

MEDIA CONTACT:

Amanda Horn, Director of Communications
 (o) 775.398.7228 / (m) 775.636.2567 / amanda.horn@nevadaart.org

‘ANNE BRIGMAN: A VISIONARY IN MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY’ PRESENTS THE WORK OF A PIONEERING FEMINIST PHOTOGRAPHER, POET, CRITIC, AND MOUNTAINEER

This first major retrospective of Anne Brigman (1869-1950) features 250 photographs and is accompanied by a significant 400-page publication co-published by Rizzoli Electa. A companion exhibition, *Laid Bare in the Landscape*, assembles photographs, films, and performance documentation by women artists like Judy Chicago and Ana Mendieta who situate the nude female body in outdoor landscapes. These exhibitions, organized by the Nevada Museum of Art, are on view in Reno September 29, 2018 through January 27, 2019.



Reno, Nev. (July 31, 2018) – This fall, the Nevada Museum of Art invites visitors to rediscover the groundbreaking work of visionary photographer Anne Brigman (1869-1950) in this first major retrospective. Consisting of 250 photographs drawn from public and private collections, *Anne Brigman: A Visionary in Modern Photography* features this pioneering artist’s most iconic work, including her early photographic explorations, as well as many never-before-seen images, correspondence, and archival materials. Photographer, poet, critic, and mountaineer, Brigman is best known for her figurative landscape images made in the Sierra Nevada in the early 1900s. *Anne Brigman: A Visionary in Modern Photography* opens September 29, 2018 and remains on view through January 27, 2019 at the Nevada Museum of Art, Donald W. Reynolds Center for the Visual Arts, E. L. Wiegand Gallery located in downtown Reno, Nevada. To accompany the exhibition, The Nevada Museum of Art and Rizzoli Electa, New York, have published the first comprehensive book devoted to Anne Brigman, and have also re-published Brigman’s 1949 out-of-print poetry book, *Songs of a Pagan*.

Raised in a prominent late-nineteenth-century Hawaiian missionary family, there is no doubt that Brigman’s nude portraits of herself and other women, taken outdoors in the California landscape in the early 1900s, challenged the customs of her Victorian upbringing and broke the rules of propriety for her time. Brigman’s significance spanned both coasts of the United States. In Northern California, where she lived and worked, she was a leading Pictorialist photographer, proponent of the Arts & Crafts movement, and a participant in the burgeoning Berkeley/Oakland Bohemian community. On the East Coast, her work was promoted by Alfred Stieglitz, who elected her to the prestigious Photo-Secession and championed her as a Modern photographer.

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Although the term *feminist art* was not coined until nearly seventy years after Brigman made her first photographs, the suggestion that her camera gave her the power to redefine her place as a woman in society establishes her as an important forerunner in the field. "My pictures tell of my freedom of soul, of my emancipation from fear," Brigman wrote in 1913. "I slowly found my power with the camera among the junipers and the tamarack pines of the high, storm-swept altitudes."

"The time is right to rediscover the work of Anne Brigman," said exhibition curator and book editor Ann M. Wolfe, Andrea and John C. Deane Family Senior Curator and Deputy Director at the Nevada Museum of Art. "The thought of a woman making nude self-portraits of herself in the early 1900s was radical, but to do so in the rugged wilderness of the Sierra Nevada was revolutionary."

Outdoor landscape settings offered Brigman, and the female artists who followed her, the freedom to confront art historical traditions, embrace nature, and re-claim a space for women through their art. To illustrate this, a companion exhibition, *Laid Bare in the Landscape*, assembles photographs, films, and performance documentation by women artists who also situate the nude female body in outdoor landscapes. From beautiful and sensual self-portraits, to sometimes-surreal and provocative statements by feminist artists beginning in the early 1970s, these women interrogate ideas surrounding beauty, femininity, vulnerability, ritual, identity, and body politics, as they relate to nature and the environment. According to Wolfe, "to compare the proto-feminist landscape photographs of Brigman to her feminist counterparts of the latter twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries is to weave a new thread through generations of visionary women artists who have aimed to further alternative ways of seeing and knowing." The exhibition features: Laura Aguilar, Judy Chicago, Imogen Cunningham, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Judy Dater, Mary Beth Edelson, Regina Jose Galindo, Kirsten Justesen, Ana Mendieta, Joan Myers, Otobong Nkanga, Cara Romero, Carollee Schneemann, Xaviera Simmons, Jo Spence, Sarah Trouche, and Francesca Woodman.

The largest exhibition of Brigman's work to date, *Anne Brigman: A Visionary in Modern Photography* brings together 250 photographs drawn from the private collection of Michael and Jane Wilson and the Wilson Centre for Photography in London, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the George Eastman Museum, the Oakland Museum of California, MoMA, New York, the J. Paul Getty Museum, and many private collections. London-based Michael Wilson, the world's foremost collector of 19th-century photography, who is also an American film producer and screenwriter, is credited with encouraging the rediscovery of Anne Brigman's work and generously loaned many photographs from his significant Brigman holdings for the exhibition.

The exhibition is accompanied by the first comprehensive book devoted to Anne Brigman, published by the Nevada Museum of Art and **Rizzoli Electa** in New York. The special deluxe packaging for this publication includes a box containing two volumes: one large 400-page book is devoted to Brigman's photographic career. Also included is a re-published volume of Brigman's 1949 book of poetry, *Songs of a Pagan*. A special archive component of the publication includes transcriptions of Brigman's writings, correspondence with Alfred Stieglitz, early works, linoleum-block prints, and Brigman's never-before-seen negatives that were recently digitized. The book is written and edited by Ann M. Wolfe, with contributions from art historians and scholars who have long been dedicated to Brigman's life and work. They include: Susan Ehrens (art historian and independent curator); Alexander Nemerov (Department Chair and Carl & Marilyn Thoma Provostial Professor in the Arts and Humanities at Stanford University); Kathleen Pyne (Professor Emerita of Art History at University of Notre Dame); Heather Waldroup (Associate Director of the Honors College and Professor of Art History at Appalachian State University). The book is designed by Los Angeles-based Brad Bartlett, two-time winner of the Frances Smyth-Ravenel Prize for Excellence in Publication Design, a grand prize awarded by the American Alliance of Museums for the best publication designed by an art museum in the United States.

Throughout the exhibitions' run, a number of educational and public programs will take place at the Nevada Museum of Art, beginning with a half-day symposium on Saturday, September 29. *Anne Brigman: The Symposium* features the five scholars who contributed to the publication (Ann M. Wolfe, Susan Ehrens, Alexander Nemerov, Kathleen Pyne, and Heather Waldroup) in dialogue about Brigman's photography, poetry, and legacy. The half-day event, a program of the Debra and Dennis Scholl Distinguished Speaker Series presented by Whittier Trust, takes place in the Museum's Nightingale Sky Room, with stunning views of the Sierra, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, and is followed by a buffet lunch.

Other notable events include an October 6 Brigman-themed art hike collaboration with Trails & Vistas, a theatrical performance, Winter Solstice yoga, and a January 24 talk by artist Judy Chicago. To see the complete programming line-up, please visit <http://www.nevadaart.org/exhibition/anne-w-brigman>.

Anne Brigman: A Visionary in Modern Photography and *Laid Bare in the Landscape* are curated by Ann M. Wolfe, Andrea and John C. Deane Family Senior Curator and Deputy Director at the Nevada Museum of Art. The exhibitions open September 29, 2018 and remain on view through January 27, 2019 at the Nevada Museum of Art, Donald W. Reynolds Center for the Visual Arts, E. L. Wiegand Gallery located in downtown Reno, Nevada.

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To access **high-resolution images for editorial use**, as well as a PDF of the publication, exhibition checklist, and full programming suite, please go to <http://bit.ly/AnneBrigmanPressKit>. Social media participation is encouraged: @nevadaart #ConfrontingTradition.

Anne Brigman: A Visionary in Modern Photography was made possible by the generosity of these sponsors: **Lead Sponsor:** Wayne and Miriam Prim. **Major Sponsors:** The Bretzlaff Foundation; Carol Franc Buck Foundation; the Satre Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Western Nevada; Louise A. Tarble Foundation. **Sponsors:** Carole K. Anderson; Barbara and Tad Danz; Nancy and Harvey Fennell | Dickson Realty; Nancy and Brian Kennedy; Mercedes-Benz of Reno, an AutoNation Company; Whittier Trust, Investment & Wealth Management. **Supporting Sponsors:** Brigid S. Barton; Denise Cashman; the Chica Charitable Gift Fund; Mimi Ellis-Hogan; Jan and David Hardie; the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation; Keith and Sheila McWilliams; Eleanor and Robert Preger; Jenny and Garrett Sutton | Corporate Direct, Inc.; Lash and Gigi Turville. **Additional Support:** Kathie Bartlett; John C. Deane. **Media Sponsors:** Getaway Reno-Tahoe; KUNR Reno Public Radio; Reno News & Review; Tahoe Quarterly; The Believer powered by the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute; Western Art & Architecture. **Laid Bare in the Landscape** received **Supporting Sponsorship** by the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

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About Nevada Museum of Art

The Nevada Museum of Art is the only art museum in Nevada accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. A private, non-profit organization founded in 1931, the Reno-based institution is supported by its membership as well as sponsorships, gifts and grants. Through its permanent collections, original exhibitions and programming, and E.L. Cord Museum School, the Nevada Museum of Art provides meaningful opportunity for people to engage with a range of art and educational experiences. Its Center for Art + Environment is an internationally-recognized research center dedicated to supporting the practice, study, and awareness of creative interactions between people and their environments. The Center houses unique archive materials from more than 1,000 artists working on all seven continents, including Cape Farewell, Michael Heizer, Walter de Maria, Lita Albuquerque, Burning Man, Center for Land Interpretation, Ugo Rondinone's *Seven Magic Mountains*, and Trevor Paglen's *Orbital Reflector*. Learn more at nevadaart.org.

Header image caption:

Anne Brigman, *Soul of the Blasted Pine*, negative 1906, gelatin silver print, 7 11/16 x 9 5/8 inches. Wilson Centre for Photography.