</i> , 1928. Oil on canvas. Collection of Penny Perlmutter, San Francisco.....	28
Figure 9: Henrietta Shore, <i>Women of Oaxaca</i> , 1931. Lithograph on paper. Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art.....	28

Figure 10: Diego Rivera, <i>Flower Day</i> , 1925. Oil on canvas. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.....	29
Figure 11: “Scenic Drive, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California” postcard.....	43
Figure 12: The “Bohemians.” Photograph reproduced in Franklin D. Walker, <i>The Seacoast of Bohemia</i> (Santa Barbara: Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1973): 39.	43
Figure 13: Mary DeNeale Morgan, <i>Cypress Trees</i> , n.d. Oil on canvas. Collection of John D. Relfe Family	44
Figure 14: Mary DeNeale Morgan, <i>Cypress Tree</i> , n.d. Oil on canvas. Reproduced in Daisy Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun, <i>Carmel at Work and Play</i> (Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925): plates after pg. 62.....	44
Figure 15: William Ritschel, <i>Glorious Pacific</i> , 1926. Oil on canvas. Collection of Daniel Hansman and Marcel Vinh.....	45
Figure 16: William Ritschel in his studio, ca. 1920. Photograph reproduced in Daisy Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun, <i>Carmel at Work and Play</i> (Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925): plates after page 62.....	46
Figure 17: Armin Hansen, <i>Niño</i> , ca. 1922. Oil on canvas. Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art .	46
Figure 18: Henrietta Shore, <i>Rocks, Point Lobos, No. 1</i> , ca. 1930. Colored crayon on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Reproduced in Merle Armitage, <i>Henrietta Shore</i> (New York: E.Weyhe, 1933).....	47
Figure 19: Henrietta Shore, <i>Yachting on the Bay</i> , ca. 1930, San Diego Museum of Art. Lithograph on paper.. ..	47
Figure 20: Henrietta Shore, <i>Shell</i> , ca. 1930. Pencil on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Reproduced in Merle Armitage, <i>Henrietta Shore</i> (New York: E.Weyhe, 1933).....	64

Figure 21: Georgia O’Keeffe’s <i>Open Clam Shell</i> , 1926. Oil on canvas. Private collection	64
Figure 22: Henrietta Shore, <i>Iris</i> es, ca. 1923. Oil on canvas. George Stern Fine Arts, Los Angeles.....	65
Figure 23: Edward Weston, <i>Shells</i> , 1927. Gelatin silver print. Center for Creative Photography, Tucson	66
Figure 24: Henrietta Shore, <i>Shell</i> , ca. 1925. Medium and whereabouts unknown.....	66
Figure 25: Henrietta Shore, <i>Nude (Self-Portrait)</i> , ca. 1921. Oil on canvas. Dell collection, Toronto	104
Figure 26: Henrietta Shore in her Los Angeles studio, 1914-15. Photograph from the Dell Collection, Toronto	104
Figure 27: Henrietta Shore, <i>Torso</i> , 1928. Pastel on paper. Dell collection, Toronto	105
Figure 28: Henrietta Shore, <i>Rocks, Point Lobos (1)</i> , ca. 1930. Pencil on paper. Whereabouts unknown	105
Figure 29: Henrietta Shore, <i>Life</i> , ca.1921. Oil on canvas. Los Angeles County Museum of Art	106
Figure 30: William Blake, <i>The Book of Thel</i> , title page, copy L. Early 1790. Relief etching. Collection of the Huntington Library.....	106
Figure 31: William Blake, <i>The Song of Los</i> , p. 5, copy E. ca. 1795. Watercolor. Collection of the Huntington Library.....	106
Figure 32: Henrietta Shore, ca. 1930. Photograph from the Dell collection.....	107
Figure 33: Henrietta Shore, <i>Iris</i> , ca. 1930. Pencil on paper. Whereabouts unknown.....	107
Figure 34: Henrietta Shore, <i>Nude</i> , ca. 1920. Pencil on paper. Private collection.....	108
Figure 35: William Blake, <i>Satan Watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve</i> , 1807. Pen and watercolor. Collection of the Huntington Library	108

Figure 36: *Arts and Decoration* February 1923, page 26 109

Figure 37: Henrietta Shore, *Two Worlds*, ca. 1921. Oil on canvas. Nora Eccles Harrison Museum
of Art, Utah State University 110

Figure 38: Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos (2)*, ca.1930. Colored pencil on paper. Dell
collection, Toronto 110

Figure 39: Rock formation, Monterey Peninsula. Courtesy of Janice Simon 111

Figure 40: Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos (3)*, ca. 1930. Colored pencil on paper. Private
collection 111

Figure 41: Henrietta Shore, *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos*, ca.1930. Colored pencil on paper.
Private collection, Toronto 112

INTRODUCTION

Reginald Poland, the director of the Fine Arts Museum in San Diego, claimed in 1927 that “[Henrietta Shore] is unquestionably one of the most important living painters of the United States, as strong as any on the Pacific Coast for the intellectual, technical, decorative and aesthetic qualities of her latest work.”¹ And five years later, the Canadian critic Archibald Key speculated that “some time, one hundred years from now, the shades of Henrietta Shore will float into the National Galleries of the world.”² As these remarks testify, during her lifetime Shore was recognized as one of the most significant artists in the United States.

Almost a quarter of a century after Poland and Key predicted Shore’s success as an artist, she is virtually unknown. The whereabouts of most of her works, documented in articles or exhibition brochures during the artist’s lifetime, are now obscure. Some pictures belong to anonymous private collectors; others are a part of the personal collection of Andrée Hollinrake Dell, the widow of Shore’s great-nephew. Fortunately, several museums in the United States and Canada have acquired paintings by the artist and during the past decade have shown the works in various group exhibitions.³ Nevertheless, Shore has remained only a minor participant in surveys of Californian art, and has had only one exhibition devoted to her work in 1986 at the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art.

¹ Reginald Poland, “Henrietta Shore’s Paintings,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 June 1927, 11.

² Archibald Key, “Parallels—and an Expatriate,” *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 142 (July 1932): 385.

³ For museum acquisitions see Appendix A of the present thesis. For a detailed exhibition history of Shore’s works see “Appendix: Exhibition History,” in Cynthia Roznoy, “Henrietta Shore: American Modernist” (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2003): 292-301.

Several scholars have noted that a more detailed examination of Shore's work is long overdue.⁴ Jehanne Bietry-Salinger, a friend of Shore's, a long-term art critic for the *San Francisco Examiner*, and a known authority in Californian art of the 1920s-30s commented not too long ago:

Her paintings had a bright luminosity and, at the same time, a cold quality—which was extraordinary. She had the knack of painting something that was real but at the same time had an air of mystery and unreality. She used cold color and had a palette that was so original. I was never able to liken her to anybody in the matter of influences. I have a warm memory of her, and hope she can be restored to her proper niche in the history of art.⁵

As Bietry-Salinger suggests, a closer evaluation of Shore's art could illuminate a particular niche in the history of art by demonstrating the importance of Shore's work within the tradition of American modernism, as well as the overall body of work from the beginning of the twentieth century.

Due to the lack of recognition of Shore's contributions, however, scholarly research about the painter is quite a challenging endeavor. Only a few studies have examined the painter's biography and artistic development. Henrietta Shore and her art have found a place in several articles focusing on different aspects of early twentieth century American art. All of these mention Shore only in passing or with a very terse discussion of major themes and preoccupations in her work. A couple of authors, most notably Roger Aikin, have commented on

⁴ See Barry M. Heisler, "Introduction," *Turning the Tide: Early Los Angeles Modernists 1920-1956*, ed. Paul J. Karlstrom and Susan Ehrlich (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1990): 8-9. Heisler points out that Shore and most other California modernists of the early twentieth century struggled for recognition during their lifetime and even today. Thus, many artists remain unknown and their work requires further analysis. Also see Christopher Knight, "Henrietta Shore" in *Last Chance for Eden: Selected Criticism by Christopher Knight, 1979-1994* (Los Angeles: Art Issues Press, 1995): 202-205; and Merle Schipper, "Laguna Beach: Henrietta Shore," *ARTnews* 86, no. 6 (Summer 1987): 66, hereafter referred to as "Schipper, "Laguna Beach: Henrietta Shore."

⁵ Jehanne Bietry-Salinger in an interview with Roger Aikin, quoted in Henrietta Shore, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition: 1900-1963* (Monterey: Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art Association, 1986): 11. Hereafter referred to as *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*.

Shore's importance to the development of Edward Weston's mature style but never established the significance of her own work and its contribution to American modernism.⁶

The single published book that focuses exclusively on Shore is the 1986 exhibition catalogue that accompanied "Henrietta Shore, A Retrospective Exhibition: 1900-1963," a show organized by the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art.⁷ The catalogue, containing essays by Roger Aikin and Richard Lorenz, provides a chronological description of Shore's life and career. With this small, but important book, Aikin and Lorenz laid the groundwork for future studies of Shore's art, but did not engage in a detailed examination of the visual, textual and philosophical influences that informed her artistic choices.

Recently, Cynthia Roznoy wrote a doctoral dissertation, entitled "Henrietta Shore: American Modernist."⁸ The study places Shore's work within the wider context of early American modern art and argues that the artist shared the same philosophical ideas and visual vocabulary employed by the Stieglitz circle. In addition, Roznoy presents Shore as a precursor of feminist art. The dissertation traces Shore's artistic development chronologically and presents most, but not all, known images by the painter, along with brief discussions of possible thematic and visual underpinnings. Roznoy's work is a valuable resource of information about Shore but its broad overview of the artist's oeuvre does not allow for an in-depth and thorough analysis of Shore's ideas.

Aikin's and Roznoy's studies form the basis for the present examination in its attempt to further the discussion of the complex visual, philosophical and personal sources that inspired

⁶ Roger Aikin, "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston" *American Art* (Winter 1992): 43-61 (hereafter referred to as Aikin, "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston") and previously included, in a more concise form, in *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 21-30. See also Ben Maddow, *Edward Weston: Fifty Years* (New York: Aperture Inc., 1973): 67-69.

⁷ See note 5 for full citation.

⁸ See note 3 for full citation.

Shore's peculiar nature imagery. Her style changed through the years, but rather than stemming from particular artistic influences, this transformation unfolded in tune with the artist's intellectual and spiritual growth. Shore's visual vocabulary developed from Impressionism towards more stylized, abstracted forms in her 1920s work, and after 1930 culminated in the textured, detailed and almost tactile drawings produced in Carmel, California. Carmel was a sanctuary to its inhabitants, a Bohemian colony of nature-inspired artists, actors and literati. All of them celebrated the peculiar beauty of the town and its natural surroundings. But no one else expressed the atmosphere and spiritual aura of Point Lobos as Shore did. Robinson Jeffers wrote about the soulful nature of Point Lobos in his poems; for photographer Edward Weston, Point Lobos expanded his modern sensitivity, directing him to capture its abstract forms on film. Shore responded to nature's vulnerability, so visible in Point Lobos, and gently laid her body and spirit on canvas or paper. The landscape drawings that she created in the 1930s manifest the artist's deep attachment to the earth and her yearning to be at one with the natural forces of the universe. By depicting the meandrous forms of the cypresses and anthropomorphic rocks, Shore drew and painted herself.

Inspired by the Theosophy of Madame Blavatsky, the transcendentalism of Emerson, the romanticism of Goethe, as well as her own special connection with the locale, Shore developed her singular form of visual expression. Among the peculiar shapes of the Monterey cypresses and rock formations, Henrietta Shore found not only her artistic maturity, but also that of her own self. The present thesis focuses on the impact that Shore's last home had on her personal and artistic life. A detailed analysis of Shore's images of the Monterey Peninsula will establish the connection between her extended visual narrative of the locale and the tradition of written ecocentric narratives initiated by Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. I will consider the

Theosophical and transcendental ideas that Shore sought to express in her work and relate them to Lawrence Buell's theory of ecocentric narrative.⁹ By unveiling the subtleties hidden within such a narrative and the very process of its creation, the present analysis will further our understanding of Shore's deeply emotional and spiritual attachment to Point Lobos and Carmel. More than merely depicting a peculiar landscape, Shore's late drawings reveal her preoccupation with current literary and philosophical trends, while simultaneously creating an intimate reflection of the artist's self.

⁹ See Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination* (Cambridge: London: Harvard University Press, 1995).

CHAPTER 1

BEGINNINGS, INSPIRATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Henrietta Shore was born on January 22, 1880 in Toronto, Canada. From an early age she demonstrated a heightened interest in art, which was nurtured by the support and encouragement of her mother, Charlotte Shore. At the age of thirteen Henrietta Shore already knew that she was going to devote herself to drawing and painting. She came to this realization one day when, in her own words, she experienced a “one-ness with nature.” In 1946, fifty-three years after this memorable childhood epiphany, Shore would reminisce:

I was on my way home from school and saw myself reflected in a puddle. It was the first time I had seen my image completely surrounded by nature, and I suddenly had an overwhelming sense of belonging to it – of actually being part of every tree and flower. I was filled with a desire to tell what I felt through painting.¹

It is significant that the artist’s recollection of her first desire to recreate her emotional and psychological state through art was intimately tied to nature and that she described her experience in transcendentalist terms of “one-ness” with her surroundings. The artist’s statement is not a testimony to an early involvement with the ideals of transcendentalism; rather, it reveals an understanding of Emersonian and Whitmanesque theory that Shore possessed at the time of her flashback. Shore’s 1946 statement projected her mature ideals onto the thirteen-year-old Henrietta. Her mature art is about self-realization and identification through a union with nature; slowly but consistently she developed the notion of depicting her body and mind through organic

¹ Henrietta Shore, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition: 1900-1963* (Monterey: Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art Association, 1986): 11.

shapes and forms in her art. This tendency is evident both in the evolution of her style and her choice of subjects.

Shore began her artistic training in 1898 with Laura Muntz Lyall at St. Margaret's College, Toronto.² Laura Muntz (1860-1930) was an established painter in Canada and her work reflected the popular trends of the time. Children comprised a large portion of Muntz's repertoire and she incorporated them in everyday scenes as well as religious subjects such as *Madonna with Angels* from 1912 (*fig. 1*). Her style was markedly modern for the period with its simplified forms, bold paint application and expressive tonalities. Shore borrowed from her teacher's style, as her early work employed impressionistic visual vocabulary. But Laura Muntz affected the young student in aspects other than art, serving as a model for balancing personal life and career goals.

When Shore became her student, Laura Muntz was forty years old and unmarried. Her life epitomized the career choices that a female artist had to make in order to succeed: dedicate her life to household duties and family or persevere, albeit by herself, and continue to create art.³ Whether by choice or circumstance, Shore followed the second route. She never married; in fact, no evidence exists that she ever had an amorous relationship.⁴ Shore's life-long solitude, I will

² Apparently Shore meant to embellish her artistic ability as a child, for she claimed that she began her art studies with Lyall at age fifteen. As Roznoy asserts, this would have been impossible, as Shore was in Paris at that time. Most likely, she began the course of study at the age of eighteen, in 1898. See Roznoy, 21-2.

³ Roger Aikin, "Canada: 1880 – 1913," in Shore, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 12.

⁴ Some scholars have suggested that Shore was a lesbian. In my research I have found no sound argument to support a claim concerning Shore's homosexuality. See Ilene Susan Fort, "The Adventurousome, the Eccentrics, and the Dreamers: Women Artists of Southern California," in *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945*, ed. Patricia Trenton (Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1995), 80; Aikin, "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston, 55-60. Another supporter of the hypothesis of Shore's homosexuality is Cynthia Roznoy. Roznoy bases her entire evaluation of Shore's life and work on the premise that the artist was a lesbian. I insist that such claims are unsupported and that the insufficient information about Shore, especially that concerning her private life, cannot be the basis of such stipulations. Moreover, I believe that Shore's sexual orientation, if not at all irrelevant, is not crucial to the understanding of the artist's work. As I want to argue in this thesis, whether homosexual or not, Shore was one of the precursors of American feminist art and her imagery carried feminine connotations which were not necessarily homo- or hetero-erotic; Shore's choice of subjects and visual expression is evocative of female sexuality and generative powers in general. Such

argue, played an important role in the artist's later art and reinforced her identification with natural subjects in the thirties.

Unsatisfied with the artistic milieu of her hometown, Shore spent the summers in New York where she took courses at the New York School of Art, first under the instruction of William Merritt Chase (1849-1916), and then in 1902 with Robert Henri (1865-1929).⁵ Both artists were prominent figures during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the formative period of American modernism. During the same period, around 1905, Shore traveled to London, Venice, Harleem and Madrid. In England she studied at the Heatherly Art School.⁶ Shore's training in the United States and Europe taught her the founding principles of modern art and challenged her to explore various artistic innovations in the years to follow.

William Merritt Chase was one of America's most influential Impressionists, and his ideas influenced many women artists at various stages in their careers. Chase believed that art should reflect real life, and thus he favored the Impressionists' approach of painting from observation. Naturalism and the rendering of contemporary life formed the basis of his artistic philosophy. But what Shore found most compelling and worth remembering about the teachings of Chase were his ideas about individual expression in art. While Chase advocated the necessity of a truly American art, he also emphasized the importance of the artist's response to lived experience and the necessity to "express what he sees and feels in a way which may be lasting."⁷ Shore held a similar opinion. In one of the few instances in which she spoke about art, Shore noted: "A painter's vision gives one a new interest, unfolding, as it does that which has not

is also the case with O'Keeffe, whose art has been widely accepted as feminine and feminist, even though she was not homosexual.

⁵ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 13.

⁶ *Ibid*, 13, 70.

⁷ William Merritt Chase, quoted in Barbara Dayer Gallati, *William Merritt Chase* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995): 130.

previously been evident. He expresses that which is not obvious to the casual onlooker. To quote a child's definition of a drawing, 'a drawing is a line drawn around a thought.'"⁸ In her art, she strove to illuminate the natural world as an expressive idea, but in contrast to Chase's, Shore's work was never distinctly American, nor Canadian for that matter. Her landscapes are specific enough to speak to Shore's individual experience and her deep attachment to Point Lobos, but they are devoid of nationalistic imagery, landmarks, or symbolism. Instead, over the years the depictions of her surroundings became increasingly images of her own self.

Nevertheless, at the onset of her artistic development, Chase clearly influenced Shore's style and choice of subject matter. More interested in the empirical exploration of his surroundings, Chase was an exponent of the Impressionist plein-air school. He went to nature in order to paint it as his eyes saw it and he prioritized the immediate impression of a landscape over the deeper and more elaborate search for inner reality.⁹ A comparison between one of Shore's first landscape explorations, *The Promenade, Center Point, Toronto* (ca. 1911; fig. 2) and a park scene by Chase, *Prospect Park, Brooklyn* (ca. 1887; fig. 3) reveals the teacher's influence on his student. The subject matter, the genteel leisurely activity of walking in the park, speaks to Shore's early affiliation with the Chase school and its debt to Impressionism. Yet, teacher and student differ in their treatment of the same theme. Chase's painting remains closer to the palette and open airy space of an impressionistic landscape, with its sunlit alley leading the viewer's eye into the distance. In contrast, Shore applied the paint in thick impasto, describing the trees in a bold expressionistic manner that goes far beyond the controlled and carefully articulated brushstrokes of Chase's image.¹⁰ Her trees dominate the composition and close off

⁸ Henrietta Shore, "Slap Dash Times Call for Pains in Art," *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 31 October 1947, 15.

⁹ Ronald G. Pisano, "The Teaching Career of William Merritt Chase," *American Artist* 40 (March 1976): 33.

¹⁰ Unfortunately most of Shore's early works exist only in black and white reproductions. A possible clue to her palette in those years is painting from ca. 1917 titled *From the Studio Window*. The paint is applied in a manner

the background. Thick vegetation envelops the human figures and threatens to take over. This park scene is one of the first instances where Shore allows nature to take the dominant role in her composition and to exhibit anthropomorphic qualities. The animated trees seem to swing their limbs rhythmically, as the shapes and shadows of their trunks and foliage echo the human figures walking in the park. In the right bottom quarter of the painting a group of trees visually merge with the silhouettes of a conversing couple; one could barely distinguish the strollers from the arboreal trunks. Where Chase allowed the park landscape to be the painting's subject, Shore stretched the boundaries of naturalistic observation and already endowed her subjects with human characteristics.

In time Shore abandoned her early style inspired and shaped by her teachers.¹¹ Gradually, she moved away from Chase's tendency towards realism and began her long exploration of abstract form. Chase taught his students to look at the outside of their sitters first: "In portrait painting, the beginner should first make *a* head; then, when one can get that, *the* head. If one begins by thinking of the soul of a person, he will probably lose the person entirely."¹² Shore approached her subjects the other way around—she tried to capture the inner reality of the rock, tree or person first; then she painted that evanescent impression in tangible forms. This is where the mysticism of her art originates. She believed that "[a] great artist does not paint nor concern himself literally with a subject. He paints an idea... He must see with simplicity and

reminiscent of *Promenade*, but deep bright blues and reds suggest a tendency towards an expressive color palette like that of the Fauves. But this painting was created a few years later than *Promenade* and might simply be a part of a later phase in the development of Shore's vocabulary and style. It should be noted that Shore's rendering of the landscape, as a mosaic of flat shapes of color, resembles more closely that of another American Impressionist, Maurice Prendergast. See for example Prendergast's *Landscape with Figures, No. 2*, 1918, Newark Museum.

¹¹ *Shoeshine Boy*, 1899, *The Blue Ball*, 1905-08, *Little Girls* of ca. 1915 and *Negro Women*, 1910-15 are few of the known early works.

¹² Chase, in his student's Pene du Bois' recollection, quoted in Pisano, 30.

penetration.”¹³ This statement, apparently Symbolist in its origin, defines Shore’s understanding of art and the artist’s role in illuminating the subtle complexities of the natural world.

Certainly, some of Chase’s criticisms of his students’ work could have been easily applied to Henrietta Shore’s landscapes from the 1930s: “What kind of a tree is that? Could birds fly through it? Build their nests in it? They’d break their necks! Open up your sky more and paint a tree that birds could fly through.”¹⁴ Instead of painting believable and “bird-accessible” trees, Shore wanted to imbue her subjects with their own vitality. One of her most enchanting paintings, *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos*, which she executed circa 1930 (*fig. 4*) testifies to the “inaccessibility” of the tree trunks; here the main aim was not to make them realistic and believable, but to reveal the human qualities of the arboreal creatures. Their limbs extend with desire, their roots intertwine as if wanting to become one. Such anthropomorphic ideas permeate Shore’s late works, but the young artist’s association with nature and its correspondence to the human mind and spirit began where Chase left off, with the Impressionists’ fascination with nature, everyday life and insistence upon individual temperament through art. From there, she transformed her works into her own version of neo-romanticism.

Chase’s influence on Shore was most valuable in respect to the importance of individualism and innovation in artistic expression. To Chase, an artist could not be, and should not be, classified as simply a “portrait” or “landscape” painter. For him, a good artist did not have a specialty; a painter was “to avoid recipes... There are no recipes.”¹⁵ Shore understood this notion and employed it in her work. Throughout her career, she painted portraits, landscapes and still-lives and never limited herself to any one of them. In fact, Shore took Chase’s rejection of

¹³ Shore, “Slap Dash Times Call for Pains in Art,” 15.

¹⁴ Chase, recorded by Reynolds Beal, a student of Chase’s at the Shinnecock Summer School, ca. 1900, quoted in Pisano, 32.

¹⁵ As remembered by students of Chase (undated statement) and quoted in Pisano, 63.

“recipes” to an extreme. She disliked categorization in general and sometime around 1913 she ceased dating her works in an attempt to prevent its future classification into periods.¹⁶ In 1952 Shore declared her disdain for “...isms of any kind, life is too big for that.”¹⁷ She believed that everything she produced was a part of a continuous body of work and could not be separated into artificial categories. Instead of pursuing outside influences, the source of Shore’s stylistic development came from within her, engendered by the transformations of her persona and living environment. Chase’s teachings of individualism and innovation emboldened Shore to paint in a way that corresponded to her inner drive, rather than slavishly following popular trends. In essence, Chase taught Shore to paint her own experiences and life.

Expressing life in art was the mantra of Shore’s other influential mentor, Robert Henri, who rejected the genteel vision of Chase. Henri’s main philosophy about art was inextricably linked to the transcendental notion of a life force and the interconnectedness of all things in nature. Henri encouraged his students to paint life, not to create mere copies of the object in front of them. “Life and art cannot be disassociated,” Henri said, “nor can any artist, however he may desire it, produce a line of ‘sheer beauty,’ i.e., a line disassociated from human feeling. We are all wrapped up in life, in human feelings; we cannot, and we should not, desire to get away from our feelings.”¹⁸ Unlike Chase who said that “a head should be a round and solid enough to roll down a hill,”¹⁹ Henri’s portraits seem to revel in a visual flux of energy and emotion.

Henri believed that in order to paint life, one should paint fast and with passion: “Work with great speed. Have your energies alert, up and active. Finish as quickly as you can. There is

¹⁶ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 10.

¹⁷ Shore in Rose Miele, “Henrietta Shore,” *Carmel Gossip*, 1952, clipping in Shore papers, Archives of California Art. See *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945*, ed. Patricia Trenton (Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1995): 277, n60.

¹⁸ Henri, in an untitled, undated class lecture, in Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984), 111.

¹⁹ Pisano, 30.

no virtue in delaying...Do it all in one sitting if you can. In one minute if you can.”²⁰ He thought of himself as a realist in the spirit of Manet, whose sweeping broad brushstrokes and dark color schemes depicted the middle and lower classes, thus rejecting the genteel high-class preoccupations of academic art. Henri wanted his students to look at reality and at the modern world with fresh and unprejudiced eyes, similarly to the way Shore would encourage Edward Weston, some twenty years later, to observe and photograph nature without a preconceived idea in mind. Henri did not insist on detail, but rather on the underlying substance of his subject. In 1901 he told his students: “The great artist has not reproduced nature, but has expressed by his extract the most choice sensation it has made upon him,”²¹ a concept that Shore would embrace in her landscapes from Point Lobos.

Most likely, Henri was the first to introduce Shore to the theories of transcendentalism. His copy of Ralph Waldo Emerson’s *Essays* went with him everywhere; many times the book was open to page fourteen: “All history becomes subject; in other words, there is properly no History; only Biography. Every soul must know the whole lesson for itself – must go over the whole ground. What it does not see, what it does not live, it will not know.”²² Following Emersonian thought, Henri advised that art should be a personal expression of one’s emotional and intellectual life, an extension of the self. In relation to the same notion, Henri also looked to Walt Whitman as a model: “Walt Whitman was such as I have proposed the real art student should be. His work is an autobiography – not of haps and mishaps, but of his deepest thought, his life indeed.”²³ This notion seems to have penetrated Shore’s mind as well. From Henri she heard and understood, possibly for the first time, the most influential literary theorists of the

²⁰ Henri, “Letter to the Class, Art Students League, 1915” in Henri, 26.

²¹ Henri, “An address to the students of the School of Design for Women, Philadelphia, 1901,” in Henri, 83.

²² Ralph Waldo Emerson, “History,” in *Essays: First Series*, first published in 1841 as *Essays*, quoted in Bernard B. Perlman, *Robert Henri: His Life and Art* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1991), 60.

nineteenth century for early-twentieth-century America. Whether poet, novelist, painter, photographer or philosopher, the modern thinker in the United States turned to the writings of Whitman and Emerson for inspiration. Shore did not write much about specific ideas that informed her artistic creation; nonetheless, her art and attitudes clearly indicate that she was familiar with transcendentalism, especially since it permeated American art theory at the turn of the century and the decades that followed.²⁴

Whitman's and Emerson's theories differed in one major point: while Emerson talked about the rebirth of the American Scholar as independent and liberated from "the courtly muses of Europe,"²⁵ he argued for a universal sense of belonging, for the realization that the soul has no boundaries, geographical, political or physical. His essay "The American Scholar" does possess nationalistic undertones, but Emerson believed that all through the universe flows the same vital energy. Whitman on the other hand, was a strong proponent of the necessity of the modern American to identify him/herself as American, as a part of a national entity. Whitman defined himself through specific American locales and the particular energies and culture that they emanate: "Manhatta [*sic*] my city...Dakota's woods...flowing Missouri...mighty Niagara."²⁶ As Lawrence Buell has rightfully noted, "Emerson's nationalism in 'The American Scholar,' for example, was hesitant and lukewarm compared to Whitman's preface to the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*."²⁷

²³ Henri, "An address to the students of the School of Design for Women, Philadelphia, 1901," in Henri, 84.

²⁴ See Matthew Baigell, *Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts*, eds. Geoffrey M. Sill and Roberta K. Tarbell (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), hereafter referred to as "Baigell, *Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts*."

²⁵ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures*, vol. I of The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971): 69.

²⁶ Walt Whitman, "Starting From Paumanok," in *Leaves of Grass* (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1980): 39.

²⁷ Buell, 56.

Henri tended to defend both of these writers' notions, even though they were discernibly contradictory.²⁸ While Henri advocated the importance of art as a way "to expose the ideas of young people to the world and to express the spirit of the day and of the people,"²⁹ Shore's vision remained more intimate and self-reflective, more Emersonian. A universal spirit emerges in her landscapes; as will be demonstrated, they speak of nature and man, the union of all things in the universe and the life force that flows through all living things, as in *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos* (fig. 4). But Shore did not strive to exalt the character of the American consciousness and identity per se. Her art *is* American in its subject matter, in its innovative style and in its attachment to nature, but not American in the way espoused by Whitman. Broader than one nation or one culture, Shore's work encompasses all that is human. Yet, as I shall argue later, in the last three decades of her life, Shore associated both her personal and artistic consciousness with one specific geographical locale, Point Lobos as part of the Monterey Peninsula. This contradiction again reflects the influence of Henri's teachings and the inherent paradox of extolling simultaneously individuality and nationality. In the spirit of transcendentalism, Shore achieved a unique balance of the individual and universal in her late landscapes; while portraying the peculiar microcosm of Point Lobos, the artist was able to evoke the life of the cosmos in its entirety.

More than anything else, Shore demonstrated an interest in Henri's transcendentalist ideas about the interrelatedness between life and art and its translation into an individual's visual expression. Henri claimed that "Art cannot be separated from life. It is the expression of the greatest need of which life is capable, and we value art not because of the skilled product, but

²⁸ For a compelling discussion of Henri's "dilemma," see Matthew Baigell, "Walt Whitman and Early Twentieth-Century American Art," in Baigell, *Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts*, 127-129.

²⁹ Henri, "The New York Exhibition of Independent Artists," *Craftsman* 18, no. 2 (1910), quoted in Barbara Rose, *Readings in American Art Since 1900*, 39-42 (New York: Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968): 40.

because of its revelation of a life's experience."³⁰ Even though her early work seems to be less self-referential than the images she created in the twenties and thirties, Shore did try to impart to her subjects a sense of universal vitality, such as Henri prescribed.

Just like her famous teacher, Shore found the greatest expression of life and energy in the portraits of little children. Henri saw children as the unblemished and uncorrupted representatives of the human race. He painted them playing and dancing, focusing on their ability to find joy in the everyday. In his *Laughing Child* of 1907 (fig. 5) Henri represented the charm of a child's smile. Set against a solid black backdrop, the little boy's face radiates out of the canvas and produces an immediate response in the viewer. In a similar fashion, Shore depicts *Head of a Girl*, ca.1902 (fig. 6). In both paintings, the highlights are placed in bold broad brushstrokes, thus creating a sense of simplicity, and simultaneously, imparting to the viewer a sense of radiant energy streaming from the canvas. One can easily imagine Henri and Shore, painting fast, vigorously and with passion, as Henri taught his students. Clearly, Shore's early work followed the master's lead. Her brushstrokes describe the face of the little girl with spontaneity and immediacy that portray not only the outer appearance of the child, but also imbue the portrait with energetic life. Of course this approach follows Henri's; his *Laughing Child* is a lucid example of the same vivacity of brushwork. In Henri's image, however, the radiance of the child's smile is much more expressive than that of Shore's little girl; Henri was able to capture the essence of the child's purity and joy, while Shore's portrait seems a bit more sentimental and unnatural with the girl's rather awkward smile and ambiguous facial expression which lingers somewhere between joy and sadness. Yet it is clear that Henri's art spirit and desire to discover the inner glow and energy of his subject has played an important role in Shore's early works.

³⁰ Ibid.

Around 1905, Shore traveled to Europe and studied at the prestigious Hetherly Art School in London. According to an article published in London's *Town and Country Review* the artist was advised by no other than John Singer Sargent to abandon schools altogether and go directly to nature for inspiration.³¹ At that time she had already chosen to part with her native country, most likely because it was not conducive to her artistic pursuits. In the following years, Shore traveled extensively, apparently in a search for a place where she could live and create. In the early months of 1913, Shore's quest took her on a tour of America's west coast with her brother and sister-in-law. Later that year, she came back to Los Angeles, this time with the status of a permanent resident and a resolve to settle in the United States.³² A few years later, in 1921, she became an American citizen.³³

In Los Angeles, Shore found an atmosphere that nurtured her artistic growth; her work attracted the attention of the public and the critics alike. Shore's east-coast training and association with popular artists of the time, like Henri, ensured her success. Anthony Anderson from the *Los Angeles Times* noted that important early influence in Shore's art and added: "Like all of Henri's pupils, she is a 'Henri enthusiast... ' a woman who paints with her brains as well as her brushes... [S]he is thoroughly modern in her point of view."³⁴ Indeed, Shore was an avid proponent of modern art. Along with Helena Dunlap and a few other artists, she participated in the founding of the Los Angeles Modern Art Society in 1916.³⁵ The members of the group described themselves as concerned with "artistic freedom" and proclaimed that "one basic principle and one only forms the foundation of this society, that of circulating the latest

³¹ *Town and Country Review*, London, March 1935, p. 48; also Shore, 64, n11.

³² Permanent residency grants all the rights of American citizenship, except for the right to vote.

³³ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 15.

³⁴ Antony Anderson, *Los Angeles Times*, 26 April 1914, sec. 3, 5.

³⁵ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 16.

developments of the East and comparing it with the freshest expressions of the West.”³⁶ The society was short-lived, but nevertheless it played an important role in the art circles of Los Angeles. Shore continued to create and exhibit and by 1917 had already had two one-woman shows, at the Reynolds Gallery and the Los Angeles Museum of Art. In 1915, her artistic merit was recognized and awarded a silver medal at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.³⁷ In 1918, the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa purchased Shore’s *Negro Women and Children*, thus granting her acclaim in her native country as well.³⁸

Shore’s active participation in the art world continued for a few more years. In 1920, at the age of forty, she moved to New York and opened a studio on West 57th street. There she helped found the New York Society of Women Artists, an association that still continues to provide support to its members.³⁹ The year was appropriate for the founding of such an organization since American women had just won the right to vote. It is no coincidence that around the same time, Shore’s imagery gradually became more abstract and that the organic forms which she created became more “feminine”; art connoisseurs were already comparing her work to that of Georgia O’Keeffe, who was exhibiting at the same time, and critics had scrutinized both for what was considered sexual imagery.⁴⁰

Shore called the paintings from this period “semi-abstractions,” probably to stress the fact that although they seem completely non-representational, their subject in fact lies in reality. *Trail*

³⁶ Arthur G. Vernon, quoted in Merle Schipper, “California Women Artists, 1900-1920,” in *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, ed. Sylvia Moore (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1989): 87, hereafter referred to as “Schipper, *Yesterday and Tomorrow*.”

³⁷ Aikin states that Shore received “silver medals in the Panama-California Expositions of 1914 and 1915,” see *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 16. This, however, is confusing. According to Cynthia Roznoy, the San Diego Exposition, which opened towards the end of 1914, was a complement to San Francisco’s Panama-Pacific Exposition of 1915. Shore received a silver medal in 1915 for her painting *Little Girls*, 1914-1915. See Roznoy, 83-85.

³⁸ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 16.

³⁹ See <http://www.anny.org/2/orgs/0188/001p0188.htm> for more information about the organization.

of Life (ca. 1923; fig. 7) stands as a vivid example of the dichotomy of abstraction and realism in Shore's images. The painting depicts a circle in the top right corner, whose center resembles a cowrie shell with its slightly open orifice. A curvilinear stream flows out from the opening. At first glance, the image evokes some sort of celestial body, maybe the moon, a meteor or comet, with its trail of light reflected in water. However Shore's abstract language leaves room for other interpretations that are more closely related to "Life" as the title suggests. The almond-shaped orifice recalls the female vagina, while the fluid trail it pours forth might symbolize menstrual blood, amniotic fluid or the umbilical cord.⁴¹ Simultaneously, the arching path seems to move away from the viewer, resembling a receding "trail of life," a symbolic reference to the physical and spiritual development of every living being. Thus Shore depicted a "reversible" pathway, one that evokes the specific (human procreation) as well as the universal (human evolution of as a small part of the universe). The painting is a part of a series of many works whose titles speak of an increasing fascination with spirituality and emotionally charged themes. Titles like *Life*, *Source*, *Growth*, *Embryo* and *Unfolding of Life* all touch upon the essence of human birth and existence.⁴² This crucial development in Shore's ideas and organic sensibility will be examined later in relation to her subsequent work.

In 1923 Shore left New York for the second and last time; apparently the landscape of the northeast could not nourish her imagination as much as the Pacific coastline. Four years after her return to Los Angeles, on February 14, 1927, Shore met Edward Weston (1886-1958). He became a good friend and most likely the reason for a sharp turn in her personal and artistic life.

⁴⁰ See for example Henry Tyrrell, "Art Observatory: High Tide in Exhibitions Piles Up Shining Things of Art: Two Women Painters Lure with Suave Abstractions..." *The [New York] World* (4 February 1923), 9M. In Chapter Three I discuss the comparison between O'Keeffe and Shore in more detail.

⁴¹ Roznoy, 155.

⁴² Most of these works are of unknown size, media and whereabouts, for evidence that Shore created them, see the list of paintings in the exhibition brochure *Paintings by Henrietta Shore* (New York: Erich Galleries, 1923).

Following his recommendation, in August of 1927 the artist and her studio-mate Helena Dunlap went on a trip to Mexico. There, Shore met two of the most influential figures of Mexican modern art, José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949) and Jean Charlot (1898-1979). In her letters to Weston, Shore expressed her admiration and respect for the two artists; her portraits of Orozco and Charlot also reveal her impressions of these men. Some years later Charlot reciprocated Shore's feelings of admiration. In his 1939 book *Art from the Mayans to Disney*, Charlot praised her work and voiced his regret about her once promising career and life, which, by the time of the book's publication, had sunk into oblivion.⁴³ However, at the time of her trip to Mexico, Shore was still in the prime of her career and her style was still evolving.

The years that Shore spent in Mexico, 1927-28, enhanced her visual perceptiveness. She was awed and inspired by the strange beauty of the Mexican landscape and the monumentality of pre-Columbian art. The stark severity of the Mexican desert encouraged Shore to simplify forms even further and continue her progress towards abstraction that began in New York in the early twenties. During her time in Mexico she began to focus on single subjects such as shells, rocks and flowers. She also painted the local people. Like other American artists who worked at the same time and went to Mexico, Shore perceived the country as a primitive land where man existed in harmony with nature.⁴⁴ Her paintings depict the idealized figures of Mexicans and Native Americans through stylized organic forms and bold shapes of flat color. Possibly, this simplification was related to Shore's semi-abstractions from the early twenties, but also to her interest in the art of the Mexican muralists, Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros, whose frescoes she

⁴³ Jean Charlot, "Henrietta Shore," in *Art from the Mayans to Disney* (New York: London: Sheed and Ward, 1939): 175-179.

⁴⁴ Fort, 82. In her letters to Weston, Shore expressed her amazement at the beauty and grandeur of the stark Mexican landscape and her sympathy for the Mexican peasants, who lived in harmony despite prevailing poverty. See letters, October 15, 1927 and September 3, 1927. Shore's letters to Weston are archived at the Center for Creative Photography at University of Arizona, Tucson. Special thanks go out to CCP's archivist Leslie Calmes who provided me with copies of the original letters.

saw in Mexico City. Her most notable work from the period, *Women of Oaxaca* (1928; fig. 8) depicts the abstracted figures of Mexican peasants whose skirts are rhythmically oscillating in motion. Upon her return to California, Shore redid *The Women of Oaxaca* as a lithograph (1931; fig. 9). In 1931 the print won the first prize at San Francisco Graphic Arts Association, a group that Shore had joined three years before. In its repetition and paring down of form, *The Women of Oaxaca* closely resembles Diego Rivera's style.⁴⁵ In *Flower Day* (1925; fig. 10) Rivera multiplies the calla lily's calix, creating waves of undulating whiteness at the top of the canvas. Similarly, in Shore's painting gray clouds float in the sky, their fluffy curves echoed in the shapes of the vessels, heads and skirts of the Mexican peasants. The stylized female bodies and their rhythmically swaying silhouettes prefigure the organic, sinuous forms of the landscapes that will fascinate Shore in the following years at Point Lobos and Carmel.

Shore settled in Carmel-by-the-sea in 1930 and remained there until 1958; she finally felt at home. She never grew attached to Canada, nor was she attracted by the fast-paced, modern life of New York City and Los Angeles. Apparently, Shore found a deep connection between the landscape of the Monterey Peninsula and her own self. In Carmel she taught art classes and participated in the founding of the Carmel Art Association and thus remained an active member of the art community. In her private life, however, Shore became more secluded and introverted. Her seclusion was a consequence of her growing association with the peninsula's unique environment that became a source of inspiration and self-revelation. During her time in Carmel, Shore reached the height of her artistic abilities. She built upon her early influences, Henri and

⁴⁵ In a letter to Weston on September 11, 1927, Shore wrote about her appreciation of the frescoes of the three Mexicans, Rivera, Orozco and Siqueiros. Most impressed by Orozco's and Siqueiros' work she added: "Rivera is a big artist. What do I think of his work, you will ask. At present I do not know—later I will tell you." In a subsequent letter, from November 24, 1927, Shore elaborated: "I prefer his (Diego Rivera's) earlier work—the earliest. It is most unfortunate that I am unable to fully appreciate his work. I grant its excellence—but am bored by it. Orozco and Charlot both interest me more by virtue of their work." Ironically, some have labeled Shore's *Women of Oaxaca* as monotonous; see Merle Schipper, "Laguna Beach: Henrietta Shore," 66.

Chase, and their insistence on the connection between life and art, the individual and nature. With her move to the small town of Carmel, perched on the cliffs of the Pacific Ocean, Shore found her soul mate, the landscape of the Monterey Peninsula. Simultaneously, the artist's active participation in public events withered to almost nothing. During the depression years Shore could barely support herself, since her name had lost its previous popularity in the art world. Her last major source of income was a 1936 U. S. Treasury Art Project commission for six mural paintings.⁴⁶ Due to the lack of sales and public recognition of her art Shore became very depressed and turned to religion, specifically the Church of Christ Scientist.⁴⁷ In the fall of 1962, Shore was diagnosed with chronic senility and institutionalized in Agnews State Hospital in San Jose, California. Soon she succumbed to pneumonia and died on May 17, 1962, penniless and forgotten by the world.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Charlotte Streifer Rubinstein, "The Thirties: Daughters of the Depression," in *American Women Artists from Early Indian Times to the Present*, 217-265 (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1982): 262-263.

⁴⁷ Roznoy, 254.

⁴⁸ Aikin states that Shore was hospitalized in 1958; according to Roznoy, however, that event happened in 1962. Both Aikin and Roznoy attest to the possibility that it was her fellow Christian Scientists who had Shore committed to the mental institution; see Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 38 and *Roznoy*, 259. Members of the Shore family speculate that the same church members possibly helped themselves to some of her artwork; this might explain the disappearance of so many unaccounted works; see Roznoy, 259, n53.



Figure 1. Laura Muntz Lyall, *Madonna with Angels*, 1912. Oil on canvas.
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa



Figure 2. Henrietta Shore, *The Promenade, Center Point, Toronto*, ca. 1911. Oil on canvas.
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa



Figure 3. William Merritt Chase, *Prospect Park, Brooklyn*, ca. 1887. Oil on canvas.
The Parrish Art Museum, Southampton



Figure 4. Henrietta Shore, *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos*, ca. 1930. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Anthony Hollinrake, Toronto



Figure 5. Robert Henri, *Laughing Child*, 1907. Oil on canvas.
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



Figure 6. Henrietta Shore, *Head of a Girl*, ca.1902. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Anthony Hollinrake, Toronto



Figure 7. Henrietta Shore, *Trail of Life*, ca. 1923. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Richard Lorenz, Berkeley



Figure 8. Henrietta Shore, *Women of Oaxaca*, 1928. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Penny Perlmutter, San Francisco



Figure 9. Henrietta Shore, *Women of Oaxaca*, 1931. Lithograph on paper.
Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art

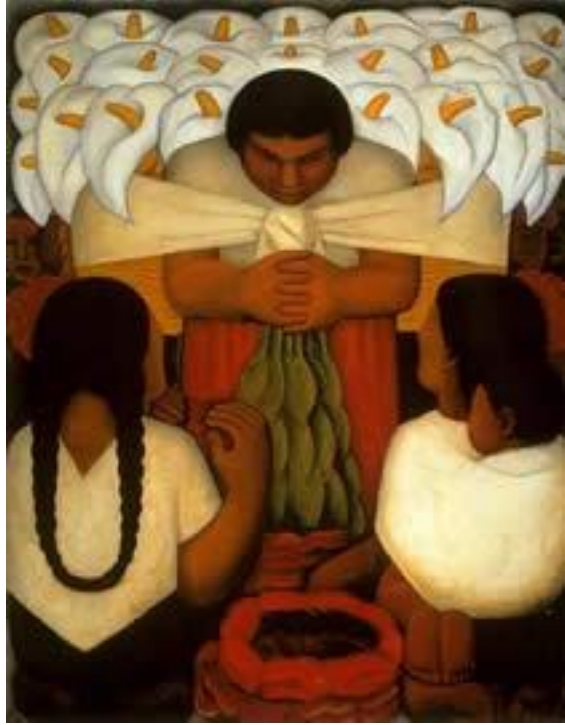


Figure 10. Diego Rivera, *Flower Day*, 1925. Oil on canvas.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art

CHAPTER 2

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA: SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC MILIEUX

In order to understand Henrietta Shore's attachment to the landscape of the Monterey Peninsula and the ways in which it transformed her art, one needs to consider the very special social and artistic atmosphere of Carmel, Shore's last spiritual and artistic sanctuary.

Carmel-by-the-sea was founded in 1903 by real estate developer J. Franklin Devendorf and lawyer Frank Powers.¹ From the very start the two men had a particular fantasy of Carmel's destiny: they envisioned the town as a family and artist-oriented community in which man and nature could coexist harmoniously. Devendorf, who was the on-site manager and the project's visionary, made every effort not to disturb Carmel's original landscape. All roads were built around the old pines and many additional trees were planted throughout the properties (*fig. 11*). In addition, Devendorf and Powers established firm standards for land development and residential and commercial building.

Ever since those first days of Carmel's birth, the town's inhabitants have fought to preserve its unique atmosphere and character that was, and still is, intimately tied to nature. In a sense, Carmel itself was founded on a Jeffersonian-inspired vision, in which man was not considered superior to nature, but on the contrary, human activities were meant to preserve and cherish her creations. Devendorf and Powers respected the legacy of Thomas Jefferson;² they, like the third president of the United States, were deeply attached to the outdoors and marveled at the abundance and beauty of the natural world. Furthermore, Jefferson made a very clear

¹ Harold and Ann Gilliam, *Creating Carmel: The Enduring Vision* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1992): 57.

connection between the love for the American landscape, the need for a simple agrarian way of life and the collective virtues of the young American nation.³ “Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God,” Jefferson stated; “if he ever had a chosen people, whose breasts he had made the peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.”⁴ The builders of Carmel followed similar principles, perhaps inspired by Jefferson’s thoughts: “The mobs of great cities add just so much support to pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body.”⁵ Devendorf and Powers strove to build a community of intelligent and nature-conscious individuals who desired to live in a small community. The two visionaries certainly succeeded in their pursuit; to all of its inhabitants, Carmel was “the inevitable place” as poet Robinson Jeffers put it.

As the building of Carmel progressed, Devendorf began his search for residents. He wanted to attract a community of intellectuals – educators, writers and artists, and accordingly, his advertisement campaign was targeted at a very specific audience. His message read:

California is growing so rapidly, that the time has come when the promoters of new towns can determine the general character of the residents. We want brain-workers, because they enjoy picturesque scenery and need a climate for a vacation place so equable that they can be outdoors the whole day long.⁶

Devendorf’s call for “brain-workers” proved successful and Carmel soon began to see the influx of newcomers. Lured by the landscape and the affordable prices of the land, many university professors and intellectuals from San Francisco began moving to Carmel. Among the first inhabitants of the small town was George Sterling who settled there in 1905. He was soon followed by his friends, and thus began the formation of the Bohemian colony in Carmel. The

² Ibid, 67-8.

³ See David E. Shi, *The Simple Life* (Athens: London: The University of Georgia Press, 2001): 78. Also see Buell, 56-57.

⁴ Thomas Jefferson in the early 1780s, quoted in Shi, 86.

⁵ Jefferson, from “Notes on the State of Virginia,” quoted in *ibid*.

core of this creative circle revolved around George and Carrie Sterling, Mary Austin, James Hopper and the pictorialist photographer Arnold Genthe. A casual visitor to Sterling's home was Jack London, whose writings were already popular at the time.⁷

The most celebrated of the early settlers was Robinson Jeffers, whose poetry personified the spirit of Carmel, its *genius loci*. He arrived to Carmel in September of 1914 with his wife and children. In 1919 they began building Tor House, which has since become one of the landmarks of Carmel. The house of Jeffers, along with that of the popular journalist Lincoln Steffens, drew the cultural elite to Carmel: sculptor Jo Davidson, critic Max Eastman, Gertrude Stein, Carl Sandburg, Langston Hughes, John Steinbeck and Mabel Dodge Luhan were among those who visited the town in the 1920s and 1930s (*fig. 12*).⁸

Together, the cultural elite of the small town worked towards the promotion of artistic production. In only a few years they established several organizations and groups that encouraged all residents to partake in various creative disciplines such as theater, literature and art. By 1910 so many artists had moved to Carmel that Frank Devendorf began to list burnt sienna as one of the residents' necessities that had to be ordered regularly and delivered to the town. In 1913, the Carmel Arts and Crafts Club opened an annual summer school of art. Among its faculty was William Merritt Chase, who taught there in 1914 and 1915.⁹ Famous instructors such as Chase and the general artistic atmosphere of "California's Bohemia," continued to attract artists to the town. In essence, Carmel was seen as an artist's Utopia: a community where one could live in peace and harmony with nature, and where the residents' only concerns were those

⁶ From Devendorf and Powers' advertisement for Carmel's newly founded community, 1903. See <http://www.carmelcalifornia.com/>

⁷ Gilliam, 88-103. For a detailed account of the early "Bohemian colony" in Carmel see Franklin D. Walker, *The Seacoast of Bohemia* (Santa Barbara: Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1973). Also see Daisy Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun, *Carmel at Work and Play* (Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925).

⁸ Gilliam, 103-104.

⁹ *Ibid*, 147.

of creative and intellectual character. Carmel was born with art in mind and in turn artists responded to Carmel's peculiar nurturing environment.

Henrietta Shore saw the Monterey Peninsula for the first time in 1929.¹⁰ One year later, she received an invitation from Dene Denny and Hazel Watrous to exhibit her lithographs in their Carmel gallery. In 1932 she commented on her experience:

I came to Carmel, October, 1930, to be present at an exhibition of my lithographs at the gallery here, intending to remain for three days only... After remaining for three months, instead of three days, I found that the beauty of Carmel and its surrounding country had much more to offer me than San Francisco or Los Angeles, so I looked around for a suitable home.¹¹

Shore's "dear chum" Weston had already settled in Carmel the year before. His friend Johan Hagemeyer owned a small cottage at Ocean and Mountain View Avenues, which he rented out to Weston at the end of 1928.¹² Shore and Weston were enamored by the strange beauty of the peninsula at once. Soon after she found a home in Carmel, Shore bought a car, so that she and Weston could travel to Point Lobos twice a week to work among the cypresses.¹³ The abstract forms of the rocks and trees fascinated both painter and photographer and eventually became the preferred imagery through which these two artists expressed their formal and intellectual concerns.

Artists, poets and photographers all came together to establish Carmel as a place where art was of primary importance. Carmel offered a friendly atmosphere to any artist who wished to live and create there. In August 1927, nineteen artists got together (including Mary DeNeale

¹⁰ The San Francisco Examiner talks about an exhibition of Shore's lithographs in John Hagemeyer's studio in Carmel in 1928 (see Jehanne Bietry Salinger, "Carmel Exhibit," *San Francisco Examiner*, 22 July 1928, E10). Therefore Shore must have been to Carmel earlier than 1929 as Aikin suggests. Dijkstra (169) says that she settled in Carmel in 1928, but this cannot possibly be true since the artist herself said that she moved to the town in 1930-31. See quote to follow.

¹¹ Shore, letter to the editor of *The Canadian Forum* 12 (September 1932): 475.

¹² See Weston, *The Daybooks of Edward Weston. Volume II: California*, ed. Nancy Newhall (Millerton: New York: Aperture, 1961).

¹³ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 30.

Morgan) and organized the Carmel Art Association, a cooperative.¹⁴ Within a few months, they rented a floor of Bert Heron's Seven Arts building, engaged a curator and held an exhibition of forty artists. They also held fund-raising events, such as Bohemian balls.

Henrietta Shore however, was one of the more reserved residents of the community. She taught painting and drawing at the Carmel Arts and Crafts Club. A member of the Carmel Art Association, she participated in the group shows of the organization. Aside from these limited activities, Shore must have kept to herself, since her name is absent from all of the gossip books and popular accounts of Carmel's social life. Other Bohemians figured prominently in the public "diaries" of the time; George Sterling and Robinson Jeffers, their friends and even Weston are mentioned, while Shore is left out repeatedly. This is a rather curious fact taking into account Shore's popularity in the artistic circles of Northern California.

Shore, apparently, was a loner. In its article of 1946 about her the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* commented:

While her (Shore's) frequent contributions to general Art Association exhibits invariably have been outstanding, they have been accompanied by none of the Hollywood-standardized hullabaloo.¹⁵

And then again, in 1960:

Essentially modest and wholly objective in her pursuit of truth in Art Henrietta Shore has lived quietly in Carmel all of these years, indulging in none of the self-publicizing which too often, in an overpopulated "art colony" directs popular taste into lesser channels.¹⁶

Shore did know all of the prominent members of the "art colony" that flourished in Carmel. A reviewer of Shore's first one-woman show at the George F. Beardsley Memorial room of the

¹⁴ According to Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 30, Henrietta Shore helped found the Carmel Art Association. However, the Association was founded in 1927 (according to several sources, including Gilliam, 152 and the Association's official web-site <http://www.carmelart.org/>); Shore moved to Carmel in 1930, which would make it impossible for her to participate in the founding process of the organization.

¹⁵ Irene Alexander, *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 10 October 1946, 9.

Carmel Art Association Gallery marveled that “the biggest crowd on record came to the Carmel Art Gallery” to view the exhibition.¹⁷ The writer then proceeded to list an impressive catalogue of names, all of which were well-known artists and citizens of Carmel. Despite her familiarity with the Bohemian community Shore apparently shunned the crowds and avoided social functions. Perhaps she was a natural introvert. A couple of years before she moved to Carmel, she wrote to Weston from Mexico: “Edward, how wonderful it is to be alone! ... I am now my old self – awake with interest.”¹⁸ Although Shore preferred solitude in general, Carmel’s environment encouraged her seclusiveness even further. The beauty of Carmel’s surrounding shores was sure to inspire quiet admiration and contemplation. Coupled with Shore’s introverted personality, the town and its atmosphere could have fostered in her a desire for privacy and solitude.

This desire to be alone, with the environment as the only neighbor and ever-present friend, is typical of the nineteenth-century romantics and their poetic narratives of nature. Thoreau, more so than anyone else, insisted on this ascetic seclusion, and described his experience in *Walden*. In Lawrence Buell’s terminology, prose that reflects Thoreau’s example of living simply in tune with nature, is an “epic of voluntary simplicity.”¹⁹ This notion is concordant with the popular idea of the simple life that permeated American thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thomas Jefferson was one of the first and foremost proponents of this kind of simple subsistence and as I pointed out, Carmel itself was founded on the notions of life harmonious with the environment and the opposition to the spread of consumerist capitalism. Buell notes that *Walden* is the first example of a narrative of voluntary

¹⁶ “Named to Represent U.S. in Paris” *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 29 October 1960, A16.

¹⁷ “A Few Notes on the Shore Reception,” *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 20 October 1946, 8.

¹⁸ Shore to Weston in a letter from October 16, 1927.

¹⁹ Buell, 144-46.

simplicity. Freed from unessential material goods and thoughts, Thoreau attained the ability to notice and admire even the minutest details of his surroundings. Thus, his personal reflections of nature go beyond simple narratives; they are “contemplative occasions,”²⁰ telling examples of the way in which one’s attachment to a place leads to a union of the self with the natural environment.

Buell interprets *Walden* as a reflection of its author’s nature-oriented writing, whose basic premise is the idea of two kinds of relinquishment—of material goods and of individual autonomy. The surrender of material goods comes first; it is a necessary return to a primitive state of existence close to nature. The relinquishment of individual autonomy on the other hand, is more difficult and oftentimes unsettling. The concept of course is transcendental; it requires the individual’s willingness to abandon the illusion of bodily and mental apartness from nature. These two kinds of abstinence, Buell argues, are the founding premises of ecocentric literature such as *Walden*. This assertion is not confined to the field of writing only; the case of Henrietta Shore, as we shall see, is a telling example of ecocentric narrative as well, but it is visual rather than rhetorical. In essence, Shore’s images of the Monterey Peninsula parallel Thoreau’s *Walden* in the way they describe nature—as a presence in its own right rather than a setting for human activity. In both cases egocentrism gives way to ecocentrism and the environment is allowed to speak for itself, simultaneously becoming a reflection of the writer/artist’s spiritual state.²¹

Shore’s decision to live in Carmel then was on a certain level equivalent to Thoreau’s move to Concord’s wilderness. Apart from the distraction of big cities and their crowds, Shore could dedicate her time to her experience of nature. The artist made a conscious choice to abandon a promising future that could have only been possible in an artistic center such as Los

²⁰ Ibid, 153.

²¹ Ibid, 155.

Angeles or New York. Thus, moving to Carmel was Shore's relinquishment of material goods for the sake of returning to nature. Enamored with the Monterey Peninsula's landscape, Shore found a source of inspiration stronger than the desire for fame and material security. Carmel, despite its popularity as a Bohemian artistic colony, could not provide the appropriate market or publicity necessary for a successful professional career in the arts.

In fact, the collective goal of Carmel's community was to resist modernization and outside intrusion in all possible ways. Even though nowadays Carmel is more commercialized than in the early 1900s, to this day, many of the residents live in houses that have no street numbers and mail can only be picked up at the post office. Strict laws prohibit "unnatural" noise: "Ordinances have been developed over the years to reduce intrusive noise such as gas-powered leaf blowers, barking dogs, loud music, etc. The natural sounds of surf, birds, and breeze are preferred to man-made noises."²² And as if that was not enough, ladies needed to obtain special permission to wear "certain high-heeled shoes" since their imprints could be harmful to the soil and trees of Carmel!²³ Proud of its idyllically primitive disposition, Carmel refused to accept modernity of any kind. Thus, it is easy to understand that avant-garde art was not one of the "natural" products of the small Monterey Peninsula town.

No less important for Shore's newly found seclusion in Carmel was the fact that the town's artistic environment was rather conservative. While the town was built in order to promote human creativity, this did not necessarily mean that it emphasized progress and innovation. In fact, Devendorf's ideas of the harmonious co-existence of man and nature, of the preserved state of the wild forests, beaches and the ocean recall nineteenth-century notions of primitivism. Certainly, Carmel did not vie for the status of Gauguin's Tahiti or Matisse's

²² See <http://www.carmelcalifornia.com/>

²³ Ibid.

Northern Africa. Nevertheless, it inspired art that was imbued with nostalgic and romanticized representations of nature. Most, not to say all, of the painters who lived in Carmel during the first half of the twentieth century worked in the widely accepted Impressionist style.²⁴ Impressionism had become the natural American mode of expression by 1915, the year of the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco whose art displays featured over eight thousand works of art, including celebrated European Impressionists, Post-Impressionists and Expressionists. The Panama-Pacific Exposition paled in comparison to the extremely influential and progressive Armory Show of 1913; nevertheless, it was an astounding feat which for the first time introduced many California artists to the art of their European colleagues Cézanne, Courbet, Degas, Gauguin, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec and van Gogh, to name just a few.²⁵ While California was just awakening to Impressionism by the second decade of the twentieth century, the East coast had already rejected the style as “socially irrelevant and somewhat clichéd.”²⁶ In comparison to the widely popularized Impressionism, the art of Shore and Weston, as that of Stieglitz and his circle, seemed progressive and distinctly more “modern” than that of the Carmel Impressionist artists. Thus, upon her arrival to Carmel in 1930, Shore became a representative of the latest artistic trends in a small town that insisted on tradition.

Three of the most celebrated artists who lived in Carmel, Mary DeNeale Morgan (1868-1948), William Ritschel (1864-1949) and Armin Hansen (1886-1957), painted the landscape of

²⁴ A notable exception is Jeanne D’Orge whose art is virtually unknown; I myself have not been able to find any reproductions of her work. However, from the accounts that exist, we can conclude that she was decidedly modern. She worked with non-traditional materials, such as oil paint on aluminum sheets topped with machine oil (needless to say these works did not survive long). Reportedly her paintings were abstract; her intention was to “transform ‘a material used in industry and in war,’ a symbol of materiality, into a symbol of the spirit.” See Bert Almon, “Jeanne D’Orge, Carmel, and Point Lobos,” *Western American Literature* 29 (November 1994): 239-59.

²⁵ Terry St. John, “California Impressionism After 1915,” in *Impressionism, the California View*, exhibition catalogue, 16-22 (Oakland: The Oakland Museum of Art, 1981): 16.

²⁶ William Gerdtts, “California Impressionism in Context,” in William Gerdtts and Will South, *California Impressionism*, 7-70 (New York: London: Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1988): 8.

the town and its surroundings. Morgan, who was considered “the quintessential Carmel artist”²⁷ and “Dean of Women Painters,”²⁸ portrayed the Monterey cypresses, dunes and ocean in subdued pastel tones. Despite the broad sweeping brushstrokes that characterize her style, Morgan’s canvases impart a sense of stillness and quietude. In a painting such as *Monterey Cypresses*, n.d. (fig. 13 and 14), Morgan was interested in the way light illuminated the tree-bark and meadow and in the shimmering color effects of landscape bathed in California’s bright sun. Morgan’s landscapes were not vehicles of universal meaning; instead, they reflect the Impressionists’ interest in capturing natural light and a moment’s sensation on canvas. Morgan participated in William Merritt Chase’s summer classes in outdoor painting in Carmel in 1914 and she would have readily absorbed her teacher’s ideas of depicting nature. Morgan’s visual language belongs to the California Impressionist style characterized by vigorous and blocky brushwork, similar to that of the famous California Impressionist William Wendt (1865-1946).²⁹

Other Carmel painters emphasized a different aspect of nature in their images. The works of William Ritschel and Armin Hansen demonstrate a fascination with the power of the ocean that is visible in their expressive brushstrokes, bright strong colors and active compositions. German-born William Ritschel, whose marine paintings won him membership in 1913 in the prestigious National Academy of Design, was one of the most celebrated artists to ever live in Carmel. He settled there in 1911 and built his “Castle” from which he traveled the world and created his world-famous seascapes. Ritschel painted outdoors, along the cliffs. His style was realistic but very expressive “of his profound reactions to the sea.”³⁰ *Glorious Pacific*, 1926 (fig.

²⁷ Gilliam, 13.

²⁸ Heather Anderson, “Artists of the California Landscape, 1850-1950,” in *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, ed. Sylvia Moore (New York : Midmarch Arts Press, 1989): 68.

²⁹ Gerdts, 19. Gerdts defines two major styles in California Impressionism: the oftentimes “Cézannesque” style of Wendt and Morgan, characterized by blocky “slabs of color;” and, the more eclectic type which blends the typical Impressionist manner with elements borrowed from Post-Impressionism and Pointillism.

³⁰ Gilliam, 143.

15) is a typical example from Ritschel's oeuvre. The painting depicts the energy and power of the ocean. Great waves are rushing towards the viewer with their white crests resembling mountaintops. One can almost hear the roaring sound of the waves crashing into the shore. The rocks themselves are also very expressive. Their surface is animated by a variety of colors, laid down with bold wide brushstrokes, characteristic of all of Ritschel's paintings. The artist was definitely a proponent of the widely accepted modes of painting. His style resembled that of the Impressionists and thus represented exactly the kind of conventional expression which Shore rejected. A photograph of Ritschel in his studio (*fig. 16*) shows him standing in front of the easel, holding the traditional palette and brushes, with a pipe in his mouth and a bandanna around his neck. His intense gaze and burly beard complete the image of the stereotypical painter. In harmony with his favored subject the ocean, Ritschel's outfit recalls the figure of a fisherman or sailor; his determined gaze reveals the artist's confident mastery of painting the vast waters of the Pacific. With his boot-clad feet spread apart, Ritschel is standing confidently in front of one of his famous marines. While his style was Impressionistic, this photograph shows someone who is not a plein-air school proponent; instead of painting outside, Ritschel apparently worked in his studio, as most academic painters did before the 1860s.

One should not be surprised that Ritschel openly disdained modern art. Apparently referring to the more progressive styles of Cubism, Fauvism and abstract painting in general, Ritschel noted:

Art should be beautiful. Look at the beauty of the line of an arm of Holbein. Instead, today we have a sausage here (upper arm), another sausage here (forearm), and five little sausages for fingers! The artist should strive to uplift the public, but you see, if you amuse, you make money. People go to the movies, listen to the radio, buy a new car to keep up with the Joneses, while on their walls there's trash!³¹

³¹ Ibid, 149-50.

William Ritschel was not Carmel's only representative of the conservative trends in art. Armin Hansen, also member of the National Academy of Design, worked in a similar fashion. Like Ritschel, Hansen has been labeled as "landscape painter, marine specialist." His primary subject however was man's relationship with the ocean. He depicted sailors and fishermen in a constant struggle with powerful natural forces. He extolled the men's ability to survive and overcome the ocean on one hand, and the sublime beauty of the raging waters on the other. In a painting such as *Niño*, 1922 (fig. 17), the heroic body of the fisherman is juxtaposed with the crashing waves in the background and the monumental form of the rock in the foreground. The bright red color, which dominates the canvas, ties together figure and rock and enhances the painting's dramatic intensity. Interestingly, *Niño*'s color scheme is comprised mainly of shades of blue, red and white, the tricolors of the American flag. In the tradition of European landscape painting, Hansen adorns rocks, sky and water with the symbols of nationalistic belonging and pride, thus aligning the majestic force of the ocean with the spirit of America. Hansen's visual means go beyond those of Impressionism. His bright palette and affinity to large blocks of pure color, such as the red shirt of the sailor, speak more closely to the visual language of the Post-Impressionists and Expressionists. Nevertheless, in comparison to the East Coast's progressive movement towards Cubism and abstraction, Hansen's paintings were safe and conventional.

Morgan, Ritschel and Hansen are emblematic of the artistic milieu of Carmel. Nurtured by the conservative spirit of the town itself, the artists who lived there followed the legacy of the Impressionists and traditional landscape painters, rather than the more innovative and progressive styles of the 1920s. Even more significant were the specific choices they made concerning their subjects. All of Carmel's artists were famous for their seascapes or "marines," images that extolled the magical allure of the ocean. Sometimes sublime and other times

picturesque, these paintings present endless vistas of water and sky with boats in the distance or waves crashing on the shore. The three Carmel artists' visual rhetoric abided by the rules of traditional landscape painting—by glorifying the awesome power and particular beauty of the Pacific Ocean and coast, Ritschel, Morgan and Hansen equated nature with nation.

Henrietta Shore, however, rarely painted the ocean or the shoreline.³² Of all of her known works from her Carmel period, very few illustrate the ocean. Among the few are *Rocks, Point Lobos, No. 1* (ca. 1930) and *Yachting on the Bay* (ca. 1930) (figs. 18, 19). The rest of her landscapes are “earth-bound” and represent the rocky land of Point Lobos and those old, persistent inhabitants of the peninsula, the Monterey cypresses. Even in the “seascapes,” if one can label them as such, it is clear that the abstract and repetitive rhythms of the water are more important for the overall effect of the pictures than the ocean as a subject in itself. That is to say, the artist did not choose to illustrate the ocean because of its magnificent powers or the sublime connotations it evokes; rather, she was interested in the abstract curvilinear patterns formed by the waves in their relationship to the earth. The soft curves of the waves and the rocks evoke the organic growth patterns that Shore employed in her abstractions from the twenties. Thus, the wave patterns in these “seascapes” might be seen as expressing universal patterns of growth and harmony, rather than evocations of the Beautiful or the Sublime. Shore was different from the common Carmelite artist, both in style and subject matter. Thus, it was not the artistic atmosphere or the Bohemian life that attracted Henrietta Shore to Carmel. As we shall see in Chapter Four, it was the rocky landscape of the Monterey Peninsula that made the artist come to Carmel and remain there for the rest of her productive life.

³² In the early 1920s Shore executed several works that depicted the ocean. Their whereabouts for the most part are unknown; we know them by title only: *By the Sea, The Cove, The Cove, Newfoundland, Cove Rocks, Seascape, Maine* and *Monhegan Harbour, Maine*. See Roznoy, 148, n46.



Figure 11. "Scenic Drive, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California" postcard



Figure 12. The "Bohemians." Photograph reproduced in Franklin D. Walker, *The Seacoast of Bohemia* (Santa Barbara: Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1973): 39.

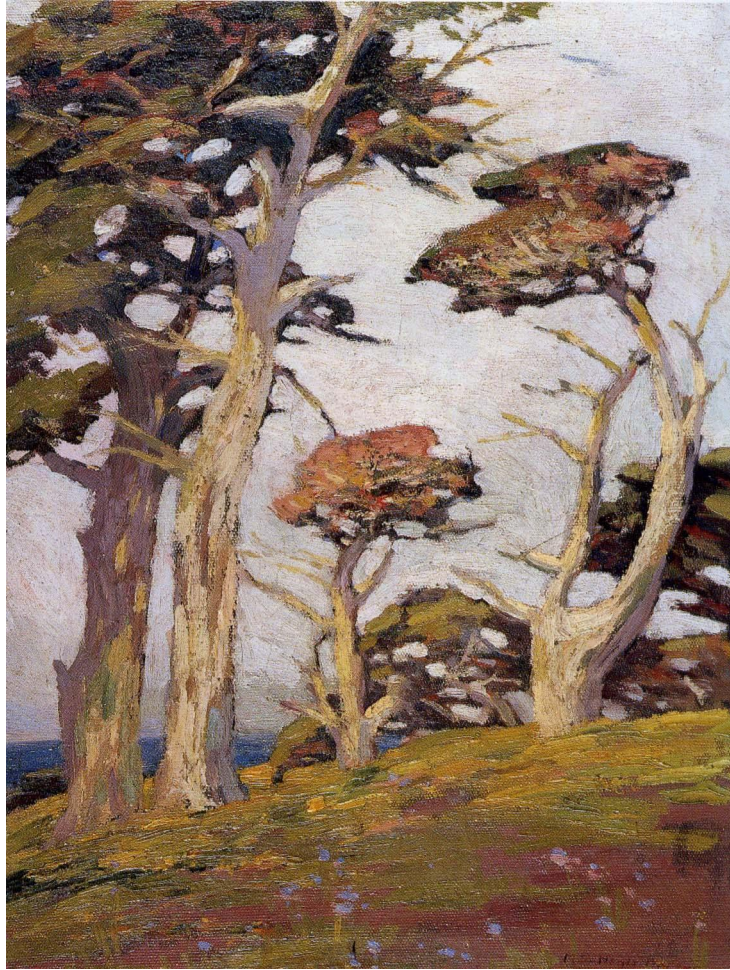


Figure 13. Mary DeNeale Morgan, *Cypress Trees*, n.d. Oil on canvas.
Collection of John D. Relfe Family



Figure 14. Mary DeNeale Morgan, *Cypress Tree*, n.d. Oil on canvas. Reproduced in Daisy Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun, *Carmel at Work and Play* (Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925): plates after pg. 62.



Figure 15. William Ritschel, *Glorious Pacific*, 1926. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Daniel Hansman and Marcel Vinh



Figure 16. William Ritschel in his studio, ca. 1920. Photograph reproduced in Daisy Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun, *Carmel at Work and Play* (Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925): plates after pg. 62.



Figure 17. Armin Hansen, *Niño*, ca. 1922. Oil on canvas. Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art

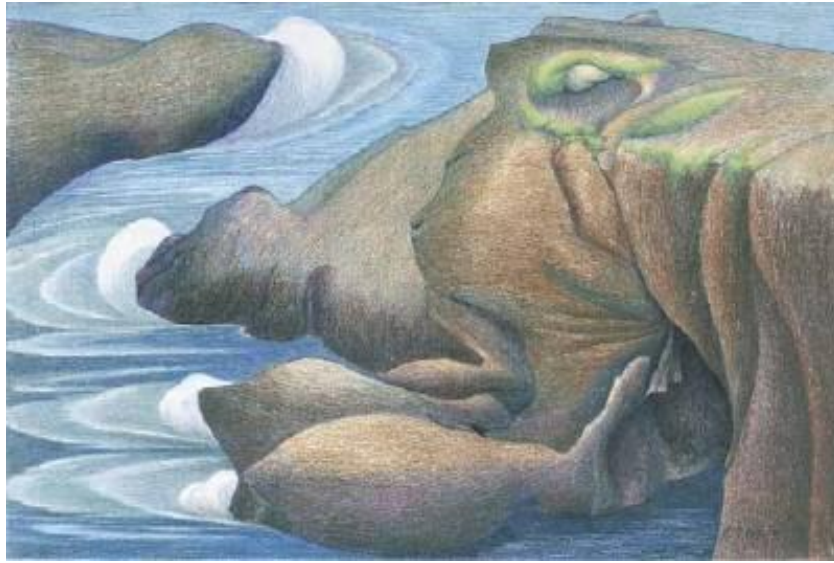


Figure 18. Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos, No. 1*, ca. 1930. Colored crayon on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Reproduced in Merle Armitage, *Henrietta Shore* (New York: E. Weyhe, 1933).

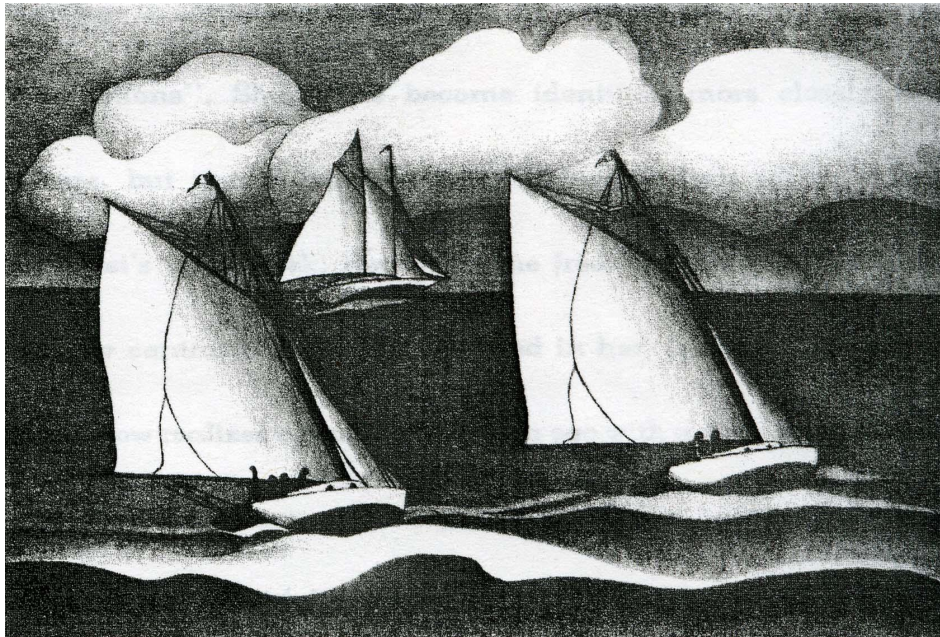


Figure 19. Henrietta Shore, *Yachting on the Bay*, ca. 1930. San Diego Museum of Art. Lithograph on paper.

CHAPTER 3

SHORE AND THE AMERICAN MODERNS

Henrietta Shore did not share much in common with her Carmel neighbors, but she certainly belonged to a more general trend in American art of the first half of the twentieth century. As Schipper recently noted, Shore's imagery from the twenties and thirties was radical in its simplified forms and frank eroticism and stood out in the midst of the more conventional canvases produced in Carmel.¹ Weston, Jeanne D'Orge and Shore were Carmel's only representatives of the progressive currents of American modern art, which developed in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. Consequently, the three had a lot more in common with the artistic community on the East Coast.²

The "father of American modern art," Alfred Stieglitz, was the fiercest proponent of the new trends in art, especially concerning the abstraction of nature. Stieglitz and his artistic circle were all greatly influenced by the teachings of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman.³ The "Americanness" and "modernity" of art were major preoccupations for Stieglitz and he tried to promote his own vision, and that of his friends and supporters, as a prime example of the spirit of American modern art. More importantly, it was the very specific genre of landscape painting that became the vehicle for Stieglitz and his circle's identification, both on individualistic and

¹ Merle Schipper, "California Women Artists, 1900-1920," in *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, ed. Sylvia Moore (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1989): 87; hereafter referred to as "Schipper, *Yesterday and Tomorrow*."

² For an analysis of the similarity between Shore's art and ideas and those of the Stieglitz circle artists, see Roznoy, 120-163.

³ For a discussion of the Stieglitz circle and the Emersonian tradition see Matthew Baigell, "American Landscape Painting and National Identity: The Stieglitz Circle and Emerson," in *Artist and Identity in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001): 26-48.

nationalistic levels.⁴ These American avant-gardists immersed themselves in the environment of specific locales, and through their images they created extended and rich portraits of land and city. Alfred Stieglitz, Charles Demuth, Joseph Stella and Charles Sheeler to name a few, extolled the urban beauty of New York City as well as the nostalgic rural landscape of the Northwest. Other artists, like Georgia O’Keeffe, John Marin, Marsden Hartley and Paul Strand, found a spiritual and artistic haven in the American Southwest, mainly New Mexico.⁵

In the spirit of transcendentalism, all of the artists surrounding Stieglitz were participants in an ecocentric tradition as defined by ecocritic Lawrence Buell.⁶ Initiated by Henry David Thoreau and continued by his followers, this tradition comprises works that center on nature and the exploration of a specific geographical locale. An ecocentric writer, or artist in this case, examines the spirit of a place in his/her works to such extent and detail, that in the process, narrator and narrated become intimately intertwined. It is in the process of describing a place, that the artist becomes a part of it, fusing his or her own soul with that of the specific natural environment. Thus the process becomes twofold: on one level, the writer/artist examines and discovers in new light all the details of this familiar and dear geographic region; on another parallel level, by completely engaging his/her being with the spirit of a place and exploring it in detail, the writer/artist embarks on an exploration of his/her own self. Thus, Buell argues, the resulting ecocentric narrative is more than just an intimate portrait of nature; it is a narrative of the self.⁷ In their quest for a truly American modern expression, Stieglitz and his entourage immersed themselves in a transcendental exploration of the American landscape, which in turn became a journey of self-searching and analysis.

⁴ See Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley: Los Angeles: London: University of California Press, 1999), 3-40, 248-250.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 253-256.

⁶ Buell, 9, 180-218.

As will be examined further, Shore's art shares the Stieglitz circle's affinity for transcendentalism and abstraction of natural form; the art of O'Keeffe especially, shares many parallels with Shore's visual explorations of space, place and womanhood. In fact, at the peak of Shore's popularity in the art world, her images were oftentimes compared with those of Georgia O'Keeffe. Both of them painted plant forms, landscapes and other organic motifs. Shore accumulated a large collection of shells that became the source of inspiration and subject for Weston's famous *Shell* series.⁸ Similarly, O'Keeffe gathered numerous rocks, skulls and bones as relics from the places that she loved. In the two artists' paintings, these "dead" elements came back to life.⁹

O'Keeffe, of course, has been recognized as *the* painter of flowers and there is no doubt that her canvases filled with luscious and sensual petals are the trademarks of her oeuvre. Shore also did close-ups of flowers. In October of 1946, *The Monterey Peninsula Herald* published a review of Shore's one-woman exhibition. The list of works included in the show recalls a Georgia O'Keeffe catalogue: "... a striking composition entitled *California Data*; waxen *Succulents*, interestingly lighted; two decorative studies of *Gloxinia*; bristling *Cacti*; delicately lovely *Iris*; *Magnolia by Moonlight*, a sensitive interpretation in tempera; the graceful trumpet flowers of the *Datura* contrasting with the somber mass of a black jug; and a study of *Calla Lilies*, beautifully designed and textured."¹⁰ Even though most of these paintings have been lost to the public, the article provides evidence of Shore's interest in plant forms. Naturally, these works evoke an immediate connection with O'Keeffe, and if this similarity between the two women's choice of subject is rarely recognized today, it was openly discussed in the 1920s.

⁷ Ibid, 425 n1.

⁸ See Weston, 21.

⁹ See for example Corn, 266-69.

Beyond subject choice the critics focused as well on two additional shared aspects of O’Keeffe’s and Shore’s paintings: their tendency towards abstraction and “subconscious emotionalism,”¹¹ as Raymond Henniker-Heaton put it.

For Henniker-Heaton, as for others, this “subconscious emotionalism” was in fact a euphemism for Shore’s and O’Keeffe’s ability to express their female nature on paper and canvas. A prime example of this widespread belief is Stieglitz’s famous remark that O’Keeffe was “pouring out...her Woman self on paper—purely—truly—unspoiled.”¹² Henry Tyrrell, the art critic of *The New York World*, analyzed the images of O’Keeffe and Shore simultaneously in his 1923 article “Two Women Painters Lure with Suave Abstractions...”:

An extraordinary manifestation of modern art expression and feminine self-revelation through the medium of semi-abstract symbolistic painting occurs in the coincident exhibitions of Miss Georgia O’Keeffe [*sic*] at the Anderson Galleries and Miss Henrietta Shore at Ehrich’s... Perhaps this art manifestation underneath the surface is nothing new but only what every woman knows and has known all through the ages, from the Princesses of the Pharaohs rudely awakened the other day out of their 4,000 years’ beauty sleep in the tombs of Egypt, down to the Mary Cassatts, Berthe Morisots, Marie Laurencins, Pamela Biancas, Georgia O’Keefes [*sic*] and Henrietta Shores of our time.¹³

Like O’Keeffe, Shore emphatically denied the presence of sexual imagery in her compositions. Nevertheless, as with the New Mexican painter, the various subjects of her works are laden with connotations of female physical forms. According to Jehanne Bietry-Salinger Carlson, who spoke to Roger Aikin about Shore’s work in the early thirties, the artist

did a drawing of her own intimate female anatomy – she said it was done from a mirror. I was intrigued by this and asked if I might have it for the *Argus*. I even

¹⁰ Irene Alexander, “40 Paintings In New Carmel Gallery Show,” *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 16 October 1946, 7. My italics.

¹¹ Raymond Henniker-Heaton, “The Art of Henrietta Shore,” in *Paintings by Henrietta Shore* (New York: Erich Galleries, 1923), no page numbers.

¹² Quoted in Barbara Buhler Lynes, *O’Keeffe, Stieglitz and the Critics, 1916-1929* (Ann Arbor: London: UMI Research Press, 1989), 16.

¹³ Henry Tyrrell, “Art Observatory: High Tide in Exhibitions Piles Up Shining Things of Art: Two Women Painters Lure with Suave Abstractions...” *The [New York] World* (4 February 1923), 9M, quoted in *ibid*, 189-190.

had a copper plate made in order to publish it. But such things were impossible at the time, and I gave it away – I know not to whom.¹⁴

Such testimonies assert that female sexuality and self-explorations were issues that preoccupied Shore. It should not be surprising then, that Shore's images do evoke female genitalia and instill in the viewer a sense of a female power of creation. In this context, the "subconscious emotionalism" refers to a purely female experience, one that aligns the artist to nature in an almost instinctual way. What Shore wanted to convey, and she consciously sought out the effect, was the universal power of creation, the life force, the energy of every being. This visual equivalence between nature and woman is, in Emersonian terms, the expression of the original creative force, God, and its omnipresence and repetition throughout the universe. The world is shaped by evolving concentric circles, Emerson claimed, all emerging from the "eternal generator."¹⁵ While these circles are spiritual rather than material, they are nevertheless visible to those who know where and how to look. "The eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary figure is repeated without end."¹⁶ The power to see nature's intricate spiraling system resides in the human eye and mind and their ability to find continuity. Undoubtedly, O'Keeffe and Shore possessed that valuable faculty and based their art upon it, revealing the correspondence between the soft curves and sensuous lines of female anatomy and those of nature.

O'Keeffe herself painted in the nude, thus establishing a connection between her female body with the subjects she depicted in her art.¹⁷ As Marjorie P. Balge-Crozier has argued, O'Keeffe consciously or unconsciously associated the objects she painted with herself. In

¹⁴ Quoted in Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 64 n29.

¹⁵ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Circles," in *Essays: First Series*, vol. II of *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979): 188.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 179.

¹⁷ Laurie Lisle, *Portrait of an Artist* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986): 151.

essence, O’Keeffe still-lifes are also self-portraits.¹⁸ I argue that the same is true for Shore. Remembering that Shore painted the “intimate” self-portrait, one can turn to an analysis of another striking image. *Shell* (ca. 1930; *fig. 20*) is possibly one of the most erotically charged of Shore’s known drawings. In a striking resemblance to some of O’Keeffe’s compositions, Shore has depicted the open form of a scallop, whose delicate texture, sinuous orifice and bilateral symmetry clearly evoke female genitalia. In comparison, O’Keeffe’s *Open Clam Shell* (1926; *fig. 21*) also relies on bilateral symmetry, but utilizes even simpler, cleaner lines. Both compositions evoke the female reproductive organs and both describe them with gentle gradations of tone and curvy lines. But Shore’s *Shell* is flatter and its widely open wings dominate the foreground of the composition, while O’Keeffe painted her clam in depth. The darker nuances of the shell’s edges and the two bright triangles at the top and bottom draw the viewer into the shell and allows him/her to penetrate the slightly open crevice. At the heart of this three-dimensional mandala is a small black oval that resembles an egg, or possibly a sperm with a curvilinear tail. In contrast, in her other painting of the same subject, *Shell No. 2*, 1928, the artist depicted a closed shell in a naturalistic mode, whose flat side comes right up to the picture plane, thus emphasizing the surface of the subject and its overall shape instead of its inner structure. The clam from 1926 seems more universal, resembling a sphere of white and black, whose center is the beginning of life. Shore’s *Shell*, on the other hand, is emphatically physical; with her descriptive line and rendering of simplified forms, she created an abstracted emblem of a woman. But it also possesses a center from which emanate the curvilinear patterns of the shell. The central oval shapes in both works likely suggest the philosophical concept of the

¹⁸ Marjorie P. Balge-Crozier, “Still-life Redefined,” in *Georgia O’Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*, 41-74 (Washington D.C.: The Phillips Collection and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

Ur-form, the equivalent in Emerson's teachings of the Over-Soul.¹⁹ Like an omphalos of the Universe, the Over-Soul is the original source of life. On a human scale, that fertile sphere is repeated in the forms of the female genitalia and uterus. Thus, in Shore's and O'Keeffe's images, the Over-Soul is symbolized and reflected in nature and in woman as creators. In both artists' shells, the fragile essence of femininity is exposed to the viewer—bared and vulnerable.

Quite possibly, Shore's images such as *Shell* and plant studies like *Irises* (fig. 22) led a critic to say disapprovingly: "A tendency is revealed in all of Miss Shore's works to lean to 'Freudian horticulture' in the manner of Georgia O'Keeffe."²⁰ Despite the patronizing tone of this statement, it touches upon a fundamental quality of O'Keeffe's and Shore's art. Both of these female artists sought a union with nature, an intimate merger with the forces of the universe. In their paintings of landscapes and flowers, O'Keeffe and Shore created extensions of their own bodies and inner selves in the forms of nature.²¹ It was Shore herself who said that "sex enters into her work as a part of life."²² O'Keeffe also suggested this in a metaphorical description of herself: "My center does not come from my mind—it feels in me like a plot of warm moist well tilled earth with the sun shining hot on it—nothing with a spark of possibility of growth seems seeded in it at the moment—[.]"²³

The comparison between O'Keeffe and Shore here is not meant to suggest any direct influences from one artist to the other. It is likely however that the two women had seen each other's compositions. Even though we have no definite record of such an event, they had plenty

¹⁹ Maurice Tuchman, "Hidden Meanings in Abstract Art," 17-63, in *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890-1985*, ed. Edward Weisberger, exhibition catalogue (LA County Museum of Art: Abbeville Press Publishers: New York, 1986): 42.

²⁰ "Henrietta Shore," *The Art Digest*, 15 November 1933, 22.

²¹ O'Keeffe's art has long been examined in terms of its evocation of the self through images of nature. See for example Sharyn Rohlfen Udall, *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 2000): 127-145.

²² Shore, quoted in Edward Weston, *The Daybooks*, 231.

²³ O'Keeffe in a letter to Jean Toomer, 10 January 1934, quoted in Lynes, 20-21.

of opportunity to meet: both studied under Chase, both were active at the same time, knew the same people and even exhibited in New York simultaneously in 1923—Shore in the Erich Galleries and O’Keeffe in the Anderson Galleries. It would not be correct to say however, that the artists were in any way affected by each other’s work. Apparently the two women were kindred spirits, a fact that might have slipped their consciousness, but that is evident in the existing parallels between their works. What this comparison demonstrates is that Shore belonged to America’s progressive artistic circles, rather than the conservative ones of Carmel.

The Shore-O’Keeffe analogy is significant in another respect as well—it reveals that while both artists were considered equal in skill and innovation during their lifetimes, at the end only one of them was successful enough to be recognized as a noteworthy contributor to the history of American art. In the 1920s, critics predicted that Shore would become one of the greatest artists of all times. Reginald Poland remarked: “We foresee merited recognition in a most important way when she becomes nationally known. A great future awaits Henrietta Shore.”²⁴ It was O’Keeffe, however, who became the emblematic female artist of the early twentieth century; Shore’s art was neglected, forgotten, unpublished and dispersed in unknown collections. As Roger Aikin has suggested, the divergent routes on which the two women found their careers were most likely the result of their relationships with the men closest to them. O’Keeffe owes her popularity largely to Stieglitz’s patronage. He exhibited her works in his galleries and introduced her to the circles of the American avant-garde.²⁵ By the time Stieglitz met O’Keeffe in 1916, his Gallery 291 had become a major venue for exhibitions of modern art. Before the paramount Armory Show of 1913, Stieglitz had already showed in his gallery works by the foremost cutting-edge European artists. By 1920, the notorious photographer had secured

²⁴ Armitage, 8.

a self-image as a prophet and spiritual leader of the American modernists.²⁶ In addition to Stieglitz's support, other members of his circle also actively promoted O'Keeffe and her vision. Paul Strand, Marsden Hartley, Paul Rosenfeld and others wrote public commentaries about her.²⁷

In contrast, when Shore met Weston, she was more popular than him. As their friendship developed, Shore gradually neglected her own career in order to promote Weston's photographs. It was she who introduced him and his pictures to the director of the San Diego Museum of Art, Reginald Poland, who later organized the exhibition of Weston's photographs and made his images known to the public.²⁸

Some have suggested that Shore was in love with Weston and that the desperation from his rejection caused the eventual demise of her promising career. Whether this was true nobody can say with certainty. However, we do know that Shore's imagery and style had a tremendous impact on Weston. In the years that they spent working together in Carmel and Point Lobos, painter and photographer continually stimulated each other's artistic creation. In his journal Weston recorded many observations about his relationship with Shore and her paintings:

I was awakened to shells by the paintings of Henry.²⁹ I never saw a chambered nautilus before... If I merely copy Henry's expression my work will not live, if I am stimulated and work with real ecstasy, it will live. Henry's influence or stimulation, I see not just in shell subject matter, it is in all my later work, - in the bananas and the nudes. I feel it not as an extraneous garnish but as a freshened tide swelling from within my self.³⁰

²⁵ For a discussion of Stieglitz's patronage of O'Keeffe's art and the importance that his active support had for the development of her career, see Lynes, 1-9, 161.

²⁶ Corn, 3-40.

²⁷ See Appendix A in Lynes, 165-306.

²⁸ For a detailed discussion of the relationship between Shore and Weston, see Aikin, "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston" and Aikin, "Edward Weston and Mexico: 1927-1930," in *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 21-29.

²⁹ "Henry" was Weston's nickname for Shore—according to Aikin, that was a possible sign of Weston's tendency to masculinize Shore in his attempt to regard her seriously as an artist and simultaneously to avoid the fact that she might have been in love with him; in *ibid*, 24. Ben Maddow insists that Shore had romantic feelings for Weston, but she soon realized his misogynistic tendencies. See Maddow, 69. Also see Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 61 n12.

³⁰ Weston, *The Daybooks*, 21.

As this statement reveals, Shore's semi-abstractions inspired some of Weston's most celebrated images—the *Shell* series, which in turn led to the famous *Peppers*. In one of his breakthrough images, *Shells* (1927; *fig. 23*), Weston photographed a close up of two interlocked shells, a nautilus and what looks like a conch. Shimmering pearlescent curves emerge from the dark background and lure the viewer with their captivating sensuality. The composition is strikingly familiar; an image by Shore, titled *Shell* (ca. 1925; *fig. 24*), also displays the abstracted form of a conch shell against a black background. Shore however, allotted a bigger part of the canvas to impenetrable darkness and the shell lies in the bottom right corner. A sense of loneliness emanates from the picture, but the purity of the white shell and its soft outline evoke serenity. A barely visible light shape in the upper part of the image repeats the sensuous organic shape of the conch and balances the composition. Possibly, this is the faint silhouette of another shell, or the trace of light emanating from the conch in the foreground and echoing its outline in the darkness. Another area of light emerges under the shell as well; gradually receding into the black background, this lighter area establishes the ground plane on which the shell is placed. Weston certainly borrowed from Shore's compositional ideas—most of his photographs of shells include luminous oval and semicircular lines at the bottom that break up the rich blacks of the background and imply a plane under the shells.

Both Shore's and Weston's images are visual testaments to the artists shared vision and philosophy. The shell images that Shore created in the mid twenties inspired Weston and sparked his imagination to visualize and develop his best work yet. But more important than this initial impetus, was the continued relationship between the two artists, both in personal and professional terms. Shore, unlike Weston, did not write much about art; she simply preferred to create it and express her beliefs visually rather than verbally. Therefore, her friendship with

Edward Weston and the convictions they shared are valuable resources of information about the essence of Shore's imagery and style.

Ralph Bogardus and David Peeler have already shown that Weston's photographs and his interest in the abstract forms and enlarged elements of plants, rocks and other natural matter are related to the ideology of Emersonian transcendentalism, specifically the importance of vision.³¹ Weston saw the camera as a means to the liberation of the human mind from the nonessentials and the photographic image as a visual revelation of spiritual truth. The photographic medium allowed Weston to visualize Emerson's notion of continuity of form within the entire universe. In his treatment of the human body, cabbage leaves, peppers and shells, Weston revealed the repetition of curves, the asymmetric balance of nature's design, the way beauty infuses each and every detail of the natural world. The Emersonian notion of enlargement finds its visual equivalence in the photographer's images. Emerson insisted on purity and transparency of vision, two indispensable aspects of the ability to see and understand nature without a preconceived idea. "Man never sees the same object twice; with its own enlargement that object acquires new aspects."³² Following this credo, Weston literally enlarged his subjects beyond life-size in order to emphasize the purity and simple beauty of a silhouette, of a curve, of textures and forms. The visual characteristics of black-and-white photography lend themselves to images that are free of the burden of color and its symbolic and emotional undertones. But Weston went much further in the simplification of his photographs. His stark compositions are free of details and decorative elements; his shells, plant forms and vegetables take center stage, divorced from their ordinary

³¹ See Ralph F. Bogardus, "The Twilight of Transcendentalism: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Edward Weston, and the End of Nineteenth-Century Literary Nature" *Prospects* 12 (1987): 347-364; see also David P. Peeler "Power, Autonomy and Weston's Imagery: A Balancing Act" *History of Photography* 15 (Autumn 1991): 194-202.

³² Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Method of Nature," in *Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, 132.

function or meaning. Thus, the viewer sees them in a new light, as if they were breathing creatures posing to have their portraits done.

Weston and Shore preoccupied themselves with similar pursuits: the search for a modernist aesthetic that would convey nature's universal laws of correspondence. In the words of Emerson, painter and photographer believed that "[p]articular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts."³³ Thus, Shore's and Weston's exploration of nature was in essence a quest for the mystical manifestation of an intangible spirit into the physical world. The two believed in the duty of the artist to depict that which not everyone can see, to reveal life's unity within variety. "I want the greater mystery of things revealed more clearly than the eyes see" Weston wrote. He saw photography as a way to perceive or visualize the world so that the viewer would comprehend nature's manifestations of life and spirit:

I am no longer trying to 'express myself,' to impose my own personality on nature, but without prejudice, without falsification, to become identified with nature, to see or *know* things as they are, their very essence, so that what I record is not an *interpretation*—my idea of what nature *should* be—but a *revelation*... into an absolute, impersonal recognition. (Weston's emphasis)³⁴

These ideas manifestly reveal Emerson's influence on the development of Weston's artistic vision. The photographer's desire to see nature clearly and without preconception echoes Emerson's famous words describing the moment in which all boundaries of the material being seem to disappear and the human soul returns to its origin in the creator:

In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life, — no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot repair. Standing on the bare ground, — my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.³⁵

³³ Emerson, "Nature," in *Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, 17.

³⁴ Weston, *The Daybooks*, 221.

³⁵ Emerson, "Nature," 10.

Like Weston, Shore saw the repetition of forms throughout nature, the “interdependent, interrelated parts of a whole which is life.”³⁶ As Bogardus noted, transcendentalist vision was the driving force behind Weston’s artistic preoccupations, the means by which he believed one could reach a deeper understanding of spiritual truth.³⁷ Shore, too, felt that artistic creation is a form of revelation:

Art is the tool by which the creative instinct in man is brought into being. It is only normal that one should possess an urgent passion to create. Creation, on the part of man, is an understanding so deep, a knowledge so transcendental, that one has a freshly awakened vision so vital, so pungent, that one has power to see and express clearly that which has always excited, that which is already known.³⁸

Shore’s statement concerning the “urgent passion to create” corresponds to Emerson’s view of the universe as a continually evolving spiral that permeates the material world. Everything stemming from the Over-Soul constantly seeks regeneration: “In nature every moment is new; the past is always swallowed and forgotten; the coming only is sacred. Nothing is secure but life, transition, the energizing spirit.”³⁹ In his essay “Circles,” Emerson puts forth the idea that this incessant urge for regeneration gives birth to a spiral—a continually growing organic form that permeates the entire cosmos.

Shore understood that all living beings subconsciously associate themselves with nature and the universe, but she also knew that this tenuous connection needs developing and nurturing. “Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight, does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both,”⁴⁰ wrote Emerson. He spoke of the necessity to lose one’s ego and to open the boundaries between spirit and matter in order to fuse a being with its creator, the universe. Such a divorce of the human mind from false mental boundaries requires a renewed sense of

³⁶ Bogardus, 351.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ From Henrietta Shore’s artist statement in a letter to Weston, January 8, 1933.

³⁹ Emerson, “Circles,” 189.

perception, without forethought or predisposition towards the natural world. Both Shore and Weston aimed at visualizing this spiritual unity of man and nature. At times, when either of them lost sight of this transcendentalist notion of transparent vision, Shore and Weston kept each other in check. “You will be a much better artist if you can approach your subject – go to nature, with no preconceived idea” was Shore’s advice to her friend.⁴¹ Weston took note of it in his journal and meditated on her words. Then, with apparent satisfaction, he wrote: “Henry admits she is fighting the same thing herself: she adds that she means by “preconceived,” a personal idea of what nature *should be* like – instead of an effort to find out what nature *is* like” (Weston’s emphasis).⁴²

Painter and photographer desired to free themselves from the burden of ordinary vision and instead tried to achieve the transparency of perception that Emerson described. In his metaphor of a “transparent eye-ball,” Emerson was also referring to the transformation of the self into a transparent I-ball—a being whose mind and soul are open to the life-force of the universal being. Only by relinquishing the opacity of ordinary perception can one free him/herself of the artificial boundaries between nature and all of its creations. As Emerson said, “[t]here are no fixtures in nature. The universe is fluid and volatile. Permanence is but a word of degrees.”⁴³ Undoubtedly Shore is referring to this transcendental experience when she speaks of “a freshly awakened vision so vital, so pungent, that one has power to see and express clearly that which has always excited, that which is already known.” In her images, Shore strove to find the truth,

⁴⁰ Emerson, “Nature,” 10.

⁴¹ Weston, *The Daybooks*, 193.

⁴² *Ibid*, 194.

⁴³ Emerson, “Circles,” 179.

rather than the nonessentials. She simplified form in order to simplify vision, as Emerson prescribed, thus revealing the essence of nature, rather than its distracting materiality.⁴⁴

While Weston's writings reflect the same interest in the notions of transcendentalism, Bogardus points out, he eventually abandoned the spiritual aspect of his photographic vision. Instead, he became more and more interested in the aesthetic appeal of abstraction and his engagement with nature remained focused on landscape's purely formal aspects rather than the visual and spiritual correspondence between all of nature's creations.⁴⁵ In contrast, after the 1930s Shore rooted her artistic vision in the ecocentric experience of Point Lobos. Overcoming her earlier interests in the semi-abstractions, she returned to a kind of realism—not in the formal characteristics of her compositions, but in the intimate way she experienced nature and described that transcendental melding of nature and spirit in her drawings.

Essentially, Shore's visual essay of Point Lobos is an example of Buell's idea of an environmental text: a narrative that emphasizes nature's interest rather than that of a human subject. In the ideal case of environmental writing, such as Thoreau's *Walden*, ecocentrism is the driving force. Buell outlines four major characteristics of an environmental text:⁴⁶

- 1) The nonhuman is described as more than just a setting, but rather as a presence in its own right
- 2) The human interest is not the only legitimate interest
- 3) The text reflects a sense of the human accountability for the well being of the environment
- 4) The environment is represented as a process, rather than a constant

⁴⁴ Charles Eldredge, "Nature Symbolized: American Painting from Ryder to Hartley," in *The Spiritual in Art*, 115.

⁴⁵ Bogardus, 355.

⁴⁶ Buell, 7-8.

A more detailed analysis of the drawings that Shore executed in Carmel after 1930 will demonstrate how her images fulfill these conditions. Taken as a whole, the series of landscapes of Point Lobos become Shore's ecocentric narrative of a place.

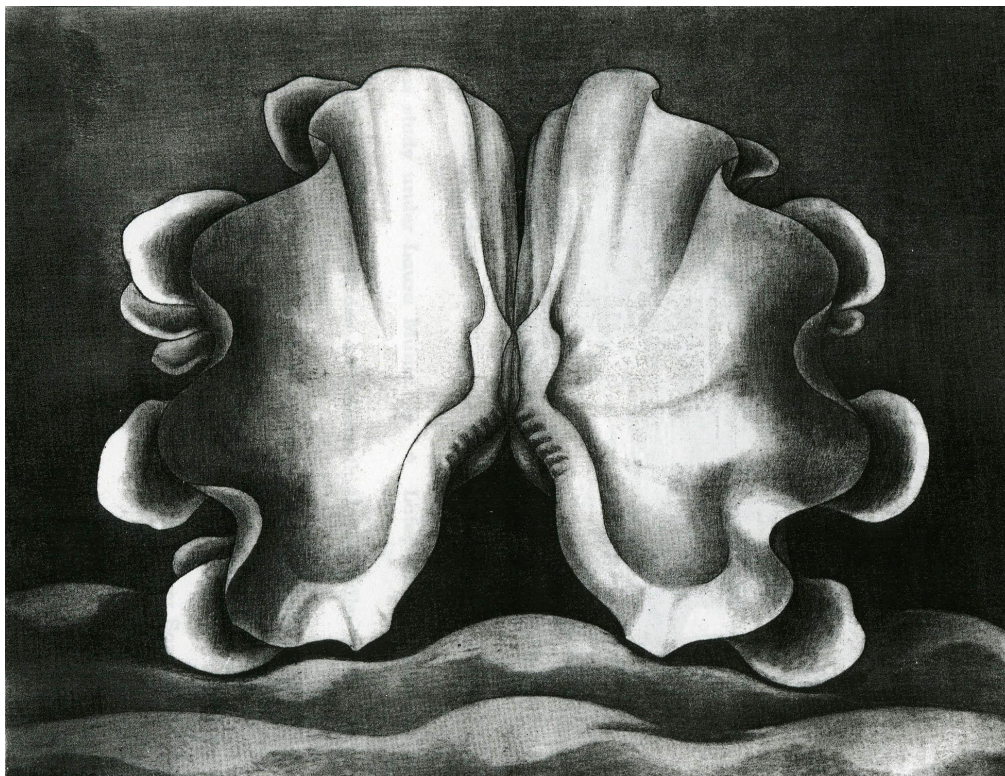


Figure 20. Henrietta Shore, *Shell*, ca. 1930. Pencil on paper. Whereabouts unknown. Reproduced in Merle Armitage, *Henrietta Shore* (New York: E.Weyhe, 1933).



Figure 21. Georgia O'Keeffe's *Open Clam Shell*, 1926. Oil on canvas. Private collection



Figure 22. Henrietta Shore, *Iris*, ca. 1923. Oil on canvas. George Stern Fine Arts, Los Angeles



Figure 23. Edward Weston, *Shells*, 1927. Gelatin silver print. Center for Creative Photography, Tucson

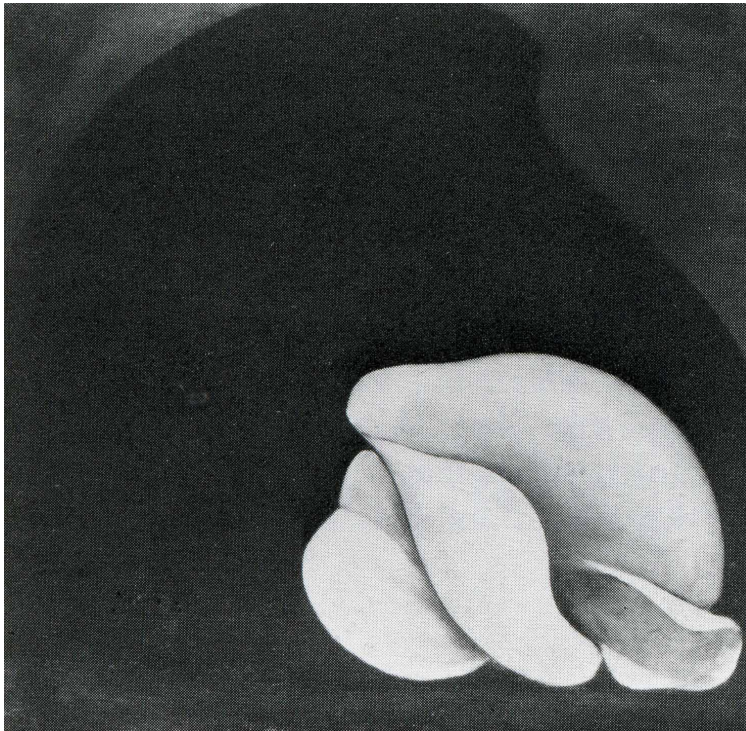


Figure 24. Henrietta Shore, *Shell*, ca. 1925. Medium and whereabouts unknown

CHAPTER 4

THE SHORE OF POINT LOBOS AND CARMEL

In 1932 the Canadian art critic Archibald Key wrote an article on Henrietta Shore in *Canadian Forum*. Despite his intent to show a certain kind of admiration for Shore's work, Key's essay is laden with overtly misogynistic remarks and denigrating comments on American modern art. According to Key, Shore "almost as big as her studio, but rounder,"¹ moved to Carmel in order to "be near her photographic contemporary Edward Weston, whose photographs of peppers are quite as obscenely indecent as Henrietta's rocks – according to the best of people."² Key pursues this issue throughout his article, accusing Shore of blatant sexual imagery and indecency. To make things worse, he ascribed to Shore feelings that she never felt: "She despises the Group of Seven as she despises every other organized group. 'Artists can't travel in packs.' Yet she speaks in their language just as she speaks the language of the Mexicans and even a word or two of American..."³ These heavy accusations speak of hurt nationalistic pride and a misunderstanding of Shore's art. Apparently Key simply could not accept the idea that an artist like Shore would leave Canada and become a citizen of another country.

The art critic goes on to slander, albeit meaning to appraise, the work of the three most important creative minds living in Carmel—Jefferson, Weston and Shore: "But the three spiritual owners know that Lobos is the very womb of nature. One feels it in the incestuous perversions which flow from the pen of the poet; in the phallic studies of kelp through the lens of Weston's

¹ Archibald Key, "Parallels—and an Expatriate," *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 142 (July 1932): 385.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

camera; and in the bloated contours from the brush of the painter.”⁴ These accusations did not remain unanswered. In the September issue of *Canadian Forum* both Weston and Shore reacted to Key’s essay and defended their art. In response to the claim that her work is inappropriately sexual, Shore replied: “Mr. Key’s facetious remark...is most ill-judged and founded on ignorance and vulgar misconception of my work”⁵ and Weston added: “The article in question cannot but give an entirely wrong impression of the serious attitude and important work of a fine artist.”⁶

The debate over Archibald Key’s article prompted another art critic, Jehanne Bietry Salinger, to get involved. Salinger, a friend of Shore’s, was outraged by Key’s statements. The article she wrote in defense of the artist, however, turned out to be somewhat ambiguous and unexpectedly supportive of an issue raised by Key in his controversial essay: namely the idea that Shore could have been more respected and a better artist had she remained in Canada. Salinger’s article attempts to dispel Key’s negativity and “facetious remarks,” only to come to the same conclusion that “on leaving Canada, Shore chose to be second in Rome rather than first in her home town.” A tone of regret and subtle disapproval emanates from Salinger’s argument, albeit the critic’s sensitive reading of Shore’s imagery:

Flowers, vegetables, animals, figures, trees, rocks, many carry a strange ‘sexless’ esoteric message, but how subtle the symbolism of the contours and the colours, how unique the spiritual conception of the artist. In this spiritual approach, in spite of her complete estrangement from everything Canadian, from everything human too, she remains pathetically close to the spring, where some twenty years ago, she and Lawren Harris and a few other young artists of that day partook of an inspiration which was to give Canada its art of today.⁷

The reference to Lawren Harris is significant; in 1932 the Canadian painter, along with the other six members of The Group of Seven, had already established himself as the most

⁴ Ibid, 385.

⁵ Henrietta Shore, “Miss Shore is not Amused,” *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 144 (September 1932): 475.

⁶ Weston, “Another Artist Protests,” *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 144 (September 1932): 476.

⁷ Jehanne Bietry Salinger, “Geography and Art—and Shore,” *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 144 (September 1932): 464.

important contemporary artist in his country, especially in the landscape genre. The fact that both Archibald Key and Jehanne Bietry Salinger compare the art of Shore to that of Harris has a twofold significance. On one hand, the analogy brings up issues of nationality, geographical boundaries and national belonging; on the other hand, it raises questions about the different ways in which Harris and Shore perceived nature, the role of the artist, and landscape painting in particular.

Archibald Key's accusation that Shore "despises the Group of Seven" suggests an interesting phenomenon: it implies that Shore hated something good and essentially Canadian.⁸ Both critics make references to Lawren Harris and compare his work to that of Shore, as if Harris' art was the ideal example of what Shore's art could have been, had she remained in her native country.⁹ In Key's and Salinger's attempts to understand Shore's images in nationalistic terms, they ironically miss the very essence of the painter's work: Shore drew from nature an emotional connection which was wholly personal and intimate. In contrast, the Group of Seven had an attitude toward their subjects that reflected nationalistic rather than personal needs. The group formed after World War I, when a disillusioned and depressed Lawren Harris decided to try to make sense of the war, and of how he defined himself as Canadian.¹⁰ The Seven believed in the conscious transformation of nature in art, in a way that expresses a feeling of

⁸ Although they called themselves The Group of Seven, the actual group included many more artists. In the 1930s, the organization changed its name to The Canadian Group of Painters, which included nearly thirty members. The most notable artists in the group were Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, Arthur Lismer, Tom Thompson, J. E. H. MacDonald, Franklin Carmichael, F. H. Varley. See Murray, 7.

⁹ Ironically, Lawren Harris himself moved to the United States in 1938. For two years he lived in Taos, New Mexico where he helped found the Transcendental Painting Group; at this time his artistic interest had shifted from stylized landscapes to highly abstract compositions inspired by Kandinsky. See Tuchman, *The Spiritual in Art*, 43-44.

¹⁰ Harris was on the verge of a nervous breakdown due to his own participation in the war. His brother Howard's death in 1918 also added to the tremendous psychological strain and Harris was overtaken by massive depression. As Harris was recovering from the nervous breakdown he embarked on an exploratory trip to Agloma, attracting friends and kindred spirits to come with him. Eventually, the trips to Agloma strengthened the artists' communal spirit. Joan Murray, *The Best of the Group of Seven* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1984): 11.

connectedness between the Canadian nation and the land it inhabits. In his “Story of the Group of Seven,” Lawren Harris defined “...the function of the artist in life: he must accept in [*sic*] deep singleness of purpose the manifestations of life in man and in great nature, and transform these into controlled and vital expressions of meaning.”¹¹ The Seven traveled a lot throughout Canada and explored her vast landscape. Their trips were exploratory adventures that led the Group on tours around northern Ontario, the land that they associated most intensely with the spirit of Canada.¹²

Harris’s essay reveals the nationalistic overtones of the Group’s purpose in art: to paint “[the] indefinable spirit which seemed to express the country more clearly than any painting I had ever seen... Canada painted in her own spirit.”¹³ In essence, Harris’s words speak of his desire to convey the unique qualities of Canadian nature. “We came to know that it is only through the deep and vital experience of its total environment that a people identified itself with its land, and gradually a deep and satisfying awareness develops. We were convinced that no virile people could remain subservient to, and dependent upon, the creations in art of other people in other times or places.”¹⁴ Harris’ references to “a people” and its freedom, rather than an individual’s spiritual experience, bring out the impersonal nationalistic perspective that the Group of Seven had on nature.

Shore herself reiterated the difference between Harris and her, but apparently Key failed to understand it: “Lawren gets out of nature what he wishes to get out of her. I take from nature what she has to offer.”¹⁵ And she also made it clear: “It would not be possible for me to despise the Group of Seven, as I do not know their work—as a group. This writer likens my

¹¹ Lawren Harris, “The Story of the Group of Seven,” in Murray, 28.

¹² *Ibid*, 15.

¹³ *Ibid*, 26.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 31.

work to that of painters with which he is unfamiliar—merely because I had painted in the country where they also worked.”¹⁶ The criticism directed to Shore then, is based on some kind of hurt national pride. Maybe it was hard to accept the fact that Shore did not care to attach herself to any national boundaries, especially because the tradition of landscape painting, whether in America, Canada or Europe, was inextricably linked to nature and nation.¹⁷ For Salinger, Shore’s fault was in choosing to leave her native land and instead chose to be “painfully detached from her roots:”

Uprooted, having to battle for her daily subsistence among strangers, finding herself on a footing of absolute equality with males in this land of the United States, where feminism is taken ever so much more literally than in Canada, this artist grew away from the shelter which would have been afforded her in her familiar surroundings—the artist she is today painfully detached from her roots, from herself it seems.¹⁸

Yet contrary to being “uprooted,” “among strangers” and “away from the shelter [of] ... her familiar surroundings,” Shore found her roots in the land of Point Lobos, literally and figuratively. In *The Environmental Imagination*, Lawrence Buell speaks of “environmental humility, an awakened place-awareness” and understanding that a place can mold an individual, just as the individual molds a place.¹⁹ Shore was certainly transformed by the spirit of Carmel and its natural surroundings. The transformation of Shore’s self and artistic style, however, did not begin in 1930 with her move to Carmel. A decade earlier, in the early 1920s, Shore had begun painting her semi-abstractions. Although these images predate her exquisite landscape

¹⁵ Henrietta Shore, quoted in Key, 384.

¹⁶ Henrietta Shore, “Miss Shore is not Amused,” 475.

¹⁷ By the 1870s American art and literature abounded with various examples of landscape narrative, “[a]nswering the needs of a citizenry to have a sense of place in the present, and to tie that to a historic consciousness of the ‘New World,’ of ‘America’ as providential environment...” See Janice Simon, *Images of Contentment: John Frederick Kensett and the Connecticut Shore* (Waterbury: The Mattatuck Museum, 2001): 25-6.

¹⁸ Salinger, 463. Salinger’s rather negative comment about feminism is curious, since she was a woman who lived in the United States; and, as I have noted, Shore’s art is essentially feminist in its preoccupation with the connection between woman and nature. Neither does it seem that Shore had personal or career difficulties due to her gender; on the contrary, she was quite successful until 1930.

drawings of the Monterey Peninsula, they signal the artist's preoccupation with the interrelatedness between body, spirit and nature.

In *Nude*²⁰ from the early 1920s (*fig. 25*) Shore began to explore her own 'bodyscape.' Even though she did not title the work a self-portrait, she has clearly depicted her own youthful likeness. When compared to a photograph of the artist in her Los Angeles studio from 1915 (*fig. 26*) the similarities become obvious. Both women possess a round face with broad but soft outline. They also share the same dark long hair tied in a big loose bun behind the head. Most important however is the melancholic and contemplative expression on the women's faces. In the photograph, Shore seems to have registered the viewer, but her gaze is distant and distracted by some inner thought. She is painting a woman playing the violin, who, like Shore, is concentrated on the act of artistic creation. A similar effect is created in *Nude*. The young woman, presumably Shore, glances off into the distance, not even turning to confront the viewer directly. Her calm countenance, enhanced by the soft pastel blue-grays that surround her, suggests a quiet intimate moment that we have been allowed to experience. An oval, mandala-like shape bearing a light grayish-blue glow envelops the woman's torso and head, suggesting Buddhist and Theosophical thought-forms of the enlightened and self-sufficient being.²¹ Thus the image exudes a sense of calm contemplation and spiritual awareness. The subdued effect of *Nude*, should not come as a surprise. As already discussed, Shore was a solitary and seemed to prefer the quiet moments of

¹⁹ Ibid, 253. Buell explains that the sense of place is instinctual and embedded in the human unconsciousness.

Oftentimes, Buell says, we cannot explain why we are reborn in a specific locale, there is no logical explanation to that process; it simply happens. See Buell, 256.

²⁰ The catalogue calls it simply *Nude*, whereas www.Askart.com titles it *Nude Self-Portrait* under their auction listings. We cannot be sure of the original title of this painting, as it might not have had one. Shore did not always title her works; usually it was other people who did so.

²¹ According to the theory of one of the most prominent Theosophists, Charles Leadbeater, a light blue aura "marks devotion to a noble spiritual ideal." Grey is associated with depression and fear, but in Shore's self-portrait, the hue is very light and clear, thus it might signify a melancholic contemplation, especially in combination with light blue. See Charles W. Leadbeater, *Man Visible and Invisible* (Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980): 66-69.

seclusion when she could be alone with her work. The nude self-portrait embodies this attitude, and emphasizes ideas of spirituality and consciousness, which will become extremely subtle but essential to Shore's late drawings from Point Lobos and Carmel.

The connection between Shore's depictions of the female body and her landscapes is even more evident in her painting *Torso* created around 1928 (fig. 27). Although, this work may be perceived as another self-portrait, such a designation is not necessary. Rather, what concerns us in this image is the delineation of the body which will be fully articulated in Shore's sensitive renderings of the Monterey Peninsula landscape. Simultaneously, the artist's tendency towards the exploration of the body in terms of its sexuality, as well as spirituality, foreshadows her emotional attachment to Carmel's natural environment.

Torso received a very poor response from Archibald Key, who thought that the nude figure was too scandalous. "One glance at the anatomical forms and the [Canadian] conservatives would petition Mr. Bennett for Henrietta's deportation."²² Frank but not indecent, however, Shore's *Torso* speaks to the viewer in simple bold shapes. The simplification of form down to its essential elements brings out the innate subject of this work; *Torso* is about being a woman. The image is twofold: on one hand it presents the viewer with a close-up of a woman's core anatomy, the center of her bodily activity, and thus exposes that anonymous figure to the outside world, lending it an air of vulnerability. On the other hand, the round and simplified forms of the torso convey anything but the weak and defenseless. Shore painted in confident big shapes; her arms and hips are described mostly by thick lines but preserving the sense of three-dimensionality. The sweeping curves of the breasts and swelling belly, suggestive of early pregnancy, are unquestionably feminine but are not those of the "weaker" sex. Appropriately, when he saw the painting Weston exclaimed: "astounding thing, so great, so powerful" and "she

is among the immortals.”²³ Shore created an image of a strong woman through an emphasis of physicality. It is curious that the artist choose to focus on the swollen stomach, very similar to that of *Nude*, rather than the face of the sitter, whoever she was. The lack of specificity of the faceless torso refers to a general idea of the feminine, of the origin of life and the life force. Despite its faceless universality, the torso connotes on a more personal level, the desire to be pregnant with life.²⁴ On yet another level, the subject could be understood metaphorically, as an expression of the idea that the woman as creator is equal to the artist as creator.

The personal and artistic significance of *Torso* should be understood in terms of the image’s relation to Shore’s landscape drawings from the 1930s. The drawing *Rocks, Point Lobos (1)*²⁵ (ca. 1930; *fig.* 28) is a typical example. By the time she started executing these images, she had long ceased dating her work and had assumed the practice of giving them straightforward and often repetitive titles; thus one has to think about them as a collection of interrelated works, all of which are a part of Shore’s extended narrative of the Monterey Peninsula. Edward Weston approached his photographs of Point Lobos in a similar way; he saw them as parts of a body of work and gave them simple and repetitive titles, as in the *Peppers* or *Shells* series. The very idea of interrelated parts of a whole, that coexist harmoniously and complement each other is transcendental; just as all elements of nature are imbued with the same life force and thus

²² Key, 384-5.

²³ Weston, *The Daybooks*, 51.

²⁴ Anna Chave has a similar reading of Georgia O’Keeffe’s paintings, whose crevices, folds, round forms and voids, evoke the female uterus and vagina. O’Keeffe did not have children either and thus, Chave suggests “O’Keeffe’s art was not the exalted vision of maternal plenitude that many critics like to imagine...but was instead, if anything, a report on the experience of childlessness; of the unoccupied womb.” See Anna Chave, “O’Keeffe and the Masculine Gaze,” in *Reading American Art*, edited by Marianne Doezema and Elizabeth Milroy, 351-365 (New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 1998): 358. Roznoy speculates that Shore wanted to be the “modern woman,” a lesbian, who chose profession over family and children. Therefore, Roznoy suggests, Shore “lacks a tenderness and sympathy for the subject (maternity, the relationship between a mother and child)...” I do not agree with such an assertion, because it cannot be supported by the little facts we know of Shore’s personal life. See Roznoy, 30.

²⁵ Shore gave the same title to a few other works; so, for the sake of distinguishing them from one another, I have placed numbers in parenthesis after the titles of the drawings.

constitute the multifaceted and diverse components of the universe, so do Shore's and Weston's individual images make up the artists' continuous ecocentric narratives of Point Lobos. As such, the series of landscape images that Shore executed after 1930, provide an insight into the artist's psychological involvement with a specific locale and her own self-searching and spiritual identification.

Despite the fact that *Torso* is a figurative work and *Rocks, Point Lobos (1)* is a landscape drawing, these two images share the same visual vocabulary and a common theme of exploration of body and spirit. If one rotated *Torso* on its side, the shapes and rhythms of its flesh would correspond visually to the round undulating forms of the earth in *Rocks*. Seemingly, the artist has unfolded her own body and draped it over the hard stones of Point Lobos. Unfortunately, this drawing exists only in a black-and-white reproduction and it is impossible to talk about the hues and nuances used by Shore; nevertheless, the surfaces of the rocks appear soft and glowing, recalling the luminosity of suave human skin. Fleishy folds and crevices echo those of a female body, as if nature as a skillful sculptor chiseled swelling breasts, stomach and buttocks out of the lifeless granite. Even details, such as the four lines that shape the ribcage of the torso, find their equivalents in the sensual surface of the rocks where ripples of velvety granite model a fan or finger-like pattern. If that was not enough, the two images seem to complement each other. In *Torso* Shore cropped the female body so that its most intimate parts, the genitalia, remain beyond the limits of the composition. But the sensual folds of the earth in the pencil drawing have filled this 'void'—in the right bottom quarter of the image, several rocks come together, in the way in which petals of a flower envelop its pistil or the folds of the female vagina envelop the clitoris. Round buttocks emerge from two spherical forms in the lower right part of the composition, while a swollen belly graces the very center, alluding to pregnancy and birth-giving. The rocks

thus become a metaphor for the creative power of nature, an allusion to the earth as a mother and creator.

It is important to note that after 1930 Shore ceased depicting the human figure, but she did not eradicate its presence altogether. As seen from the analysis of *Rocks, Point Lobos (I)*, the human body is still present in the way the rock formations reflect the curves and crevices of the female anatomy. This dissolution of the body into nature is transcendental in its origin and reflects Lawrence Buell's notion of the relinquishment of individual identity mentioned in Chapter Two. The human figure is not absent altogether, but it loses its centrality in the narrative, or in this case, Shore's drawings. Instead of the focal point, the human presence becomes an indelible and equal part of the environment. As Buell argues, an ecocentric narrative does not necessitate the complete eradication of the writer's ego, but its suspension, in order to leave room for nature's to assume its rightful place in the order of the universe.²⁶ Shore's visual essay of Point Lobos is decidedly different from her earlier works where the human figure is explicitly depicted; in the 1930's landscapes, Shore evoked humanity in much more subtle ways.

Female curves and crevices all find a place in Shore's sensual drawing of Point Lobos' rocks. Such visual analogies provoked the derisive attitude of the art critics towards Shore's and O'Keeffe's works. Despite the artists' attempts to deny publicly the presence of sexual references in their art, they nevertheless infused their imagery with sensual equivalents of the female physique.²⁷ *Torso*, and later *Rocks, Point Lobos (I)*, seems to be a logical development of ideas expressed in Shore's *Nude (Self-Portrait)* from ca. 1921. The two bodies look strikingly similar, in their simplified forms and curvaceous outlines, but the later work seems to depict an

²⁶ Buell, 168-78.

²⁷ In public O'Keeffe denied that she ever intended her images to be perceived as sexual. Nevertheless, she never put a stop to Stieglitz's promotion of her work as sexual and feminine. For a discussion of O'Keeffe's attitude towards the critics and their interpretation of her works as sexual, see Lynes, especially 158-9.

older woman's body, not so soft and flawless anymore. In *Torso*, the ribcage is exaggerated and reveals the diminished elasticity of the skin; the breasts are not quite as full and symmetrical. Both women have swollen bellies, ironic reminders of the fact that Shore never bore a child and expressed this unfulfilled longing in her paintings. In this context of female desire to be a mother, the comparison between *Nude* and *Rocks Point Lobos (I)* is even more interesting. As mentioned earlier, *Torso* does not reveal the sitter's genitalia; *Nude* and *Rocks*, however, do. The stylized triangle formed at the intersection of thighs and stomach is repeated in the fluid folds of the granite below the "belly," the largest and roundest rock formation. Thus, Shore's youthful body, wrapped in a soft fabric that falls around her hips, finds an equivalent in the drawing of rocks whose very appearance resembles a warm blanket enveloping a living being.

It would be naïve to assume that the artist was unaware of the archetypal connection between woman and earth and the visual correspondence between her own depictions of landscapes and nudes. Even the ill-spirited Archibald Key remarked on the connection and wrote about her "pregnant painted rocks:" "Henrietta Shore expresses only the beginning—the re-creation of the life force in rocks, leaves, flowers and bellies."²⁸ Key was right. Shore's images abound with references to maternity and creation and *Rocks, Point Lobos (I)* is a telling example of this relationship. As noted, the roundness of the biggest rock and its central positioning in the composition, recall a pregnant woman's stomach. What Key failed to see however, is the fact that such visual analogies between a woman's and nature's procreative abilities find a clear precedent in Shore's works from the twenties. The semi-abstractions served as a philosophical and visual basis for the development and synthesis of Shore's mature style and ideas, as expressed in her anthropomorphic drawings of Point Lobos.

²⁸ Key, 385.

During the early twenties Shore executed several images in which stylized female and male bodies spring forth from natural forms—leaves, stalks and rocks. In *Life*, ca.1921 (*fig. 29*), Shore depicts a man and a woman whose torsos are abstracted down to elemental shapes. Their white bodies, outlined with a barely visible veil of soft blue, emerge from two leaf-like formations in a way similar to flower petals unfold from a green stalk. The elongation of the torsos, both ending in triangles pointed down, echoes the shape of a seedpod as well. This idea is strengthened by the fact that the figures lack much definition and the arms are missing altogether. Flower and plant imagery takes us back effortlessly to the idea of procreation and birth, especially here, in the depiction of a man and a woman.

Shore makes the connection between human and nature explicit in *Life*, where the couple springs forth from organic forms. Such imagery was rare at the beginning of the twentieth century when most modernists were moving towards abstract form and away from this type of emblematic images. But precedents of *Life* exist, especially in the works William Blake (1757-1827), a prominent eighteenth-century Romantic poet and artist.²⁹ Blake created numerous images, illustrating both his own and other authors' poems. There are many instances in Blake's visual oeuvre in which human beings and plant forms complement each other, as in the title page of *The Book of Thel* (early 1790s; *fig. 30*).³⁰ In this illustration, the young shepherdess Thel is watching a man and a woman dance among wild flowers. The two figures are surprisingly small and fragile as they emerge from two large red calices. The flowers themselves are animated with movement and join in the human's couple playful chase. In yet another example of this motif,

²⁹ I would like to extend special thanks to Prof. Evan Firestone for pointing out the thematic and visual similarities between Blake's and Shore's works, as well as the fact that the Huntington Library's collection was a resource accessible to Shore when she lived in Los Angeles.

³⁰ Some other examples of the plant-human motif that belong to the Huntington Library collection are *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, "The Blossom," "The Sick Rose" and "The Divine Image," copy E, ca. 1806; *Songs of Innocence*, "Infant Joy," copy I, 1789; *Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, plate 28, 1804-27; *Night Thoughts*, "Night II," p. 35.

page five from *The Song of Los* (ca. 1795; fig. 31), a human couple is cradled by two large lily flowers, an image that is even more closely related to Shore's *Life*.

There is no evidence that Shore was familiar with Blake's works, both visual and verbal. Nevertheless, parallels between these two artist's ideas suggest that the British Romantic could have been a source of inspiration for Shore. The largest collection of Blake's works is located in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery in San Marino, California. Henry Huntington, the founder of the library, began to acquire his collection in 1919 and during that same year he founded the library. By the time of his death in 1927, the avid bibliophile had collected an astounding number of Blake's illuminated books and individual images, including some of his rare and finest works.³¹ San Marino is in close proximity to Los Angeles and thus the extensive Huntington collection, including the two examples cited here, would have been easily accessible to Shore during her second residence in Los Angeles, from 1923 to 1930.

Blake would have been a logical source of ideas for Shore. Transcendentalists and Theosophists alike loved the poet's Romantic notions of the unity between man and nature. In *The Book of Thel* for example, nature is both a mirror for human emotion and a sympathetic confidant: the maiden Thel speaks to a lily, cloud, worm, and clod of clay and shares her thoughts on the transience of life.³² Life and death are intertwined in the never-ending cycle of nature: it gives birth and nurtures human beings, but their lives are short and fleeting.

Similar themes must have occupied Shore's imagination when she created *Life*. The female figure originates from a bright red shape that is reminiscent of a lily pad, a red calla lily calyx or an artist's palette, similar to the huge wooden leaf-shaped palette Shore is holding in a

³¹ See Robert N. Essick, *William Blake at the Huntington: An Introduction to the William Blake Collection in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1994): 9.

³² *Ibid*, 30.

photograph of around 1930 (*fig. 32*). Flowers comprise a large part of Shore's early oeuvre and during the artist's lifetime, the public associated Shore mostly with studies of foliage and blossoms. Dora Hagemeyer wrote of Shore's floral compositions:

It is worthwhile to take one of the flower lithographs and live with it a while – a certain quality of light comes forth to you – a truth; as if the secret of its being had been pierced by one so closely identified with its life, that she has given forth, as the flower gives forth – purely, without mental barriers. It is as if Miss Shore had not looked upon the flowers, but had *become* the flower, and having known it from inside, as it were, had recreated it. (Hagemeyer's italics)

Statements such as this one transmit the emotional impact that Shore's images exert on the viewer. Hagemeyer speaks of Shore's lithographs as if they were a means to the revelation of life and spiritual truth. One cannot help but recall Georgia O'Keeffe's famous line: “—do you feel like flowers sometimes?”³³ and again find a connection between the two female artists: both of them saw in plant forms more than meets the eye.

The prints of which Hagemeyer speaks are unknown to us today. A pencil drawing titled *Iris* (ca. 1930; *fig. 33*) must be the closest reference to the “floral lithographs” that exists today. It depicts three animated iris plants, whose large blossoms dominate the top half of the composition. There are two irises whose blossoms are completely open and whose petals fall gracefully around their pistils. The sinuous curves thus shaped, especially those of the topmost flower, recall Shore's rendition of the open shell and the feminine associations that it carries. Here, however, Shore has depicted an iris that is just now opening up. Its erect, almost phallic, buds create a visual and metaphorical counterpart to the leafy open petals. There is also one flower that has begun blossoming, but has not yet fully formed. This incomplete development creates a sense of progress and movement as well: one can trace the birth of the iris from its

³³ Quoted in Balge-Crozier, 55, is oftentimes presented as evidence for her association with the flowers in her paintings. For a discussion of O'Keeffe's floral studies as self-portraits, see Balge-Crozier, 54-61. For a study of

leaves on the bottom, to the buds of the plant closest to the viewer, to its half-open calyx and then to the fully unfolded irises behind it. Hagemeyer was right to note that Shore had an intimate connection with the flowers, and that she “so closely identifie[d] with [their] life.” *Iris* is a beautiful and sensual “diagram” of the life of a flower, originating in its male and female counterparts.

There are other images that testify to Hagemeyer’s assertion that Shore had a special relationship with her blossoming “models.” One only needs to look at the photograph that shows Shore painting cypress tree roots. The sinuous trunk of the “model” is not seen in the image, nevertheless, plants comprise a large part of the composition: a shaggy bush occupies the space in front of Shore’s easel, while the fence behind the painter is lined with flower pots. Undoubtedly, Shore’s interest in plants extended beyond a simple fascination with form. More than just being vehicles of artist’s modernist vocabulary, flowers and trees were a natural subject for Shore’s deeply felt and oftentimes self-referential images. As Hagemeyer asserts, Shore not only looked at a flower to paint it, but “she had *become* the flower.” Empathically transcendental, this notion of the artist merging with his/her subject during the process of creation again takes us back to Buell’s ideas of ecocentric narrative.

So, to come back to the reading of the painting *Life*: on one hand, the red leaf from which the woman springs forth is a symbolic representation of Shore’s intimate identification with plants. On a more general level, however, one can read it as a visual rendering of the esoteric idea of the interconnectedness of all living beings in the universe: here both man and woman originate from the green leaves of a plant. But even this semblance to foliage is mutable: the leaves seem solid and monumental, as if carved out of stone. Tracing the fluid green shapes, one

O’Keeffe’s calla lily paintings in particular, see Barbara Buhler Lynes, *Georgia O’Keeffe and the Calla Lily in American Art, 1860-1940* (New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 2002).

reaches the gray rocky ground on which the figures seem to float rather than stand firmly. It is from this visibly barren terrain that a sinuous purplish-gray aura rises and envelops the couple. The aura is also shaped like an elongated paint palette, the space between the two figures being a large hole for the artist's thumb. The presence of this luminous outline of the two figures suggests concepts beyond that of transcendentalist correspondence. More than just a way to interweave one shape in another and reiterate the repetition of curves throughout nature, Shore most likely wanted to convey another idea of human spirituality and its visual expression—that of the Theosophists.

Shore was familiar with popular nineteenth-century esoteric teachings like Theosophy.³⁴ She read Uspenskii, whose most important book *Tertium Organum* concerned the mystical concept of the Fourth Dimension.³⁵ In addition, Shore might have been familiar with other Theosophists like Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater whose writings were widely available in the first few decades of the twentieth century and are still available today; even specialized art publications such as *Camera Work* featured excerpts or whole essays on Theosophy.

Thus, Shore must have been thinking of Theosophical concepts, such as the human aura, or thought-forms, when she painted *Life*. Theosophists Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater set forth the idea that every human being's thoughts create "thought-forms." These nonphysical entities manifest themselves in the form of oval-shaped luminosities whose color defines the level of spiritual enlightenment of the bearer.³⁶ The background of the composition is a brilliant shade of cobalt blue, which Leadbeater interpreted as the color of religious devotion. However,

³⁴ Roznoy, 56, 138-9.

³⁵ On August 29 1927, Weston noted that Shore gave him a copy of Uspenskii's *Tertium Organum* because she was enjoying it and wished that the two of them read it at the same time. See Weston, *The Daybooks*, 37.

the fluid veil that envelops the two plant-human beings is charcoal gray with hints of purple, thus symbolic of melancholic sadness.³⁷ The impression of emotional gloom is also suggested in the way the woman hangs her head, perhaps in a gesture of sorrow. These generic faceless man and woman could represent all of humanity, or possibly Adam and Eve, the original creators. They float within the gray bubble of earthly life, not yet aware of the spiritual blue aura that goes beyond their own world. Nevertheless, the image is optimistic about the outcome: both male and female torsos are white, outlined with a faint trace of blue, thus suggesting a rebirth and spiritual growth.³⁸ The painting represents the beginning of human life and the origin of spiritual consciousness.

In *Life*, Shore also expressed one of the founding notions of transcendentalism: all forms and beings in the universe are inextricably connected and reflect each other.³⁹ In this depiction of a human couple, Shore was able to convey the continuity of life by painting ambiguous shapes and forms that can be interpreted in many different ways. Plants become rocks, rocks transform into a glowing aura, flower calyces recall an artist's palette. Roznoy has speculated that "the blood-red caul that lies between the male and the female figures...resolves to a uterus, the pathways to vaginal birth canals, and the purely white figures into the newly born."⁴⁰ Naturally, the woman is the one who bears the calyx, as it is associated with fertility and creation; in this context, Roznoy's reading of the red shape as a uterus seems appropriate. On the other hand, Shore paints the red leaf in the shape of a painting palette and thus implies her belief in the connection between artist and subject and even artist and nature, because they are both creators.

³⁶ Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, *Thoughtforms* (1952; reprint, Kessinger Publishing): 6-7. Hereafter referred to as "Besant and Leadbeater."

³⁷ Leadbeater, 66-69.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Emerson, "Circles," 179.

⁴⁰ Roznoy, 153.

Nature gives birth to all plant and animal life, while the artist creates visual interpretations of nature's reality. These ideas fit in with the painting's Theosophical reading. According to Leadbeater, warm red is the color of love and affection.⁴¹ Thus, it is in the union of opposites—male and female, physical body and spirit—that the highest state of consciousness is achieved and a human life is identified with its origin. Nature is a never-ending process of transformation; the life force is never lost, it constantly percolates through all of nature's creations.

The drawing *Nude*, ca. 1920 (*fig. 34*), is another example from the semi-abstraction series that carries a similar transcendental message. It shows a woman standing on a block of stone or earth whose lily-pad shape is reminiscent of the leaf/palette that appears in *Life*. The way in which this stone rises out of the ground recalls an axed tree stump as well. In this image, although the woman is alone and confident, she seems to need support. Both of her hands gently touch two rock or tree-like formations that protrude from behind her. Art historian Roger Aikin suggests that in *Nude*, Shore has depicted herself. Aikin finds an analogy between the large stony stump/leaf on which the nude figure is standing and the palette that Shore is holding in the 1930 photograph. The point is well taken because a correspondence between the two shapes certainly exists. Even the stylized ear and face of the woman echo this omnipresent leaf formation, thus making a direct connection between the human being and her surroundings. But is it true that the meaning of the painting is that Shore is “alone, standing resolutely on the pedestal of her art”?⁴² Or maybe the artist is expressing her belief in art's ability to create life; just as the rock/tree/leaf “gives birth” to the female nude, art becomes the source of life, of the life-force. Or perhaps vice versa: in his essay “Art,” Emerson put forth the idea that the universal creative energy, channeled

⁴¹ Leadbeater, 67.

⁴² Aikin, “Shore and Weston,” 60.

through the artist, produces art.⁴³ As we have seen, it is the artists' transparent vision, or the realized connection between the Eye and the I, between the subjective and objective, that allows them to reveal the transcendental continuity of nature.

The transcendentalist notions of correspondence and enlargement echo in the writings of other literary figures, whom Shore cited in her artist's statement. The most omnipresent and pervasive of those is a quote by the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: "There is no past we need long to return to. There is only the eternally new which is formed out of the enlarged elements of the past, and our genuine longing must always be for a bigger, better creation."⁴⁴ I say "omnipresent and pervasive" because this particular passage appears in every piece of writing about, or from, Shore. She even had it placed at the beginning of a couple of her exhibitions, as her motto. The quote in itself sounds more like one taken from Emerson, but that should not be surprising since Emerson revered Goethe and praised him as the prototype of the ideal creative thinker, writer and scientist.⁴⁵ Again we find the notion of enlargement and intuitive perception. At the beginning of the statement from which Shore took the above excerpt, Goethe suggests that the past and human longing for the past are false interpretations of reality. The poet argues that one need not think of the significant experience of our life as something of fleeting nature that eventually becomes extraneous to our being. On the contrary, from the very

⁴³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Art," in *Essays: First Series*, 208.

⁴⁴ On page 136 of her dissertation Roznoy cites the source of the passage incorrectly as: "from "Conversation with Muller [*sic*]," November 4, 1823, *Goethe, His Whole Works*, ed. Amtze Beutler, 1949." In fact, the quote in the German appears under the heading "F.v Müller, November 4, 1823" in Johann Wolfgang Goethes, *Gedenkausgabe der Werke, Briefe und Gespräche 28. August 1949*. Band 23 (Goethes Gespräche Zweiter Teil). Herausgegeben von Ernst Beutler (Zürich: Artemis Verlags-AG, 1950): 314-315. It is important to note that these are not Goethe's words, but a paraphrase by Müller. I still have not been able to locate an English version of the text and I would like to extend special thanks to Anelia Atanassov who translated the passage from the German. I would also like to thank Katherine Lorimer, reference librarian at the Goethe-Institut in New York, for her assistance in finding the original source and text of the quote. See Appendix B for original text.

⁴⁵ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Goethe; or, The Writer," in *Representative Men: Seven Lectures*, vol. IV of *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987): 156-166.

beginning, that experience should become an indelible part of us, thus creating a better “I.”⁴⁶

This passage unites Goethe’s and Emerson’s romantic belief that the mind needs to be liberated from the concepts of materiality or time. It is only through intuitive perception and vision that one can understand the eternal essence of the universe, and the continuity of life throughout all of nature and all of its elements, small and big.

In his essay “The Metamorphosis of Plants,” Goethe put forth the idea of the archetypal plant, *Die Urphlanze*, from which all other plants originated.⁴⁷ The essay appeared in 1797, thirty-nine years before Emerson wrote his seminal essay “Nature.” According to Goethe, the leaf is the smallest element from which all other more complicated structures could be derived. The *Urphlanze*, however, is a concept that is not limited to the plant world. In his poetry and other writings, Goethe intermingled the idea of repetition of form and the endless progress of all natural forces. Even more importantly, Goethe wrote of nature and plants as female entities and described nature’s creative processes in terms of human coupling and reproduction:

Yes, the leaf with its hues feeleth the hand all divine,
And on a sudden contracteth itself; the tenderest figures

Twofold as yet, hasten on, destined to blend into one.
...
Presently, parcell'd out, unnumber'd germs are seen swelling,
Sweetly conceal'd in the womb, where is made perfect the fruit.⁴⁸

In this image of rebirth, elements of nature become human beings that come together and merge into one being to create offspring. These stanzas correspond to some of the already discussed images by Shore—leaves are blending into one, seeds and germs are swelling, fruit and womb are connected. Goethe’s choice of words is certainly meant to evoke the idea of creation and

⁴⁶ Goethe, 314.

⁴⁷ Friedrich von Wolfgang Goethe, *The Metamorphosis of Plants* (Bio-Dynamic Farming & Gardening Association, 1993), originally published in 1797.

⁴⁸ See Appendix C.

evolution, a continuous process of renewal. As was demonstrated earlier, Shore also depicted the same ongoing process in images such as *Iris*es and the semi-abstract paintings in which the artist portrayed men and women emerging from flowers, trees and rocks.

Goethe also spoke of the emerging of one thing from another, “the eternally new,” and the endless reincarnation of forms in nature:

Here doth Nature close the ring of her forces eternal;
Yet doth a new one, at once, cling to the one gone before,
So that the chain be prolonged for ever through all generations,
And that the whole may have life, e'en as enjoy'd by each part.⁴⁹

Shore read Goethe and must have known about his famous theory of *Urphlanze*.⁵⁰ The idea of evolution of all beings, human and nonhuman, underlies both *Life* and *Nude*. The presence of a palette-leaf in both paintings is a symbol of the correspondence between art and nature and their interconnectedness in the universal flow of life energies.

Nude, however, takes this idea to the next level. The stony platform under the nude female figure also recalls a tree stump. This reference to trees is an early indicator of the symbolism that Shore will adopt in the 1930s. In her late landscapes of Point Lobos, such as the painting *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos* (fig. 4), trees take on anthropomorphic forms and become surrogates for the human being attuned to the spirit of nature. In *Nude* Shore is still developing the motif of a cut down tree. While it might evoke a negative connotation (dead tree, dead nature), the image as a whole seems rather optimistic. The female nude gently touches two earthly protrusions, also stump-like, and passes through them. A winding path weaves behind her, emerges from a depression and climbs up to the pedestal, suggesting that the woman is moving and traversing from a lower to a higher level. This road seems dangerous and precarious: the path resembles a narrow passage, cut out of the solid rock; darkness envelops it on both

⁴⁹ Ibid.

sides. The shape and smooth rocky surface of the path echo the pedestal on which the woman is standing—once again, a shape evoking a leaf, a palette, but also an embryo, curled up in the fetal position. This interrelatedness is expressed not only by the imagery that Shore chose, but also in the way that she drew and painted her subjects. In all of her works from the twenties, the human figure possesses a monumental sculptural quality, which in the case of *Nude* is just one more device used to connect the woman and the earth; it is an image of birth, growth and human evolution, both in terms of spiritual awareness and physical development. On a more global level, *Nude* is an image that establishes a close connection between nature, life and art, rather than just the specific connection between Shore and her art as Aikin suggests.⁵¹ In 1947 Shore stated: “I am not interested in ‘art for art’s sake.’ Rather, I am interested in the rise of drawing, painting and sculpture as the means of further cognizance with, and manifestation of Life – the very essence of Being.”⁵² In her paintings from the twenties the artist was already illustrating her belief in her own role as a mediator, a liminal being that can cross the boundary between nature and humanity. Aikin’s reading of *Nude* as a self-portrait is valid to the extent that Shore saw herself as an indelible part of her surroundings and as a vital part of a complex system of life forms. In short, *Nude* is as much about Shore’s sense of personal connection to the earth in general as it is about the interconnectedness of matter and spirit.

Nude also offers some visual evidence that Shore might have studied William Blake’s images and borrowed from his ideas, both thematically and in terms of visual vocabulary. Shore emphasized the various features of the female anatomy, delineating different muscle groups and simplifying them. This approach is similar to Blake’s in works such as *Satan Watching the*

⁵⁰ See Roznoy, 134.

⁵¹ In Aikin’s article, the dating of *Nude*, as well as another similar drawing, *Two Nudes*, to the early 1930s is incorrect. The catalogue of Shore’s retrospective exhibition, the LA County Museum and the style and subject of the works, all agree to a date of around 1920.

Endearments of Adam and Eve (1807; fig. 35). The figure of Eve is muscular and chiseled and her anatomy is clearly articulated. In addition, both women establish a direct connection between the earth and themselves. In Shore's drawing, the figure gently touches stony pedestals, while Blake's Eve extends her fingers towards the stylized flowers that cover the ground underneath her body. Possibly, Shore's depiction of a lonely female figure is the embodiment of a new Eve, one that can walk through life without a male partner, and whose only support is nature itself. After all, Shore spent her life without a partner and the landscape of the Monterey Peninsula was her closest friend during her last years.

In February 1923 *Arts and Decoration* published a review of Shore's exhibition at the Ehrich Galleries in New York.⁵³ The layout of the *Arts and Decoration* publication is of interest—the five images that supplement the text are arranged in the shape of a cross (fig. 36). Four paintings—*Two Worlds*, *The Trail of Life*, *Life Emerges* and *Life*, which I already discussed—construct the arms and legs of the cross. As their titles suggest, all of these paintings evoke the theme of creation through abstract elemental shapes resembling seed and embryo forms. The only representational image, among those featured in the article, is the one placed in the very center of the cross, the keystone of the four “appendages.” This is the painting *Maternity*, a figurative composition which portrays the mother as a procreative and nurturing entity. The subject also suggests the abundant religious iconography of the Virgin and the Christ child. Shore's choice of a mother breastfeeding her baby closely resembles the Renaissance *Madonna lactans* motif that symbolizes the virtues of motherly love and nurture.⁵⁴ We can only

⁵² Henrietta Shore, “Slap Dash Times Call For Pains In Art,” *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 10 October 1947: 15.

⁵³ “Subconscious Emotionalism on Canvas,” *Arts and Decoration* (February 1923): 26. The article is not very informative as it repeats word for word Raymond Henniker-Heaton's essay from the exhibition pamphlet.

⁵⁴ The Christian type of *Madonna lactans* has a long tradition in Western art. See for example Leonardo, *Madonna Litta*, 1490-91; Michelangelo, *Madonna of the Stairs* (1490-92); Jan Van Eyck, *Madonna Lactans (Lucca Madonna)*, 1436; Rogier Van Der Weyden, *Virgin with the Child and SS Peter, John the Baptist, Cosmas and*

guess whether Shore had a part in the arrangement of these reproductions. We do know that the artist was raised in the Christian tradition. During Shore's later years, disillusioned by poverty and the public's oblivion of her art, she became more and more consumed by the teachings of the Bible.⁵⁵ Her formative artistic years however, reveal an interest in the esoteric and spiritual teachings of Theosophy, which incorporated Christian imagery. Thus one can understand the article in *Arts and Decoration* as a testament to Shore's preoccupation with spirituality, man and nature in general. The five-image layout on page twenty-six represents a sort of a diagram of interrelatedness, with the female creative force in the middle. Above and below are paintings which allude to the unification of two opposites—male and female, sun and moon, human and landscape. On the sides, two abstract objects symbolize the origin and unfolding of life—seed-like and womb-like forms describe abstract concepts of the life force.

The image on the left of *Maternity* is *Trail of Life*, with its symbolism of birth and life. Opposite to it, on the right of the mother and child is *Life Emerges*. The painting has an asymmetrical composition. A white curvilinear shape, recalling a shell or a flower, occupies the bottom left corner; behind it, a floating band of gray sweeps from top left to bottom right. The rest of the canvas sinks back into darkness. When viewing the bud-like bursting image here, one recalls shell and flower imagery, which as noted earlier are significant in Shore's oeuvre. Both shells and flowers evoke the female procreative organs, woman's creative powers and Shore's self-identification with nature. *Life Emerges* and *Trail of Life* are the two abstract paintings that flank *Maternity*, an image of the nurturing mother. Their placement in the group of five pictures

Damien, 1450-51; Masolino, *Madonna with the Child (Madonna Lactans)*, n.d.; Domenico Beccafumi, *Madonna with the Child and St John the Baptist*, 1538-40.

⁵⁵ Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition*, 38. According to Aikin, the Hollinrake collection includes two religious paintings—"one mystical and haunting *Christ Walking on the Water*."

in *Arts and Decoration* defines the horizontal axis of the cross as the realm of human and cosmic birth, of the physical development of our universe.

The two vertical components of the cross arrangement present a different kind of creation—that of the mind and spirit. On the bottom is *Life*, which, as I pointed out earlier, embodies ideas of Theosophical enlightenment. The couple is at the beginning of their path to God: they are not yet spiritually aware. Thus, the image sits at the bottom of the cross formation, signifying the beginning of the evolution of the soul towards enlightenment. In contrast, the topmost painting, *Two Worlds* (ca. 1921; fig. 37), symbolizes the highest level of consciousness. The painting is executed entirely in shades of blue, the favored color of spiritual awareness.⁵⁶ Two luminous orbs, which emanate a white to pale blue glow, are positioned diagonally across the canvas. Behind them, concentric circles which emanate from a center between the orbs, delineate a strange natural phenomenon evoking *aurora borealis*. In the left half of the composition, a precipitous mountain peak rises amidst the blue atmosphere and barely touches the top orb.

Clearly Shore is trying to evoke the mystery of the universe. The two celestial orbs can easily be understood as the sun and the moon. On the other hand, the title *Two Worlds* suggests that these spheres could also be two levels of reality, or two stages of spiritual enlightenment. If this is so, the top orb portrays the highest state of consciousness that can be reached only after a difficult journey up the mountain's steep precipice. According to Charles Leadbeater's color theory, the opaque brown shades of the mountain peak would represent the lowest stage of evolution or the earthly realm of dense matter.⁵⁷ The orbs floating above the mountainous peak

⁵⁶ See Leadbeater, 69. Also see Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art, And Painting in Particular* (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1947): 58-9. An entry in Weston's Daybooks testifies to the fact that Shore read Kandinsky and was aware of his color theories. See Weston, 34.

⁵⁷ Leadbeater, 38.

however, are symbolic renderings of a higher spiritual state. As Kandinsky pointed out, blue tends to create a concentric movement, especially when the blue gradually gets lighter and more translucent as it approaches white.⁵⁸ This is precisely the case with the strange circular formations in Shore's painting. Furthermore, when considered in the context of Theosophy, the symbolism of the concentric circles becomes even clearer. According to Annie Besant's and Charles Leadbeater's interpretation, a thought-form that consists of concentric blue circles manifests a thought of a high order; such a blue sphere reveals a bearer who is envisioning "the LOGOS as pervading all nature."⁵⁹ *Two Worlds* stands above *Maternity*, at the top of the cross, to signify the highest stage of human development. The whole "diagram" of the cross therefore, traces a human's life from physical birth, to spiritual enlightenment.

Shore continued to develop her "semi-abstractions" in the years before her move to Carmel. The year 1930 marked a visible transformation in Shore's style. Moving away from the conceptual abstraction of the 1920s work, Shore adopted a more naturalistic approach in the landscapes of Carmel. Essentially, the artist returned to a sort of romantic realism that allowed her to espouse an ecocentric view of her subject: the Carmel landscapes reveal Shore's desire for integration of mind, body and soul in the environment of a specific place. These landscapes mark the last notable and important works of Shore's life, precisely because they reflect her newfound union with nature, far from the crowds and material preoccupations of the important artistic centers like New York and Los Angeles.⁶⁰ In 1933 she wrote: "I have worked to develop the gift

⁵⁸ Kandinsky, 60.

⁵⁹ Besant and Leadbeater, 50-51. The LOGOS, also known as "the Word of God" or "the Solar Deity" is the origin of all life, the omnipresent "mighty Being" or God. See Charles Leadbeater, *A Textbook of Theosophy* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1954): 17.

⁶⁰ The last major works that Shore executed were the murals for the post offices at Santa Cruz and Monterey, which were commissioned by the WPA's project TRAP. However, they do not bear as much personal relevance for Shore as the landscape drawings, since the murals were commissioned to conform to certain ideological needs of the government and were meant for public viewing. The drawings on the other hand, were very personal and rarely seen by anyone but Shore's closest friends. For a discussion of the murals see Richard Lorenz, "The Mural

of understanding nature that I might best use that gift through my drawing and painting to express the love received and given to God.”⁶¹ The same year, Edward Weston worded Shore’s development eloquently in the 1933 limited edition book dedicated to her:

Emerging from the “Semi-Abstractions,” Shore has become identified more closely with nature, but nature freed from the non-essentials, which diffuse an artist’s early work. Retaining the free, sweeping rhythms, the grandly contrasted volumes achieved in her “abstract” painting, Shore now realizes a fusion of her own ego with a deep universality. Approaching nature with reverence, using her tools with knowledge and command, her work compels attention.⁶²

As Weston pointed out, going into the thirties Shore retained her affinity towards abstraction, but developed a sense of texture and surface in order to convey a closer connection with nature. As noted in previous discussions of *Nude* and *Rocks, Point Lobos (1)* (figs. 27 and 28), for Shore the landscape became an extension of the human body and soul; her trees and rocks are depictions of living organisms whose energy is animated through the careful and sensitive touch of the colored pencil or crayon. The intimate touch of the landscape drawings stems from Shore’s specific choice of subjects. She never depicted recognizable touristy sites or attractions, but instead chose to draw rocks, pebbles and trees.⁶³ Thus, her exploration of Point Lobos does not participate in the nineteenth-century American tradition of landscape painting, nor is it a part of the Stieglitz’s circle association of America with the city and the natural landmarks of the Southwest and the Northeast. Free from the romanticized, tourist-oriented conceptions of Carmel and Point Lobos, Shore’s series of drawings comprises a narrative of a

Paintings,” in *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition: 1900-1963* (Monterey: Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art Association, 1986): 40-43. Also see Charlotte Streifer Rubinstein, “The Thirties: Daughters of the Depression” in *American Women Artists from Early Indian Times to the Present* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1982): 217-265.

⁶¹ Shore to her brother Egerton, in an inscription inside a copy of her monograph from 1933; quoted by Knight, 204.

⁶² Edward Weston in Armitage, 11.

⁶³ Only a few of these pictures are known today, mostly from reproductions and photographs made during Shore’s lifetime. Of those, there are five images of rocks and six of trees; they all bear generic titles such as *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos* or *Rocks, Point Lobos*.

place.⁶⁴ According to Buell, an extensive and detailed examination of place, necessarily implicates the examination of self.⁶⁵ Then, we can consider Shore's series of landscape drawings as an exploration and reflection of her own self.

One of the characteristics of an ecocentric narrative is the depiction of nature as more than a background or a setting, allowing it to speak for itself as self-sufficient. Thus, Buell notes, anthropomorphism or personification alone is not enough to establish nature as a presence in its own right. Instead, a love for nature must be grounded in a place, in the writer's (artist's) intimate experience of the place. Nature's independence from the distortion of human perception relies on the specificity of the narrative and the observation of even the minutest details.⁶⁶ It is this kind of devotion to specificity that makes Shore's landscapes of Point Lobos so poignantly personal. In Shore's drawings, stylized and simplified form is only the outer surface of things. One of the several *Rocks, Point Lobos (2)* (ca.1930; *fig. 38*) depicts the "lifeless" granites as if they were a group of animals that have gathered together on a sunny afternoon. Eyes, nostrils and teeth protrude from the crevices and lend the rocks an animated quality. Shore's rendering of such details suggests an affinity to the grotesque. In this drawing, the rocks shed their mundane appearance and don the colorful guises of various bizarre little creatures. Every pebble, cranny and swelling carries a sense of life. As Emerson said, "Even the corpse has its own beauty."⁶⁷ The multifaceted surfaces recall a colony of cells, a multitude of small organisms, which constitute a unified entity—a microcosm such as the human organism, which in turn reflects the macrocosm of the universe itself. When compared to the real rocks of the Monterey peninsula

⁶⁴ For an example of landscape painting as personal narrative see Simon, 16-41. For a discussion of Kensett's abandonment of "touristic perspectives shaped by picturesque aesthetics," see page 35.

⁶⁵ Buell, 6-27, 115-39.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 217.

⁶⁷ Emerson, "Nature," 13.

(fig. 39; courtesy of Janice Simon), Shore's stony animals uphold their realism, but only superficially, by formal likeness; beyond that, they reveal a personal touch and affection.

The artist employed the repeating patterns of nature: the ovals and circles, spirals and soft curves. But she moved beyond the diagrammatic renderings of nature in her 1920s works; here the forms are not quite as simple and shallow, as in *Shell* for example. Rather than depicting the stylized and nonspecific landscapes that appear in paintings such as *Life* or *Nude*, the images from the 1930s portray the recognizable unique trees and rock formations of Point Lobos. Steering clear from the stylized and oftentimes monochromatic environments of her earlier work, Shore imbued her Monterey Peninsula images with minute details. It is in the care and attention with which these landscapes are executed that an incredible sense of life and energy lies. What Shore was striving to understand and reveal is the unseen depth and multifaceted surfaces of natural form. She believed that the energy of the universe flowed through everything, but that the human eye can sometimes overlook this miraculous flow. As Emerson argued, the role of artists is to reveal the marvels of nature; they cannot recreate nature, but they can suggest its incredible life to the unseen eyes of humanity.⁶⁸ Thus, even when Shore depicted “dead matter” like the dry and twisted forms of withering cypress trees or the undulating lines of rocks and pebbles, she imbued her subjects with a life force. The artist had a unique understanding of nature, especially that of Point Lobos: where others saw lifeless and “gnarled”⁶⁹ trees, Shore saw living beings. In one instance of brilliant sensitivity to Shore's creative endeavors, Archibald Key noted:

Poet (Jefferson), photographer (Weston), and painter (Shore) find in the surging sea, the age-old rocks, the snarled [*sic*], twisted Monterey cypress the same life force. Henrietta made one feel new life emerging from the bleached, wracked trunks that

⁶⁸ See Emerson, “Art,” 209.

⁶⁹ In every single description of the Monterey Cypress – from poetic to scientific accounts, “gnarled” is the ever-present epithet. In contrast, Shore's trees are anything but “gnarled”.

clung tenaciously on the rocky slopes. “Deadwood? Superficially yes! But in every inch life was being re-created—new life, a new form.”⁷⁰

The painting *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos* (ca. 1930; *fig. 4*) stands as a vivid example of the way in which Shore enlivened the “deadwood.” The composition relies entirely on bright primary and secondary colors—blue, green, red, yellow, purple and orange—thus doing away with unessential complications of color gradations. The picture portrays two trees, one red and one yellow, which seem to dance in a passionate embrace. Shore again relies on color significance to enrich her subjects and impart to them a deeper meaning. Here, the bright warm colors that she chose, lend a sense of energy and life to the trees. More importantly, the two colors distinguish the trees from one another. Possibly, the odd couple represents the two opposing creative forces, of male and female. The figures reach out to one another and caress each other’s branches, like lovers. They also “fit” into each other: the yellow tree’s roots protrude to the left and seem to crawl into a deep niche inside the red trunk.

The choice of color is important for two reasons: because of the expressive qualities of bright yellow and red hues set against a background of cooler tones like green, blue and violet; but also because of the symbolism of these colors as viewed by Theosophists. According to Leadbeater, crimson is the manifestation of love, “the most beautiful feature in the vehicles of the average man.”⁷¹ Yellow, on the other hand, implies intellectuality. Thus, Shore depicted the union of emotion and reason, two universal opposing forces whose concord promises to balance and complete the whole. Again, we find Shore’s persistent theme of procreation and the harmonious merging of two opposite entities.

Cypress Trees, Point Lobos is an interesting example of Shore’s work from the thirties, both because of its own merit, but also because it seems to be one of only two paintings that she

⁷⁰ Key, 385.

did of Point Lobos; all other works that she executed in that period are drawings.⁷² In the drawings, the sense of life and energy is expressed even more emphatically than the painting. The reason why Shore's subjects seem so alive is her careful layering of different colors on top of each other. She used the rough surface of the drawing paper and employed it in such a way as to create multifaceted and deep tones, rather than flat blocks of color that oftentimes result from drawing with colored pencils. Shore's rendering of rocks and trees reveals an extraordinary sensitivity to form and color. The textures and surfaces of these drawings are teeming with life and with a multitude of organisms. As critic Merle Armitage aptly pointed out:

...it is in her pencil drawings that Henrietta Shore has reached the pinnacle of her power, the uncommon ability to convey vividly those things which can be neither said nor written. With sureness at times disarming, she elects those forms which have for us the most significance and in this medium epitomizes the rarest phase of her recondite comprehension.⁷³

The "recondite comprehension" of which Merle Armitage speaks imbues all of Shore's images, but it seems most palpable and approachable in the drawings she did at Point Lobos. These small pictures were the most profoundly personal of all of Shore's images. As Susan Landauer has noted, Shore drew sustenance from an interior dialogue and expressed herself in the form of self-referential imagery—a precedent for female artists before World War II. The 1940s witnessed the first broad-scale development of an iconography centered on women and women's experience; self-portraiture gained widespread currency in women's art of Northern California.⁷⁴ In the case of Henrietta Shore, the expression of self remained disguised in the form of landscape

⁷¹ Leadbeater, 67.

⁷² To the best of my knowledge, there is only one other painting of trees or rocks: the one that Shore is painting in the photograph of around 1930 (*fig. 30*). I have not been able to locate the painting or another image of it.

⁷³ Armitage, 16.

⁷⁴ Susan Landauer, "Searching for Selfhood: Women Artists of Northern California," in *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945*: 32.

imagery rather than the more traditional forms of self-portraiture.⁷⁵ Again one needs to recall the rock-like earthbound quality of the female body and its connection to *Rocks, Point Lobos (1)*. In the drawings of Point Lobos Shore refined the body-rock of *Nude* and got rid of the figure altogether—as Weston put it, she got “rid of the non-essentials.”

An exquisite example of the “body-scape” drawings is *Rocks, Point Lobos (3)* (ca. 1930; *fig. 40*). The gentle pink and pale peach shades that Shore employed could not come closer to the hues of soft human skin. The rocks lack any hard edges and protrusions, but instead their surface seems velvety-soft and malleable. Amongst the lighter-colored rocks, Shore placed four darker formations. At first sight they look like tongues, playfully protruding from the rocks crevices. However, they also recall other orifices of the female body—a vagina with its soft gradations of light to dark pink, or breasts, with their dark nipples gracefully perched atop a round hill. From the very technique which she selected for these landscapes, to the way in which she abstracted certain forms while paying utmost attention to the smallest details in surface and texture, all of the choices that the artist made speak of her care and dedication to depicting Carmel and its surroundings.

When looking at the drawings done by Shore in the early thirties, one cannot help but notice the “loneliness” of her subjects. In contrast to the artist’s work from the 1910-20s, these later images steer away from the genre of portraiture and they never represent the human figure explicitly. Her compositions are usually centered on a close view of a rock, tree or roots alone and often impart a sense of solitude and isolation. The drawing *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos*, ca.1930 (*fig. 41*), along with the eponymous painting (*fig. 4*), is an exception to the rule; in this

⁷⁵ This phenomenon is not necessarily restricted to Shore; Georgia O’Keeffe and the Canadian Emily Carr both reinvented the self-portraiture and landscape genres and merged them into a new kind of expression of the self. For a compelling discussion of the self-referential quality of O’Keeffe’s and Carr’s nature imagery see Udall, 80-265.

colored pencil drawing Shore depicts two sinuous cypresses, whose bodies seem to sway gracefully in the Pacific breeze. A sense of stillness drapes over the intimate scene and the viewer feels as if he/she has just intruded onto this private moment. This feeling is strengthened by the closeness of the trees whose roots come right to the bottom of the picture plane, almost stepping out of the image. It is hard to deny the anthropomorphic quality of the odd couple; as in the painting by the same title, the cypresses appear to complement each other, both curving their trunks in the same rhythm and pose. One of them protrudes a limb towards the other, as if reaching out to caress her/him. Nevertheless, the feeling of loneliness remains. With a precise line, albeit sensitive and tactile, Shore separated the cypresses into distinct entities. The trees are stretching their branches in vain because, separated by the ephemeral blueness of the sky, they can never caress each other and their bodies remain two separate organisms.

Cypress Trees, Point Lobos bears an important characteristic of Shore's late landscapes, namely the anthropomorphic qualities with which she endows her subjects. In its essence, the drawing and painting *Cypress Trees* are new versions of *Life*, the image which depicts the universal Adam and Eve, the feminine and masculine forces of life. In her later work, the drawing of the cypress trees, Shore did away with human form, but retained the human presence in the anthropomorphic forms of the sinuous trees. However, this does not mean that the human figure is absent altogether; on the contrary, Shore renders her trees and rocks in ways that essentially depict human and earth united—in their functions as creators, as carriers of life, as vessels for the universal energy that flows through everything. The landscape becomes the primary body—where every element belongs to the whole and where humanity is only a small part of the greater whole, and thus the human body cannot describe the larger-than-life spirit of nature. The human intercessor becomes obsolete and dissolves into the environment.

At the time when Shore created her drawings, sensitive critics who had access to these images were able to identify the underlying transcendental nature of Shore's imagery. In November of 1931 Dora Hagemeyer, wife of photographer John Hagemeyer and good friend of Shore's and Weston's, wrote an article in the local paper in which she applauded Shore's affectionate depictions of the landscape:

The rocks at Point Lobos have this same vibrant quality. It cannot be explained by line or mass or color – it is a quality of life, never suspected from the casual observer of the earth... She not only knows those rocks; temporarily she *becomes* them. In one instance she has united them basically with the ancient Chinese conception. She has touched, perhaps an eternal truth, for, while certain drawings recall the ancient Chinese, they might just as well recall the work of any civilization in its purest phase, before the conjuring of the mentality has crept in to elaborate and spoil.⁷⁶

This appraisal of Shore's sensitivity to impalpable realities offers not only a clue to the philosophical teachings that might have informed the artist's creations. Hagemeyer mentions "the ancient Chinese conception" but this is not necessarily an important source for Shore. Most likely, the esoteric ideas, which Hagemeyer was thinking of, came from Theosophical teachings rather than directly from Taoism, Buddhism or Shinto. Coupled with Shore's interest in Emersonian transcendentalism, Theosophy formed the philosophical and spiritual foundation of Shore's visual expression. The ways in which she depicted nature cannot be explained solely through her secluded personality. It was mentioned earlier that Shore, far from being alone in the venture to explore the universal connection between earth and human, was a participant in a widely influential tendency of the time: an interest in the universal life force that was fueled mostly by the writings of the transcendentalists Emerson, Thoreau and Walt Whitman.

In her penultimate letter to Weston from January 8, 1933, in direct response to Weston's request to explain the essential character of her work and to talk about the ideas that inspired it,

⁷⁶ Dora Hagemeyer, "Henrietta Shore: Her Work," *The Carmelite*, 5 November 1931, 4.

Shore stated: “I enclose the keynote and guide to my work.”⁷⁷ What she wrote that day discloses a deep reverence for nature and a desire to understand the universal elements of creation and life. Even though she never refers to Emerson himself, it is more than clear that the concepts she talks about are directly related to transcendentalism:

To be true to nature one must abstract. Nature does not waste her forms. If you would know the clouds – then study the rocks. Flowers, shells, rocks, trees, mountains, hills – all have the same form within themselves used with endless variety, but with consummate knowledge. ‘The rhythms change, they do not close.’⁷⁸ Rodin rightly said ‘A woman, a horse, a mountain – all the same thing.’⁷⁹

This artistic statement embodies the romantic idea of nature as beautiful in itself, but also as a revelation of transcendent beauty. Shore’s recitation of Rodin epitomizes the transcendental notion of enlargement of natural forms as physical reflections of the universal spirit. The quotation echoes Emerson’s statement: “The primary forms, as the sky, the mountains, the tree, the animal, give us delight in and for themselves; a pleasure arising from outline, color, motion, and grouping.”⁸⁰ To Shore, and to the famous transcendentalist, nature’s creations are all emanations of the same life force that flows through the entire universe. This energy is present in the ever-lasting and self-renewing natural world, as well as in more temporary abodes such as the human body. One form repeats another; all human beings, all rocks and trees are elements of the same living universe. One only needs to realize the correspondence between human and nature, between what is living and what we might consider non-living, such as clouds or hills. “The mountains are dynamic to me, a living part of the rhythm of all life,”⁸¹ Shore said. She was consciously trying to perceive nature in its purest form, free of preconceptions and imposed thoughts. Speaking of the painter John Langley Howard, she noted: “He is a close student of

⁷⁷ Henrietta Shore, letter to Weston from January 8, 1933.

⁷⁸ Here Shore is quoting John Masefield, “The Passing Strange.” See Appendix D for full text.

⁷⁹ Henrietta Shore, letter to Weston, January 8, 1933.

⁸⁰ Emerson, “Nature,” 12.

nature, of his materials and of himself. Should he cease being a student, he will at that moment cease to be an artist.”⁸² This statement reflects Shore’s beliefs of the artist’s identity and duty always to observe nature and to learn from it, to remain true to nature and to avoid falsifying it. That was also the advice Shore gave to Weston; she urged him to go to nature with new eyes every time. Later the photographer praised her for her ability to achieve just that: “When she paints a flower she IS that flower, when she draws a rock she IS that rock; living her part so fully, recreating out of her own substance, Shore’s work stimulates directly through the senses without intellectual interference.”⁸³ Weston understood his friend’s artistic preoccupations well. He knew that Shore possessed the rare gift of transcendental transparent vision. In her landscapes Shore allowed nature to speak for itself directly to the viewer “without intellectual interference.” According to Buell, this is one of the most important characteristics of an ecocentric narrative. Shore’s extended visual narrative of Point Lobos, however, is not only a portrait of a place, but also of a person. As Weston noted, while Shore drew landscapes, she also drew herself.

Significantly, Shore’s landscape drawings were her last truly personal and intimate artistic creations. In the 1930s she was already experiencing serious financial difficulties and those years marked the beginning of the public’s and critics’ indifference towards her work. Quite possibly, Shore turned to nature as a subject because nature, with its eternally regenerating powers, offered a sense of security and permanence that lacked in Shore’s life. As I pointed out, the notion of “the eternally new” is as Goethean as it is Emersonian and it pervades Shore’s oeuvre. Her artistic statement is a verbal testament to her search for universal laws of continuity. Along with Goethe’s and Rodin’s words on the subject, Shore also quoted the poem “The Passing Strange” by John Masefield. The only two verses that she chose to include were these:

⁸¹ Henrietta Shore, quoted by Reginald Poland in Merle Armitage, *Henrietta Shore* (New York: E.Weyhe, 1933): 3.

⁸² Key, 385.

But gathering, as we stray, a sense
Of Life, so lovely and intense,
It lingers when we wander hence,

That those who follow feel behind
Their backs, when all before is blind,
Our joy, a rampart to the mind.⁸⁴

These are the last two verses from Masfield's long poem. Taken by themselves, they give the illusion of a positive outlook on life and joy. However, the rest of the poem concerns rather grim issues of death, the passing of time and of man's weaknesses. The poet pictured our bodies as temporary—"water and saltness held together"—ephemeral vessels which could allow us only fleeting moments in this world. These mere minutes that we have been allotted in the eternal existence of the universe, we usually spend on trifles and inessential things. But Masfield encouraged boldness and curiosity and criticized indifference. He was afraid of loneliness too: "Fasten to lover or to friend, / Until the heart break at the end" was his urge. The poem abounds with references and metaphors of death and decay, but ultimately, it is also about renewal and rebirth and about the eternal cycles of nature and man.

Apparently Shore decided to omit the pessimistic part of Masfield's poem and emphasize the end, in which life and joy are renewed and given a second chance. It is possible however, that this omission was prompted by Shore's own thoughts of degeneration and death. In 1933, when she sent her artist's statement to Weston, she was already fifty-three years old and living in poverty on the verge of desperation. Naturally, at this moment Shore was turning more and more to spiritual matters and sought to express in her art a vision of a world which exists beyond the here-and-now and transcends the evanescence of the material world.

⁸³ Weston in Armitage, 11.

⁸⁴ See Appendix D.



Figure 25. Henrietta Shore, *Nude (Self-Portrait)*, ca. 1921. Oil on canvas. Dell collection, Toronto



Figure 26. Henrietta Shore in her Los Angeles studio, 1914-15. Photograph from the Dell collection, Toronto

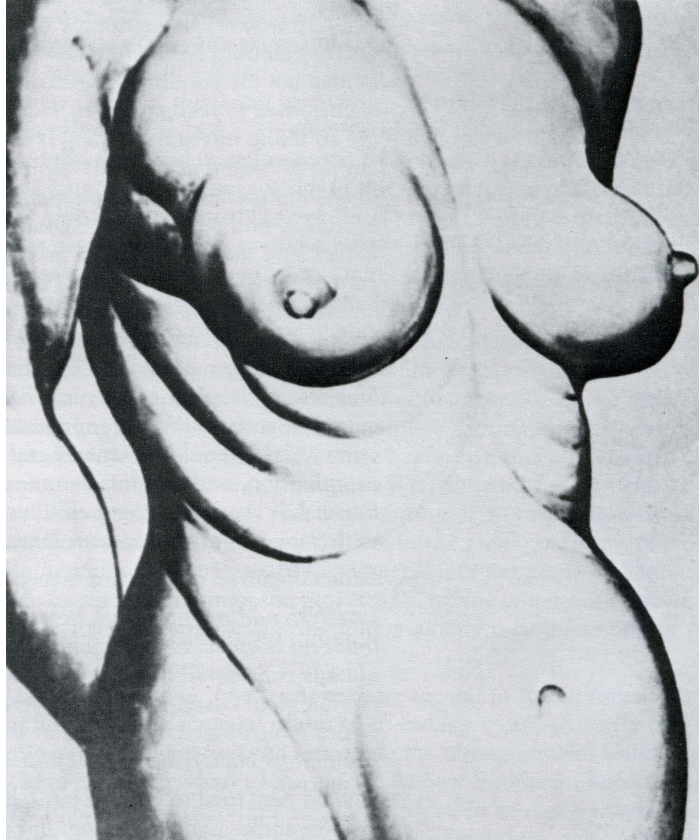


Figure 27. Henrietta Shore, *Torso*, 1928. Pastel on paper. Dell collection, Toronto



Figure 28. Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos (1)*, ca. 1930. Pencil on paper.
Whereabouts unknown



Figure 29. Henrietta Shore, *Life*, ca.1921. Oil on canvas. Los Angeles County Museum of Art



Figure 30. William Blake, *The Book of Thel*, title page, copy L. Early 1790. Relief etching. Collection of the Huntington Library



Figure 31. William Blake, *The Song of Los*, p. 5, copy E. ca. 1795. Watercolor. Collection of the Huntington Library



Figure 32. Henrietta Shore, ca. 1930. Photograph from the Dell collection



Figure 33. Henrietta Shore, *Iris*, ca. 1930. Pencil on paper. Whereabouts unknown

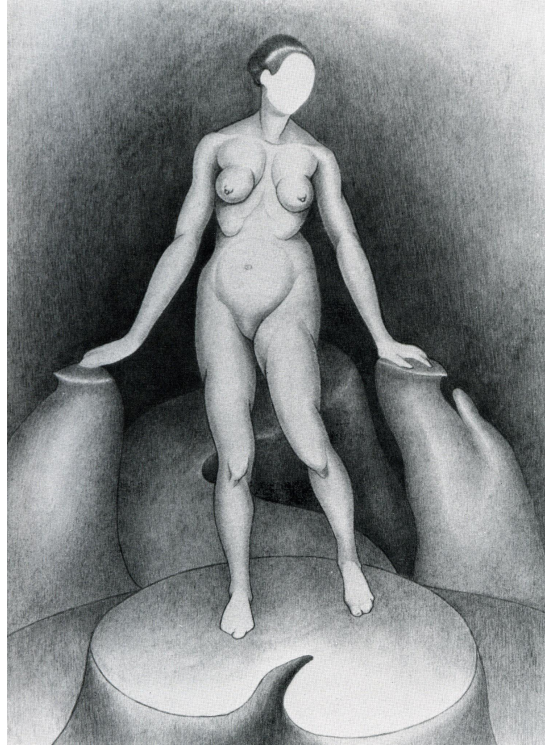


Figure 34. Henrietta Shore, *Nude*, ca. 1920. Pencil on paper. Private collection

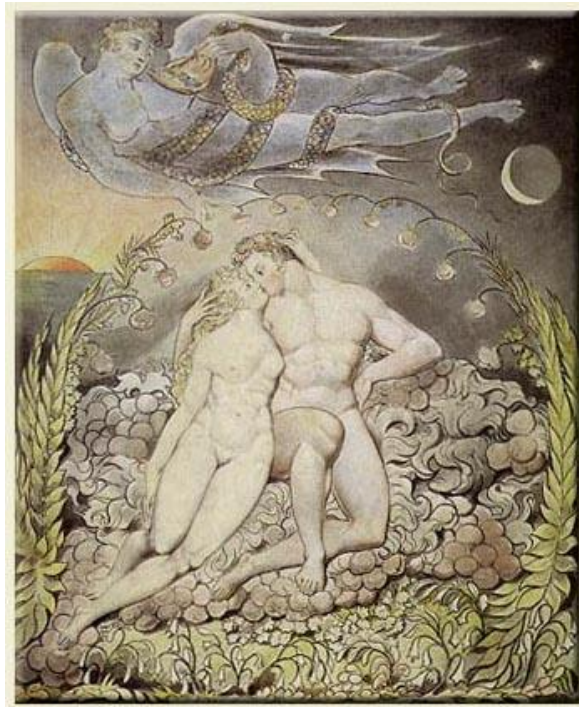
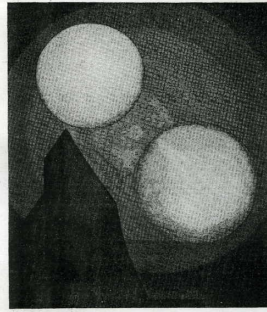


Figure 35. William Blake, *Satan Watching the Endearments of Adam and Eve*, 1807. Pen and watercolor. Collection of the Huntington Library

Subconscious Emotionalism on Canvas

AN exhibition of what is termed "fourth dimensional interpretations," painted by Miss Henrietta Shore and shown at the Ehrich Galleries in New York, is one of the sensational art shows of the season. Writing at length of this artist's work Mr. Raymond Heniker-Heaton says:

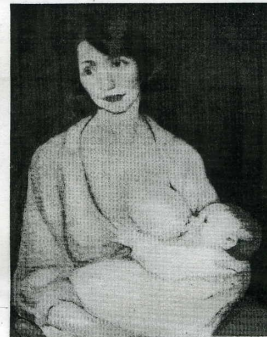
Henrietta Shore has painted many pictures, landscapes, flowers, nudes and portraits—all possessing an unusual intensity of feeling. In these early works the color is rich and high in key, applied with a broad and vigorous brush. They are painted suggestively according to the understanding of the middle of the XIXth century,—objectively in the light of present-day thought. Her attitude toward the objects she portrayed was traditional, but her art has distinguishing characteristics. However, Miss Shore believed that she had come to a standstill—faith in her academic training as the source of her art was wavering. She had attained the limits of her present trend, based on education and association,



"Two Worlds," an abstraction with an astronomical basis



"The Trail of Life," presenting the elements of a subconscious emotionalism



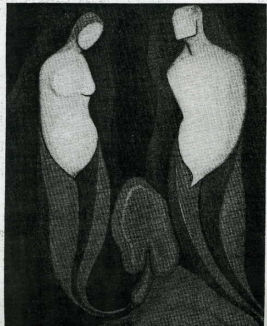
"Maternity," painted by the artist in her more conventional manner



"Life Emerges," a pictorial appeal to a pure emotional reaction

which allowed but little advance over the prevailing studio realism which adorns the walls of our official sanctuaries. In discussing the essential principles of art, I am forced to generalize in a measure, since it is always difficult to describe analytically certain terms which are names of conditions we feel rather than see.

Permanent qualities in art are not obtained by repeating or rehearsing time-honored formulas. They are achieved through sensibility to the dominating spirit of the time, and the creative mind will recast Nature in this mold. The constructive spirit of today is reflected in a protest against externals, whether they take the form of blatant realism, the Greek ideal types or the sentimentalities of early English portraiture. Speaking generally, the attitude toward subject-matter should be more or less abstract according to the period under discussion, not involving necessarily a repudiation of naturalistic form, but rather a reflection of an abstract attitude. All vital art should have unity in design and construction. Art must be fluid—with a fluidity not lacking definition, but suggesting volume: the combination of a variety of elements, having the power to disintegrate into a mass of universal energy. This is a



Attributes of minor importance in per and schools and individual artists are sub to contemporary spirit and thought. E period has an unreproducible intellectual emotional condition, giving distinctive d acter to the surface attributes and indeed the objective aspect of the main princi thereby distinguishing the art of each fi all other periods. The art of painting sculpture should express contemporary asp tions, with an added quality dependant u the individual imagination of the artist.

Henrietta Shore's paintings are no lon objectively representative, but their great parture is a logical development of previous work. To a considerable extent, new qualities we observe are the outcome a subconscious emotionalism. In the first tures there is evidence of psychic confusi the color is feverish and involved. In li ones we observe a greater clarity in cons tion and a simplification of design and co We feel a growing power of construction, and although there is more or less adhere to naturalistic form in its three dimensi

it is really abstract—the entire character con ing much more from within than without.

Many may wonder what these paintings i tend to portray. The sophistry which co fuses the nature of our motives, obscures t basic principles of art, indeed, life. It is deeply embodied in us that we have, with t agility of the human mind, sentimentaliz our materialism until we believe it to be God-given virtue. And so in Art we a often misled by a fiction and by qualities minor importance as to what are essentia You ask what the pictures represent. T question implies that they are unlike anythi you are familiar with. Therefore if you a told that the subject of one picture is a caul flower and another a soul in flight, you wi be indignant at the representation of t cauliflower; as for the soul in flight, yo probably know no more about it than does t artist. The question is whether you feel t art quality in the painting. Names or d scriptions, however mysterious, have nothi whatever to do with this. You can enjo vital picture without knowing or thinki about its constituent elements. Indeed it better not to, as intellectual preoccupatio tend to interfere with emotional concentr tion, unless you are finely balanced. If yo

Figure 36. Arts and Decoration February 1923, page 26

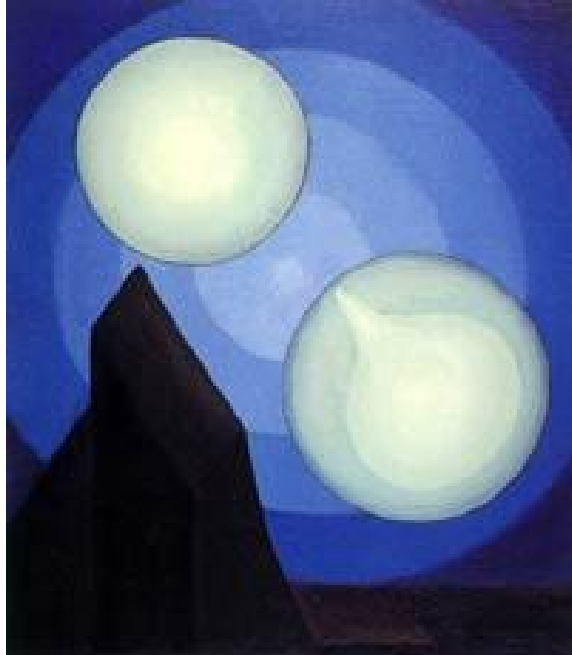


Figure 37. Henrietta Shore, *Two Worlds*, ca. 1921. Oil on canvas. Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University

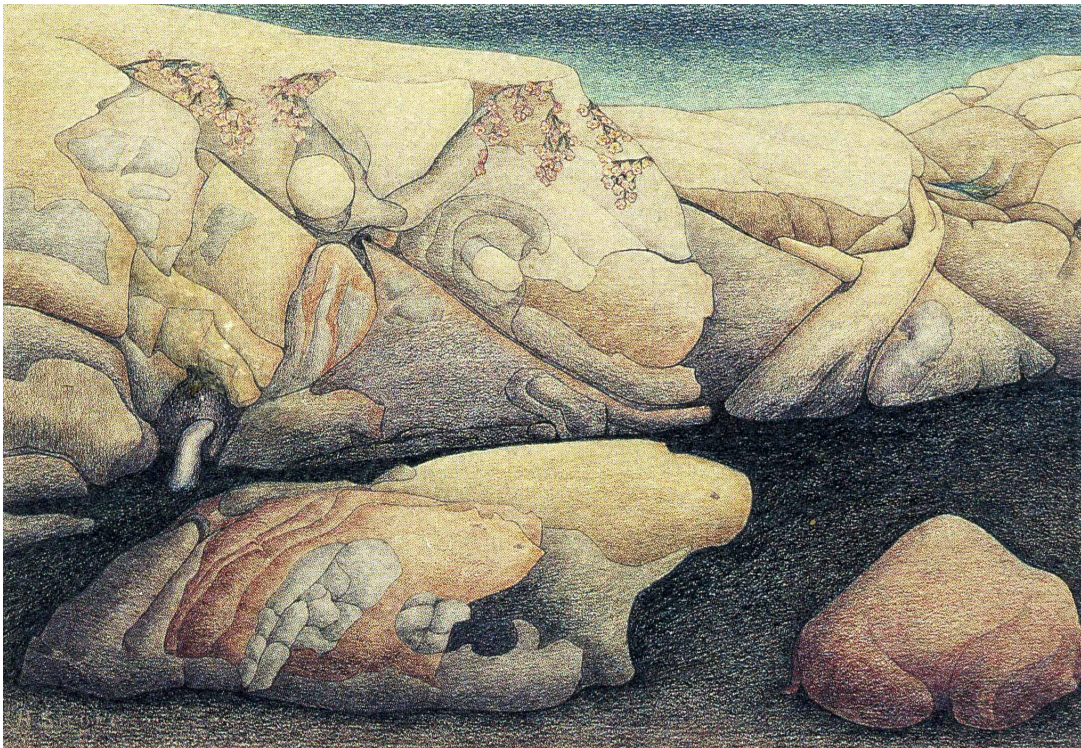


Figure 38. Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos (2)*, ca. 1930. Colored pencil on paper. Dell collection, Toronto



Figure 39. Rock formation, Monterey Peninsula. Courtesy of Janice Simon

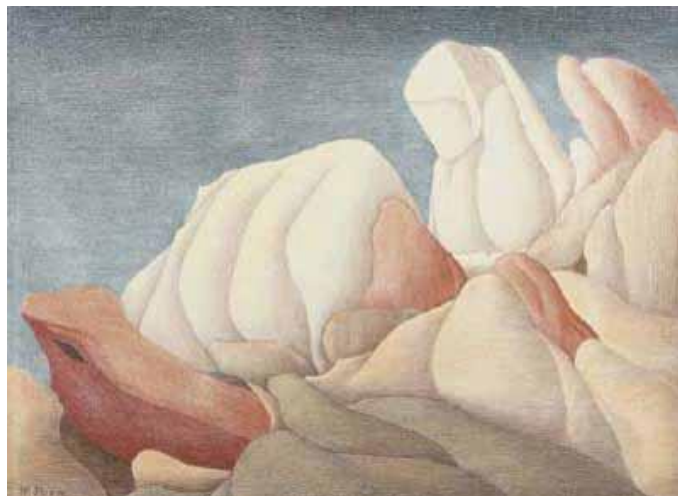


Figure 40. Henrietta Shore, *Rocks, Point Lobos (3)*, ca. 1930. Colored pencil on paper. Private collection



Figure 41. Henrietta Shore, *Cypress Trees, Point Lobos*, ca.1930. Colored pencil on paper. Private collection, Toronto

CONCLUSION

Shore's landscapes celebrate the rebirthing powers of nature. Death and destruction have no apocalyptic overtones because they instantly transform into regenerative energy. All matter is alive and continuously changing in Shore's works. The cypresses' massive bodies spring forth from the fertile crevices of the granite. At Point Lobos, "[t]he greatest meeting of land and water in the world,"¹ destruction is the balancing force in the ongoing struggle of life. The cypresses that Shore portrayed are subjected to the constant destruction of winds and water, thus their remarkable and unique bodies. But even more curious and relevant to Shore's choice of subject is the fact that the Monterey Cypress possesses a strange mechanism for reproduction, one that ironically led to its near extinction. The mature tree produces pinecones that are glued together by sticky sap. This durable binder can be melted solely by very high heat such as a forest fire or extremely hot weather. Only then, at the verge of ultimate demise, the tree releases its seeds in order to procreate its species. Thus, the cypress cones can give birth to a new sapling when the mature trees are nearing death. Since few of the seeds survive and succeed to develop in the unfriendly environment, the once extensive forests of Monterey Cypress have eventually dwindled away and now exist in two small groves—on Point Lobos and near the city of Monterey. Nourished by the humid air of the peninsula and cradled by the fog, the cypresses thrive in places where no other plant can survive; chased by the taller and more numerous pines,

¹ Painter Francis McComas, quoted by Newton Drury, "A Master Plan for the Future," in *Point Lobos Reserve: Interpretation of a Primitive Landscape*, ed. Aubrey Drury (Sacramento: Printing Division, 1954): 11.

these veterans have found their home at the very edge of the world, on the tip of the rocks, clinging with their powerful roots in contorted shapes.²

Once again, Shore the artist is one with the odd reproductive behavior of her subjects, the trees. Just like the cypresses that she so loved to paint, Shore released her creations only in dire need; and similarly, that led to her eventual oblivion and demise. During her mature artistic career she decided to live in seclusion, away from the artistic centers in America. Rather than focusing on the popularity of her art, she chose to promote Weston's. And she rarely wanted to part with her work. She always asked for unreasonably high prices and was very picky about her buyers. A quote by Jehanne-Bietry Salinger suggests some explanation to Shore's deplorable faith:

She was very private, proud and haughty, and could be terribly sharp. She would not sell to anyone she disliked, but often sold her paintings too low because she needed the money. She knew who she was, and she did not have a great opinion of her fellow artists...³

Unfortunately, when poverty and desperation struck, Shore was forced into selling these same paintings for much less. Weston was among a selected few who had the privilege to see her drawings. In 1927 he remarked in a daybook entry:

I saw for the first time one of her drawings. 'I rarely show them, I never have exhibited them.' 'Why?' I questioned—'I am selfish,'—her answer. This one drawing was not a quick sketch, it was done with as much care and thought as her painting: a superb piece of work. My admiration grows.⁴

It may have been that the drawings were intimate and personal that beyond just being "selfish," Shore was shyly reluctant to reveal her inner self; her deepest emotions still remain a mystery.

Emerson said:

² Gilliam, 31.

³ Jehanne-Bietry Salinger quoted by Aikin, "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston," 45.

⁴ Weston, *Daybooks*, 15.

The best of beauty is a finer charm than skill in surfaces, in outlines, or rules of art can ever teach, namely, a radiation from the work of art, of human character—a wonderful expression through stone or canvas or musical sound of the deepest and simplest attributes of our nature, and therefore most intelligible at last to those souls which have these attributes.⁵

When it concerns the art of Henrietta Shore, Emerson's words ring true. Her landscape drawings are more than mere copies of the strangely unique microcosm that is Point Lobos. Instead, they are renditions of Shore's attachment to nature and her belief in the existence of correspondences between human and universe.

In introducing the catalogue to the retrospective exhibition of Shore's work at the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art, art historian Roger Aikin noted that "[the] modern researcher who does try to make sense out of her (Shore's) development as an artist by arranging her work in chronological order is frustrated and, implicitly, rebuked by the lack of dates."⁶ Contrary to this statement, I believe that Shore's development as an artist and the progression of her style from energetic Impressionism to subtle abstraction are completely in tune with her own development as an individual. During her last years of active artistic creation Shore lived in Carmel. She led a seclusive life, apparently more satisfied with the quiet company of the Monterey cypresses, rather than the lively events organized by Carmel's Bohemian community. Buell notes that ecocentric writers do not perceive solitude as isolation; instead, for these creative minds nature itself is the neighborhood.⁷ It was not loneliness, but retrospective solitude, that engendered Shore's most significant pictures. As Thoreau said: "In proportion as he (man) simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness."⁸ The landscape surrounding the small

⁵ Emerson, "Art," 213.

⁶ Roger Aikin, *Henrietta Shore: Retrospective Exhibition*, 10.

⁷ Buell, 268.

⁸ Henry David Thoreau, quoted in Bogardus, 348.

town, especially the site of Point Lobos, became the subject of Shore's last important works. In them, she visually expressed a deep attachment to the locale and to its land, rocks and trees. Through the gentle marks of pencils and pastels, the artist created some of the most heart-felt images of landscapes in American art.

Shore's drawings from the thirties form a logical conclusion to her artistic exploration. Filtered through the teachings of Emersonian transcendentalism, and based upon all of her earlier work, drawings such as *Rocks*, *Point Lobos* reveal an intimate portrait of the artist herself. More than a narrative of a place, the Point Lobos series offers insight into the way a particular geographical space becomes "place." By transforming Shore psychologically, the Monterey Peninsula helped her express her profound comprehension of the connection between the entire universe, her own physicality, and her transcendent spirit.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aikin, Roger. "Henrietta Shore and Edward Weston." *American Art*, Winter, 1992, 42-61.
- Alexander, Irene. *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 10 October 1946, 9.
- Almon, Bert. "Jeanne D'Orge, Carmel, and Point Lobos." *Western American Literature* 29, November, 1994, 239-59.
- Armitage, Merle. *Henrietta Shore*. New York: E.Weyhe, 1933.
- Baigell, Matthew. *Artist and Identity in Twentieth-Century America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- . "Walt Whitman and Early Twentieth-Century American Art." In *Walt Whitman and the Visual Arts*, edited by Geoffrey M.Sill and Roberta K. Tarbell, 121-141. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992.
- Besant, Annie and Charles Leadbeater. *Thoughtforms*. 1952; reprint, Kessinger Publishing.
- Bogardus, Ralph F. "The Twilight of Transcendentalism: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Edward Weston, and the End of Nineteenth-Century Literary Nature." *Prospects* 12, 1987.
- Bostick, Daisy and Dorothea Castelhun, *Carmel at Work and Play*. Carmel: The Seven Arts, 1925.
- Buell, Lawrence. *The Environmental Imagination*. Cambridge: London: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Charlot, Jean. "Henrietta Shore." In *Art from the Mayans to Disney*. New York: London: Sheed and Ward, 1939.
- Chave, Anna. "O'Keefe and the Masculine Gaze." In *Reading American Art*, edited by Marianne Doezema and Elizabeth Milroy, 351-365. New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Corn, Wanda. *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935*. Berkeley: Los Angeles: London: University of California Press, 1999.
- Dijkstra, Bram. "Early Modernism in Southern California: Provincialism or Eccentricity?" In *On the Edge of America: California Modernist Art, 1900-1950*, edited by Paul J. Karlstrom, 157-180. Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1996.

- Drury, Aubrey, ed. *Point Lobos Reserve: Interpretation of a Primitive Landscape*. Sacramento: Printing Division, 1954.
- Ehrlich, Susan and Paul J. Karlstrom, eds. *Turning the Tide: Early Los Angeles Modernists 1920-1956*. Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1990.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Fort, Ilene Susan. "The Adventurousome, the Eccentrics, and the Dreamers: Women Artists of Southern California." In *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945*, edited by Patricia Trenton, 75-106. Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1995.
- Gallati, Barbara Dayer. *William Merritt Chase*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995.
- Gerdts, William. "California Impressionism in Context." In *California Impressionism*, edited by William Gerdts and Will South, 7-70. New York: London: Paris: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1988.
- Gilliam, Harold and Ann. *Creating Carmel: The Enduring Vision*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1992.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *Gedenkausgabe der Werke, Briefe und Gespräche 28. August 1949. Band 23 (Goethes Gespräche Zweiter Teil)*. Herausgegeben von Ernst Beutler. Zürich: Artemis Verlags-AG, 1950.
- . *The Metamorphosis of Plants*. Bio-Dynamic Farming & Gardening Association, 1993.
- Hagemeyer, Dora. "Henrietta Shore: Her Work." *The Carmelite*, 5 November 1931, 4.
- Henniker-Heaton, Raymond. "The Art of Henrietta Shore." In *Paintings by Henrietta Shore*. New York: Erich Galleries, 1923.
- Henri, Robert. *The Art Spirit*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1984.
- Kandinsky, Wassily. *Concerning the Spiritual in Art, And Painting in Particular*. New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1947, 58-9.
- Key, Archibald. "Parallels – and an Expatriate." *The Canadian Forum* 12, July 1932, 384-5.
- Knight, Christopher. "Henrietta Shore." In *Last Chance for Eden: Selected Criticism by Christopher Knight, 1979-1994*, 202-205. Los Angeles: Art Issues. Press, 1995.
- Laurie Lisle, *Portrait of an Artist*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986.

- Leadbeater, Charles W. *Man Visible and Invisible*, Wheaton: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980.
- . *A Textbook of Theosophy*. Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1954.
- Lynes, Barbara Buhler. *Georgia O'Keeffe and the Calla Lily in American Art, 1860-1940*. New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 2002.
- . *O'Keeffe, Stieglitz and the Critics, 1916-1929*. Ann Arbor: London: UMI Research Press, 1989.
- Maddow, Ben. *Edward Weston: Fifty Years*. New York: Aperture Inc., 1973.
- Masefield, John. "The Passing Strange." In *The Collected Poems of John Masefield*, rev. ed. London: William Heinemann, Ltd, 1932, 663-665.
- Mastin, Catharine M. *Canadian Artists: South of the Border*. Windsor, Ontario: AGW, published with the assistance of the Ontario Arts Council, 1992.
- Moore, Sylvia, ed. *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*. New York : Midmarch Arts Press, 1989.
- Murray, Joan. *The Best of the Group of Seven*. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1984.
- Nieto, Margarita. "Mexican Art and Los Angeles, 1920-1940." In *On the Edge of America: California Modernist Art, 1900-1950*, edited by Paul J. Karlstrom, 121-138. Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1996.
- Peeler, David P. "Power, Autonomy and Weston's Imagery: A Balancing Act." *History of Photography* 15, Autumn 1991.
- Perlman, Bernard B. *Robert Henri: His Life and Art*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1991.
- Pisano, Ronald G. "The Teaching Career of William Merritt Chase." *American Artist* 40. March 1976, 28-33, 63-6.
- Poland, Reginald. "Henrietta Shore's Paintings." *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 June 1927, 11.
- Rose, Barbara. *Readings in American Art Since 1900*. New York: Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968.
- Roznoy, Cynthia. "Henrietta Shore: American Modernist." Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2003.
- Rubinstein, Charlotte Streifer. "The Thirties: Daughters of the Depression." In *American Women Artists from Early Indian Times to the Present*, 217-265. Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1982.

- Salinger, Bietry Jehanne. "Carmel Exhibit." *San Francisco Examiner*, 22 July 1928, E10.
- . "Geography and Art – and Shore." *The Canadian Forum* 12, September 1932, 463-4.
- Schipper, Merle. "California Women Artists, 1900-1920." In *Yesterday and Tomorrow: California Women Artists*, edited by Sylvia Moore, 81-101. New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1989.
- . "Laguna Beach: Henrietta Shore." *ARTnews* 86, no. 6, Summer 1987, 66.
- Shi, David E. *The Simple Life*. Athens: London: The University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- Shore, Henrietta. *Henrietta Shore: A Retrospective Exhibition: 1900-1963*. Monterey: Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art Association, 1986.
- . *Paintings by Henrietta Shore*. New York: Erich Galleries, 1923.
- . "Slap Dash Times Call for Pains in Art." *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, 31 October 1947, 15.
- Simon, Janice. *Images of Contentment: John Frederick Kensett and the Connecticut Shore*. Waterbury: The Mattatuck Museum, 2001.
- St. John, Terry. "California Impressionism After 1915." In *Impressionism, the California View*, exhibition catalogue, 16-22. Oakland: The Oakland Museum of Art, 1981.
- Trenton, Patricia, ed. *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945*. Berkeley: Los Angeles: London; University of California Press, 1995.
- Turner, Elizabeth. *Georgia O'Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*. Washington D.C.: The Phillips Collection and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Tyrrell, Henry. "Art Observatory: High Tide in Exhibitions Piles Up Shining Things of Art: Two Women Painters Lure with Suave Abstractions..." *The [New York] World*. 4 February 1923, 9M.
- Udall, Sharyn Rohlfen. *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own*. New Haven: London: Yale University Press, 2000.
- Walker, Franklin D. *The Seacoast of Bohemia*. Santa Barbara: Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1973.
- Weisberger, Edward, ed. *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890-1985*, exhibition catalogue. LA County Museum of Art: Abbeville Press Publishers: New York, 1986.
- Weston, Edward. "Another Artist Protests," *Canadian Forum* 12, no. 144, September 1932.

---. *The Daybooks of Edward Weston. Volume II: California*, edited by Nancy Newhall. Millerton: New York: Aperture, 1961.

---. *My Camera on Point Lobos*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1968.

Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1980.

APPENDIX A

MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS OF WORKS BY HENRIETTA SHORE

California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento

The Artichoke Pickers, 1936-37, oil on canvas, 29 x 74 in

Los Angeles County Museum of Art:

Life, ca. 1921, oil on canvas, 31.5 x 26 in

Jean Charlot, ca. 1927, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in

Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art

Banana Tree, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 7.5 x 6 in

Mexican Mother, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 8.25 x 9.25 in

Two Nudes, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 16.25 x 12 in

Water Lily, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 8 x 6 in

Women of Oaxaca, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 13.75 x 18.5 in

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Girl in Furs, ca. 1908, oil on canvas, mounted on hardboard, 81.4 x 63.6 cm

Negro Women and Children, ca. 1910-15, oil on canvas, 54 x 45.25 in

The Promenade, Center Point, Toronto, ca. 1911, oil on canvas, 44.4 x 76.7 cm

Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Utah State University

Two Worlds, ca. 1921, oil on canvas

Oakland Museum of Art

Gypsy Encampment, ca. 1928-30, lithograph on paper, 14.5 x 10 in

San Diego Museum of Art

Seals, ca. 1928-30, lithograph, 12.125 x 16 in

Canadian Weed, ca. 1928-30, lithograph, 12.25 x 9.5 in

Yachting on the Bay, ca. 1928-30, lithograph, 9.5 x 14 in

Smithsonian American Art Museum

Study for *Mural of Rock Breakers*

APPENDIX B

F.V.MÜLLER, ORIGINAL GERMAN TEXT

Johann Wolfgang Goethes, *Gedenkausgabe der Werke, Briefe und Gespräche* 28. August 1949. Band 23 (Goethes Gespräche Zweiter Teil). Herausgegeben von Ernst Beutler (Zürich: Artemis Verlags-AG, 1950): 314-315.

F.v Müller, November 4, 1823

Heute endlich, nach vielen Bemühungen und sich durchkreuzenden Hindernissen kam das öffentliche Konzert der Madame Szymanowska zustande. Noch wenig Stunden vorher wäre das Unternehmen fast aus Mangel eines guten Instrumentes gescheitert, hätte nicht die Frau Großfürstin selbst das ihrige großmütig dargeliehen. Nach dem Konzert soupierten wir mit Egloffsteins bei Goethe, der von der lebenswürdigsten Gemütlichkeit war. Als unter mancherlei ausgebrachten Toasten auch einer der Erinnerung geweiht wurde, brach er mit Heftigkeit in die Worte aus:

Ich statuiere keine Erinnerung in eurem Sinne, das ist nur eine unbeholfene Art sich auszudrücken. Was uns irgend Großes, Schönes, Bedeutendes begegnet, muß nicht erst von außen her wieder erinnert, gleichsam erjagt werden, es muß sich vielmehr gleich vom Anfang her in unser Inneres Verweben, mit ihm eins werden, ein neueres besseres Ich in uns erzeugen und so ewig bildend in uns fortleben und schaffen. Es gibt kein Vergangenes, das man zurücksehnen dürfte, es gibt nur ein ewig Neues, das sich aus den erweiterten Elementen des Vergangenen gestaltet, und die echte Sehnsucht muß stets produktiv sein, ein neues Besseres erschaffen. Und, setze er mit großer Rührung hinzu – haben wir dies nicht alle insgesamt durch diese lebenswürdige, edle Erscheinung, die uns jetzt wieder verlassen will, im Innersten erfrischt, verbessert, erweitert? Nein, sie kann uns nicht entschwinden, sie ist in unser innerstes Selbst übergegangen, sie lebt in uns mit uns fort, und fange sie es auch an, wie sie wolle, mir zu entfliehen, ich halte sie immerdar fest in mir.

APPENDIX C

J. W. V. GOETHE, "THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PLANTS"

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, "The Metamorphosis of Plants," in *The Poems of Goethe*, trans. E. A. Bowring et al (New York: John D. Williams, 1882): 255-258.

THOU art confused, my beloved, at, seeing the thousandfold union

Shown in this flowery troop, over the garden dispers'd;
any a name dost thou hear assign'd; one after another
Falls on thy list'ning ear, with a barbarian sound.
None resembleth another, yet all their forms have a likeness;

Therefore, a mystical law is by the chorus proclaim'd;
Yes, a sacred enigma! Oh, dearest friend, could I only

Happily teach thee the word, which may the mystery solve!
Closely observe how the plant, by little and little progressing,

Step by step guided on, changeth to blossom and fruit!
First from the seed it unravels itself, as soon as the silent

Fruit-bearing womb of the earth kindly allows Its escape,
And to the charms of the light, the holy, the ever-in-motion,

Trusteth the delicate leaves, feebly beginning to shoot.
Simply slumber'd the force in the seed; a germ of the future,

Peacefully lock'd in itself, 'neath the integument lay,
Leaf and root, and bud, still void of colour, and shapeless;

Thus doth the kernel, while dry, cover that motionless life.
Upward then strives it to swell, in gentle moisture confiding,

And, from the night where it dwelt, straightway ascendeth to light.
Yet still simple remaineth its figure, when first it appeareth;

And 'tis a token like this, points out the child 'mid the plants.
Soon a shoot, succeeding it, riseth on high, and reneweth,

Piling-up node upon node, ever the primitive form;
Yet not ever alike: for the following leaf, as thou seest,

Ever produceth itself, fashioned in manifold ways.
Longer, more indented, in points and in parts more divided,
Which. all-deform'd until now, slept in the organ below,
So at length it attaineth the noble and destined perfection,
Which, in full many a tribe, fills thee with wondering awe.
Many ribb'd and tooth'd, on a surface juicy and swelling,
Free and unending the shoot seemeth in fullness to be;
Yet here Nature restraineth, with powerful hands, the formation,
And to a perfecter end, guideth with softness its growth,
Less abundantly yielding the sap, contracting the vessels,
So that the figure ere long gentler effects doth disclose.
Soon and in silence is check'd the growth of the vigorous branches,
And the rib of the stalk fuller becometh in form.
Leafless, however, and quick the tenderer stem then up-springeth,
And a miraculous sight doth the observer enchant.
Ranged in a circle, in numbers that now are small, and now countless,
Gather the smaller-sized leaves, close by the side of their like.
Round the axis compress'd the sheltering calyx unfoldeth,
And, as the perfectest type, brilliant-hued coronals forms.
Thus doth Nature bloom, in glory still nobler and fuller,
Showing, in order arranged, member on member uprear'd.
Wonderment fresh dost thou feel, as soon as the stem rears the flower
Over the scaffolding frail of the alternating leaves.
But this glory is only the new creation's foreteller,
Yes, the leaf with its hues feeleth the hand all divine,
And on a sudden contracteth itself; the tenderest figures
Twofold as yet, hasten on, destined to blend into one.
Lovingly now the beauteous pairs are standing together,
Gather'd in countless array, there where the altar is raised.
Hymen hovereth o'er them, and scents delicious and mighty
Stream forth their fragrance so sweet, all things enliv'ning around.
Presently, parcell'd out, unnumber'd germs are seen swelling,
Sweetly conceal'd in the womb, where is made perfect the fruit.
Here doth Nature close the ring of her forces eternal;

Yet doth a new one, at once, cling to the one gone before,
So that the chain be prolonged for ever through all generations,

And that the whole may have life, e'en as enjoy'd by each part.
Now, my beloved one, turn thy gaze on the many-hued thousands

Which, confusing no more, gladden the mind as they wave.
Every plant unto thee proclaimeth the laws everlasting,

Every flowered speaks louder and louder to thee;
But if thou here canst decipher the mystic words of the goddess,

Everywhere will they be seen, e'en though the features are changed.
Creeping insects may linger, the eager butterfly hasten,--

Plastic and forming, may man change e'en the figure decreed!
Oh, then, bethink thee, as well, how out of the germ of acquaintance,

Kindly intercourse sprang, slowly unfolding its leaves;
Soon how friendship with might unveil'd itself in our bosoms,

And how Amor, at length, brought forth blossom and fruit
Think of the manifold ways wherein Nature hath lent to our feelings,

Silently giving them birth, either the first or the last!
Yes, and rejoice in the present day! For love that is holy

Seeketh the noblest of fruits,--that where the thoughts are the same,
Where the opinions agree,--that the pair may, in rapt contemplation,

Lovingly blend into one,--find the more excellent world.

APPENDIX D

JOHN MASEFIELD, "THE PASSING STRANGE"

John Masefield, "The Passing Strange," in *The Collected Poems of John Masefield*, rev. ed.
(London: William Heinemann, Ltd, 1932): 663-665.

Out of the earth to rest or range
Perpetual in perpetual change,
The unknown passing through the strange.

Water and saltness held together
To tread the dust and stand the weather,
And plough the field and stretch the tether,

To pass the wine-cup and be witty,
Water the sands and build the city,
Slaughter like devils and have pity,

Be red with rage and pale with lust,
Make beauty come, make peace, make trust,
Water and saltness mixed with dust;

Drive over the earth, swim under the sea,
Fly in the eagle's secrecy,
Guess where the hidden comets be;

Know all the deathly seeds that still
Queen Helen's beauty, Caesar's will,
And slay them even as they kill;

Fashion an altar for a rood,
Defile a continent with blood,
And watch a brother starve for food:

Love like a madman, shaking, blind,
Till self is burnt into a kind
Possession of another mind;

Brood upon beauty, till the grace
Of beauty with the holy face
Brings peace into the bitter place;

Prove in the lifeless granites, scan
The stars for hope, for guide, for plan;
Live as a woman or a man;

Fasten to lover or to friend,
Until the heart break at the end
The break of death that cannot mend:

Then to lie useless, helpless, still,
Down in the earth, in dark, to fill
The roots of grass or daffodil.

Down in the earth, in dark, alone,
A mockery of the ghost in bone,
The strangeness, passing the unknown.

Time will go by, that outlasts clocks,
Dawn in the thorps will rouse the cocks,
Sunset be glory on the rocks:

But it, the thing, will never heed
Even the rootling from the seed
Thrusting to suck it for its need.

* * * * *

Since moons decay and suns decline,
How else should end this life of mine?
Water and saltness are not wine.

But in the darkest hour of night,
When even the foxes peer for sight,
The byre-cock crows; he feels the light.

So in this water mixed with dust,
The byre-cock spirit crows form trust
That death will change because it must;

For all things change, the darkness changes,
The wandering spirits change their ranges,
The corn is gathered to the granges.

The corn is sown again, it grows;
The stars burn out, the darkness goes;

The rhythms change, they do not close.

They change, and we, who pass like foam,
Like dust blown through the streets of Rome,
Change ever, too; we have no home,

Only a beauty, only a power,
Sad in the fruit, bright in the flower,
Endlessly erring for its hour,

But gathering, as we stray, a sense
Of Life, so lovely and intense,
It lingers when we wander hence,

That those who follow feel behind
Their backs, when all before is blind,
Our joy, a rampart to the mind.