

*Pedro de Lemos*  
*Lasting Impressions:*  
*Works on Paper,*  
**1910–1945**

BY

Robert W. Edwards

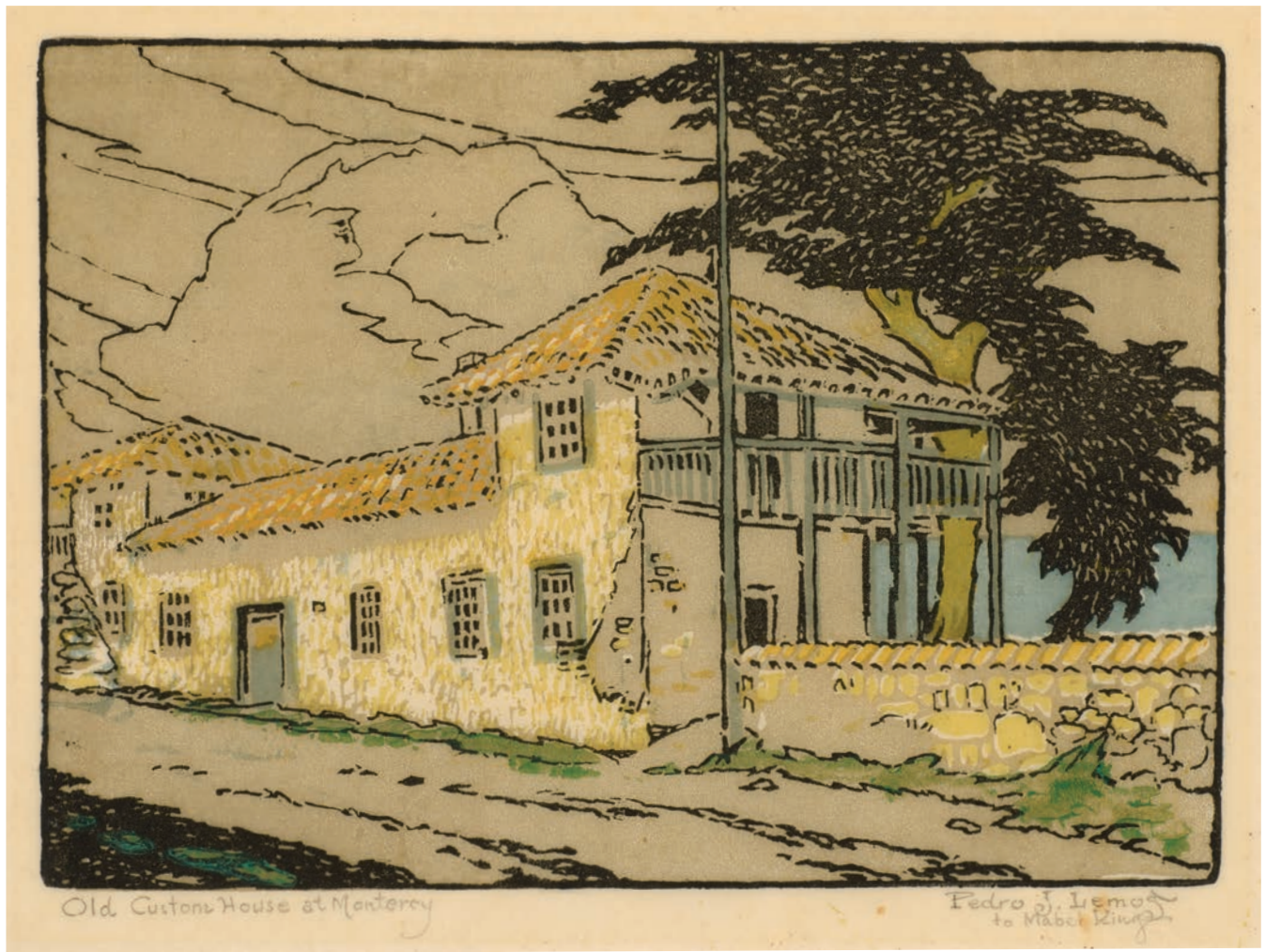
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

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1a *Coast Guards*, ca. 1940s, drypoint, 6" x 7".

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# Foreword

by Karen Crews Hendon

The Monterey Museum of Art presents *Lasting Impressions—Pedro de Lemos*, the first exhibition that celebrates one of the region's most important artists who championed diverse styles, methods, and materials during the American Arts & Crafts Movement in California.

A Renaissance man and ambitious designer at heart, Pedro Joseph de Lemos (1882–1954) was a preeminent printmaker who also excelled at painting, drawing, metal, leather, and cement work. Winning awards for his innovations in printmaking, Lemos was extensively proficient, from wood engravings and color block prints to lithography and intaglio methods such as drypoint, mezzotints, soft ground etchings, and aquatints. His prints garnered an Honorable Mention at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

Lemos was an influential figure in arts education during the first half of the 20th century and published numerous nationally recognized books for artists and teachers in all media with illustrated lesson plans that emphasized his progressive approach. Lemos trained under artists Arthur Mathews (1860–1945) and Arthur Wesley Dow (1857–1922), two of the most prominent figures in the decorative arts movement; both men became his respected mentors. Having synthesized an appreciation for fine craftsmanship, experimentation with abstract concepts of line, and a subtle Tonalist approach, Lemos left an artistic legacy that is largely underrepresented. A prolific and celebrated artist and building designer on the Monterey Peninsula and in Palo Alto, Lemos became a co-founder of the California Society of Etchers in 1912, was a member of the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, and was the first president of the Carmel Art Association in 1927.

As a professor of art he taught at the San Francisco Art Institute, administered by the University of California in Berkeley, and in 1917 became Curator and Director of the Stanford University Museum and the Thomas Welton Stanford Art Gallery, where he served until 1945.

His passion for local and world cultures led Lemos to rediscover his own Iberian heritage. Traveling extensively to Europe, South America, in the United States, and into the Southwest, he found the role of the artist integral to the preservation of native heritage. He documented and incorporated their arts and craft designs into his curriculum, and was one of the first artists in the Monterey region to teach about cross-cultural visual literacy as a means towards cultural sustainability.

The Monterey Museum of Art is proud to present *Lasting Impressions—Pedro de Lemos* and to provide a forum for such an accomplished artist whose historic and educational legacy has bridged the past with the present. Charlotte Eyerman, the museum's Executive Director, and her staff have been assisted by guest curators Robert W. Edwards and Julianne Burton-Carvajal, in collaboration with Terry Trotter, a specialist in early California art. This exhibition includes prints, oil paintings, watercolors, drawings, calligraphy, leather work, pottery, cement work, and artist ephemera with an interactive educational space. The Museum is grateful to all its supporters, partners, and collaborators involved in this project who believe that the intersection of art, culture, and community can transform lives.

Monterey, California

# Preface

by John Howell White

It is natural and fitting that this long over-due recognition of the life and work of Pedro de Lemos has been published by Davis Publications. Pedro had a deep and personal relationship with the Davis family. He also exerted a powerful influence on art education across the United States, in addition to his many contributions to art and culture in California. Robert Edwards' narrative provides readers with a nuanced and articulate overview of the importance of Pedro's work in both these arenas.

In the first half of the 20th century, *The School Arts Magazine* (known now as *SchoolArts*) was a forum for art teachers around the country, a place to find and share resources and pedagogical approaches. Pedro's association with *School Arts* began with his 1913 article, "Etching in the Schoolroom". In 1916, with several other articles to his name, Pedro was chosen by then-editor Henry Turner Bailey to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. Pedro brought to this position his interest in the Arts & Crafts Movement and his artistic and educational leadership on the West Coast. Pedro became the editor of *School Arts* in 1919 and continued in this position until his retirement in 1950.

Pedro was a second-generation immigrant who, like the Davises, believed in supporting and utilizing the talents of family members. The editorial offices of *School Arts* were located in two of the homes Lemos built in Palo Alto. There, with his wife Reta and his daughters Esther, Margaret, and Marie, he produced ten issues of the magazine every year for thirty years. His brothers, John and Frank, contributed as authors, illustrators, and designers.

The Davis and Lemos families had a personal and professional relationship, sharing stories and taking trips together. In Santa Fe they stayed at La Fonda, took Harveycar excursions to visit Native American villages and artists, and met with educational leaders such as Kenneth Chapman, who promoted the study and revival of "Indian Arts."

Pedro was instrumental in bringing Native American art and culture to *School Arts* readers, but that was just one of many ways he worked to broaden American educational perspectives through the magazine. His philosophy, "art for life's sake," fueled a broad range of artistic interests, from architecture to leathercraft, from painting and drawing to basketry and beadwork. Pedro exposed teachers in 1932 to the paintings of Frida Kahlo and the drawings of Mexican schoolchildren. He devoted one issue of *School Arts* to Russian Communist classroom art, and another to a bilingual English/Spanish edition on Central and South American art. He implored art teachers to travel in foreign lands and to appreciate each culture's handmade objects, grounded in functionality.

Pedro's skills in illustration and teaching resulted in lavish and informative instructional materials, published by Davis Press (now known as Davis Publications) as textbooks, instructional pamphlets, and single-topic books on folk culture and studio methods. To this day Pedro's illustrations provide some of the clearest demonstrations of craftsmanship. He brought to the magazine in-depth articles on cultural practices as well as down-to-earth advice about classroom art instruction. He tirelessly sought ways for mainstream art educators to engage their students with underrepresented art forms and cultures.

Davis Publications is proud to publish this informative companion book to the exhibitions of Pedro's work at the Monterey Museum of Art and the Thomas Welton Stanford Art Gallery in Stanford University. The exhibitions and this book will bring to Pedro de Lemos and his descendants proper and long-overdue recognition.

Kutztown University, Pennsylvania



# Introduction: *Becoming Pedro de Lemos*

by Julianne Burton-Carvajal

Having begun his life and career as Pedro Joseph Lemos, the artist ended them as Pedro J. de Lemos\*. Although born in Nevada, his home territory was Northern California. Oakland, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Carmel, and Pebble Beach were his places of residence and points of departure for documenting artisanal traditions the world over.

If a single phrase can account for Lemos' staggering range of abilities, it would be "Renaissance man." Six decades after his death, the world seems entirely transformed. Yet several concepts that define our present era – multitasking, multiculturalism, identity, hybridity, and diaspora – seem essential to appreciating the significance of his legacy and his special relevance for today's audiences, whatever their ages.

Guided by a motto of "art for life's sake" rather than "art for art's sake," his success at integrating creative, professional, pedagogical, residential, family, community, and travel realms while making a nationwide impact based on a global radius continues to be a source of inspiration. Printmaker of encyclopedic virtuosity, craftsman, illustrator, photographer, painter in oils, architectural designer, innovator in molded cement and other handicrafts, administrator, museum director, exhibitions curator, author, editor, teacher and teacher of teachers, community activist, preservationist, volunteer art therapist, devoted son, sibling, husband and parent, and on-site collector of vernacular artistic traditions around the globe – his overlapping commitments defy categorization. The way he managed to weave them all together exemplified the ethos of the Arts & Crafts Movement, his lifelong compass.

Lemos' personal quest for origins may be another guiding thread. Having come of age in 1903, he married fellow artist Reta A. Bailey in 1907. As their three daughters were verging on adulthood, California immersed itself in a wave of nostalgia for, and celebration of, a Spanish colonial past as legendary as it was historic.

It might be tempting to dismiss the artist's decision to add the "aristocratic particle" to his surname as a self-aggrandizing effort to climb aboard that romanticizing bandwagon. Having discovered Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, seventh Spanish governor of the Louisiana Territory, whose portrait he proceeded to paint, the artist traced the Lemos line back to a Conde de Lemos – Count of Lemos – who acted as benefactor to novelist Miguel de Cervantes, and to an earlier predecessor who assisted Queen Isabel of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon during the very first military challenge to their combined rule. As the son of an immigrant miner turned cobbler, Lemos might be forgiven the covert American yearning for aristocratic European roots.

Alternatively, the expanded surname may derive from his mother, Marie Josephine, presumably of French extraction although documented as "an immigrant from Portugal." Her surname – de Bethancour et de Mos – has a double dose of aristocratic particles. The painstaking retroactive insertion of "de" into the signature of every self-signed work he could gather invites another interpretation. As the individual singularly responsible for moving art education in North America beyond the classically inspired Beaux Arts paradigm through his decades-long editorship of *The School Arts Magazine*, he may have wished to signal that he was a man of the world in a more literal sense, and decided that manifesting membership in the Iberian diaspora was the means to that end.



1c *Pedro de Lemos in the interior of his Ramona Street commercial project, mid-1920s.*



The Lemos title originated in, and is still associated with, Monforte in Galicia, a central-western portion of the Iberian Peninsula alternately part of Spain and part of Portugal. The nearby Azores, as well North and South America and parts of Asia, were all populated by venturesome Iberians seeking a better life. With its ancient layers of immigration – Greek, Roman, Celtic, Visigothic, Hebrew, Muslim, and Berber – Iberia was an inextricable mélange of ethnicities and cultures long before it coalesced into two nations.

Pedro de Lemos relished creative expressions – pottery, weaving, and carpentry – that were intrinsically tied to the routines and rhythms of daily life. His interest in art-making was both global and anti-hierarchical. In New Mexico, Spain, Mexico, Guatemala, and North Africa he discovered indigenous and peasant cultures that became fonts of inspiration for his own prolific artistry as well as

his lifelong commitment to instructional dissemination. His expanded surname linked him to all those regions, which in turn seeded an interest in visiting others outside the Iberian cultural radius. As an artist, Pedro de Lemos was an exemplar of his era. As an educator and exhibitor, he was a harbinger of the future.

*\*Editor's Note: In 1933 Pedro Lemos added to his family name the particle "de" which was often spelled as one word, "deLemos." In order to be consistent and to comply with standard Spanish orthography, which requires the separation of the particle from the family name, the spelling "de Lemos" will be used throughout this publication, unless it is quoted in the title of a book or article. He signed the vast majority of his publications and most of his art as "Pedro Lemos." Refer to endnotes 1, 3, 291, and 295, for a discussion of the Lemos "aristocratic de."*