

MEDIA CONTACT:

Rebecca Eckland, Director of Communications and Marketing, 775.398.7263, rebecca.eckland@nevadaart.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



END OF THE RANGE EXPLORES LITTLE-KNOWN WORK OF PAINTER CHARLOTTE SKINNER

RENO, Nevada (October 14, 2023) – Known for her vibrant colors that brought life to what early nature writer Mary Hunter Austin would call “the land of little rain,” Charlotte B. Skinner (1879-1963) defined herself as a painter of the Sierra Nevada and Desert Country of Owens Valley. Lone Pine Peak, Mt. Whitney, the Alabama Hills and other iconic landmarks of this striking and remote landscape figure predominately as the subject matter and focus of the artist’s body of work. In 1929, *Los Angeles Times* correspondent and art critic Arthur Miller would admit “...the veritable character of the Sierras with a touch of genuine Owens pathos in the withering poplar trees is shown in C.B. Skinner’s *Glacier Carvings*.”

Even after the artist left the region and relocated first to Eugene Oregon, and then to later to Morro Bay, California, she continued to render these scenes for the rest of her life, stating “my work has been exclusively of the Sierra Nevada and Desert Country of Owens Valley.”

On view at the Nevada Museum of Art October 14, 2023 – May 5, 2024, *End of the Range: Charlotte Skinner in the Eastern Sierra* features approximately 40 original paintings and drawings that span Skinner’s lifelong career as an artist and educator. The three iconic Skinner paintings, *Silence (Lone Pine Sierra)* (1938), *End of the Range* (not dated) and *Rocks* (not dated) illustrate the vibrant colors that celebrate the Eastern Sierra at the turn of the 20th Century.

The exhibition will also feature works of Skinner’s artist-friends who visited her residence in Lone Pine, California, looking for new subject matter and inspiration outside of the bustle of busy San Francisco, as well as the like-minded creative company of their host. These guests include many recognizable artists and photographers at the time such as Dorothea Lange, Maynard Dixon, Roi Partridge, Sonya Noskowiak, Ralph Stackpole, and William Wendt, to name a few. The exhibition will also feature Panamint Shoshone baskets from the artist’s personal collection that were given to her in exchange for teaching art classes to local Indigenous populations.

Skinner was not a native of Lone Pine; instead, the artist’s younger years were spent in San Francisco where she and her two brothers were raised by their extended family. As a young student, she would eventually study painting at the Mark Hopkins Institute (now known as the San Francisco Art Institute) under the tutelage of Arthur Frank Matthews, a founding member of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, Gottardo Piazzoni and Robert Aiken. As she became more involved in the art community in San Francisco, she met fellow student, artist and mining engineer William Lyle Skinner. The two married in

1905, and moved to Lone Pine, California where they would reside for almost thirty years. This is where Skinner would create her most iconic paintings.

Skinner's first painting of her new home in Lone Pine—an untitled oil painting that capturing Owens Lake, a mere five-minute walk from the Skinner home—was completed the following year in 1906. The piece already contains several signature elements that would characterize her vast body of work: a vibrant palette, attention to the striking rugged contour of the Eastern Sierra and a wide variation of greens, blues and earth tones.

Skinner, who was known for her penchant to find scenes to paint that were within walking distance of the Skinner homestead, captured impressive mountain silhouettes, cottonwood groves in irrigated valleys, and the Owens River and Lake, which would be diverted to provide water to Los Angeles, drastically altering the landscape. William Lyle Skinner would even run for public office to oppose the shifting water rights, but ultimately these efforts failed, and many have speculated this is what caused the artist and her husband to relocate to Eugene, Oregon in 1933.

Yet, the Skinner family was a well-established pioneer family in Lone Pine; the family owned a ten-acre homestead, and among the five siblings (of which William Lyle Skinner was one) owned and operated the Santa Rosa, Cerro Gordo and Christmas Gift mines, which produced lead, silver and zinc. After leaving Lone Pine, Skinner and her husband would return to visit family, and the artist would paint these mining scenes in watercolor, capturing a robust industry that brought many pioneering families like the Skinners to the American West. In many ways, the Skinners were a part of the landscape in the early 20th century as much as the mountains, cottonwood trees and diminishing water; Owens Valley author Mary Austin would mention them by name as her neighbors in her seminal autobiography *Earth Horizon*.

Throughout her life, Skinner remained committed to her artistic practice, exhibiting her paintings across the West Coast, including the Stanford Art Gallery (1930), Portland Art Museum (1933), and the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum (1956). Skinner also exhibited at the Nevada Art Gallery (now the Nevada Museum of Art) in 1952 alongside illustrator and friend, Maynard Dixon and noted California landscape painter William Wendt.

In conjunction with the exhibition, a 60-page booklet will be released on October 14 containing a feature essay written by exhibition curator Kolin Perry. The booklet will be available in the Museum Shop for \$20.

Full press kit images can be accessed by [following this link](#).

Image Captions: Charlotte Skinner, *Pasture Lands, Owens Valley*, not dated, oil on canvas, 24 x 28 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, promised gift of John A. White in memory of James E. Skinner; Charlotte Skinner, *Rocks*, not dated, oil on board, 12 ¾ x 15 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, promised gift of John A. White in memory of James E. Skinner; Charlotte Skinner, *Silence (Lone Pine Sierra)*, 1938, oil on canvas, 36 x 40 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, promised gift of John A. White in memory of James E. Skinner

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The Nevada Museum of Art is the only art museum in Nevada accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). A private, nonprofit organization founded in 1931, the statewide 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 opportunities for people to engage with a range of art and education experiences. The Museum's **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, the Center for Land Use Interpretation, Great Basin Native Artists Archive, Ugo Rondinone's *Seven Magic Mountains*, and Trevor Paglen's *Orbital Reflector*. Learn more at nevadaart.org.

Land Acknowledgement

The Nevada Museum of Art acknowledges the traditional homelands of the *Wa She Shu* (Washoe), *Numu* (Northern Paiute), *Newe* (Western Shoshone), and *Nuwu* (Southern Paiute) people of the Great Basin. This includes the 28 tribal nations that exist as sovereign nations and continue as stewards of this land. We appreciate the opportunity to live and learn on these Indigenous homelands.