



# Jersey Shore Impressionists: The Fascination of Sun and Sea 1880-1940

*Roy Pedersen*

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Water and light have seduced artists through the years and the quality of these elements at the New Jersey Shore continues to attract artists to this day. Between the late 1800s and 1940, an inspired group of painters were drawn to the New Jersey coastline, forming communities of artists.

*Jersey Shore Impressionists* breaks new ground in the history of American art by recognizing the distinct influence of New Jersey and its Shore on impressionist era American painters. This book establishes -- for the first time -- a category of impressionist American painters who focused on, or were profoundly influenced by, the landscapes and seascapes of this Shore -- from Sandy Hook and Highlands to the Barnegat Bay region to Cape May.

"Not since 1964, nearly 50 years ago, and only once before that in 1938 has there been published a book on painters in New Jersey," says the book's author, Roy Pedersen. "Never until now has there appeared a survey of the regional impressionist painters of New Jersey. This book and the accompanying exhibition for the first time celebrate these unrecognized works into the history of New Jersey and American art."

*Jersey Shore Impressionists* is produced in conjunction with a 2013 exhibition at the Morven Museum & Garden in Princeton, NJ. The exhibition, titled "Coastal Impressions: Painters of the Jersey Shore, 1880-1940" seeks to examine how the New Jersey Shore was home to artist colonies whose output rivaled that of the better-known colonies of Old Lyme and Cos Cob, Connecticut, and Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

In a Foreword, Richard J. Boyle, former director of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, describes the foundation of art colonies, and how they traveled from origins in mid-nineteenth century France to the *plein-air* attraction of the Jersey Shore's "special light."

The first art colony - at Manasquan - forms around 1880 as young artists fresh from European training in Germany, France and Italy begin to arrive, and the book includes work from these artists - Will Hicok Low, Theodore Robinson, Albert Grantley Reinhart, Charles Freeman and Caroline Coventry Haynes. The next generation - Edward Boulton, Ida Wells Stroud, Julius Golz - trained in America, join and form new colonies to paint the unique light as well as the activities of the Shore.

The passionate work created by these artists stands as an important, but unsung, chapter of American Impressionism and is celebrated in this book, establishing the important contribution to American art in general, and New Jersey's cultural heritage in particular.

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