



BARBARA JOHNSON

# BARBARA JOHNSON AND ANDREA JOHNSON

Carmel artist Barbara Johnson, now in her eighty-seventh year, continues to paint and make monoprints as she has done for a good portion of her lifetime. A passionate artist, her obvious enthusiasm for the work spread to her daughters, particularly Andrea, a noted local painter. Despite their intimate family connection, Barbara and Andrea Johnson's art could not be more different.

Barbara Johnson was married and had two young children by the time she went to art school at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She was determined to follow a path begun when, as a young girl, she walked seven miles each way to attend art classes at the local museum. Forbidden by her father to study art or music at Smith College, she majored in government and geography, but her desire for art never waned. Her husband encouraged her, saying that if she didn't go to art school, she wouldn't be fit to live with. Johnson immersed herself in the experience, and by her own admission was a little obsessive, anxious for her children to go out to play so she could concentrate on painting.

From the beginning Johnson leaned strongly toward abstraction. She developed a distinctive style evocative of aerial panoramas, in which geometric and curvilinear divisions both surround and enclose fields of lavish color, applied and blended on the canvas with a palette knife. She embraces strong and muted colors easily, creating dynamic visual harmonies with each. Johnson is also an enthusiastic and successful printmaker, specializing in monoprints. Essentially paintings on Plexiglas run through a press with paper, the prints maintain her recognizable aerial viewpoint. They also meld remnants of delicate Japanese paper and reclaimed portions of her own discarded prints, to engage more closely with pattern and texture. When she wants a break from the exacting processes of printmaking, her canvas and oils are always waiting.

Her daughter, painter Andrea Johnson, has also embraced pattern in her well known jewel-like paintings of flowers and birds. Both acknowledge their years spent in Japan as the origin of this attraction. Recently however, Johnson has been more absorbed with landscape painting. While jogging with her dog through the open spaces of Fort Ord, Garland, and Toro Parks, she fell in love with the area's hills and inspired, decided to paint them.

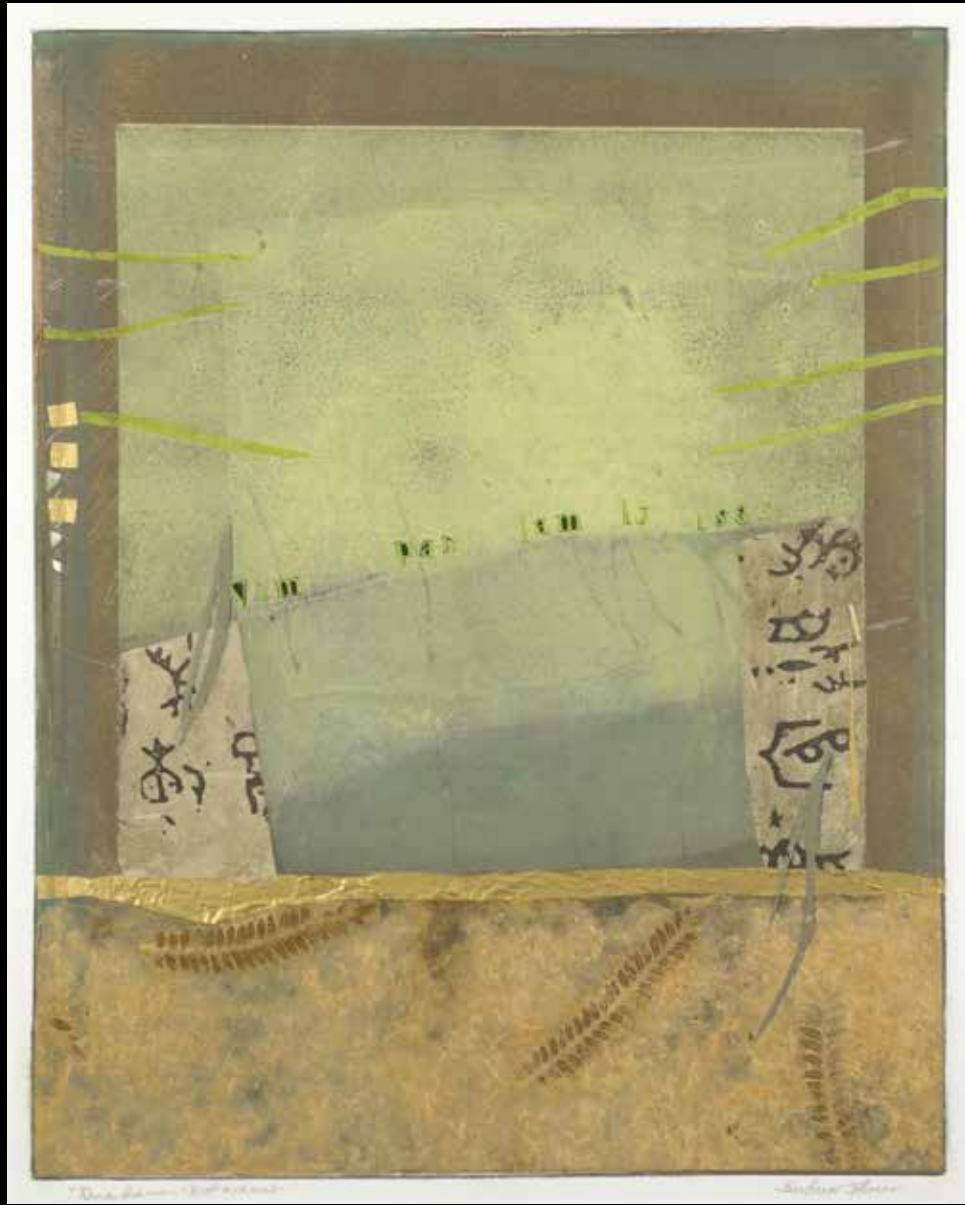
Unlike her mother, Andrea Johnson carefully plans out her compositions. She makes use of the grid system and cut pieces of paper to resolve placement of specific pictorial elements. Her colors are mixed on the palette and with meticulous brushstrokes she layers paint and glazes to develop her subject and bring out its luminosity. She favors early morning light, long shadows, and the low clouds of fog and oncoming storms, which she captures with a fine authenticity.

Barbara and Andrea Johnson are each committed artists, but their differences are unmistakable. In her student years Barbara Johnson experimented with figurative painting, but despite her enthusiasm for art, never showed interest in traditional landscape or still life painting. It is equally safe to say that Andrea Johnson has never contemplated painting an Abstract Expressionist composition. Nevertheless, mother and daughter are linked, not only by blood, but also by successful realization of their creative vision and a shared dedication to their work.

Helaine Glick  
Curatorial Advisor



**Early Sunlight**, Monoprints with Collage, 16 1/2 x 22 1/2 inches



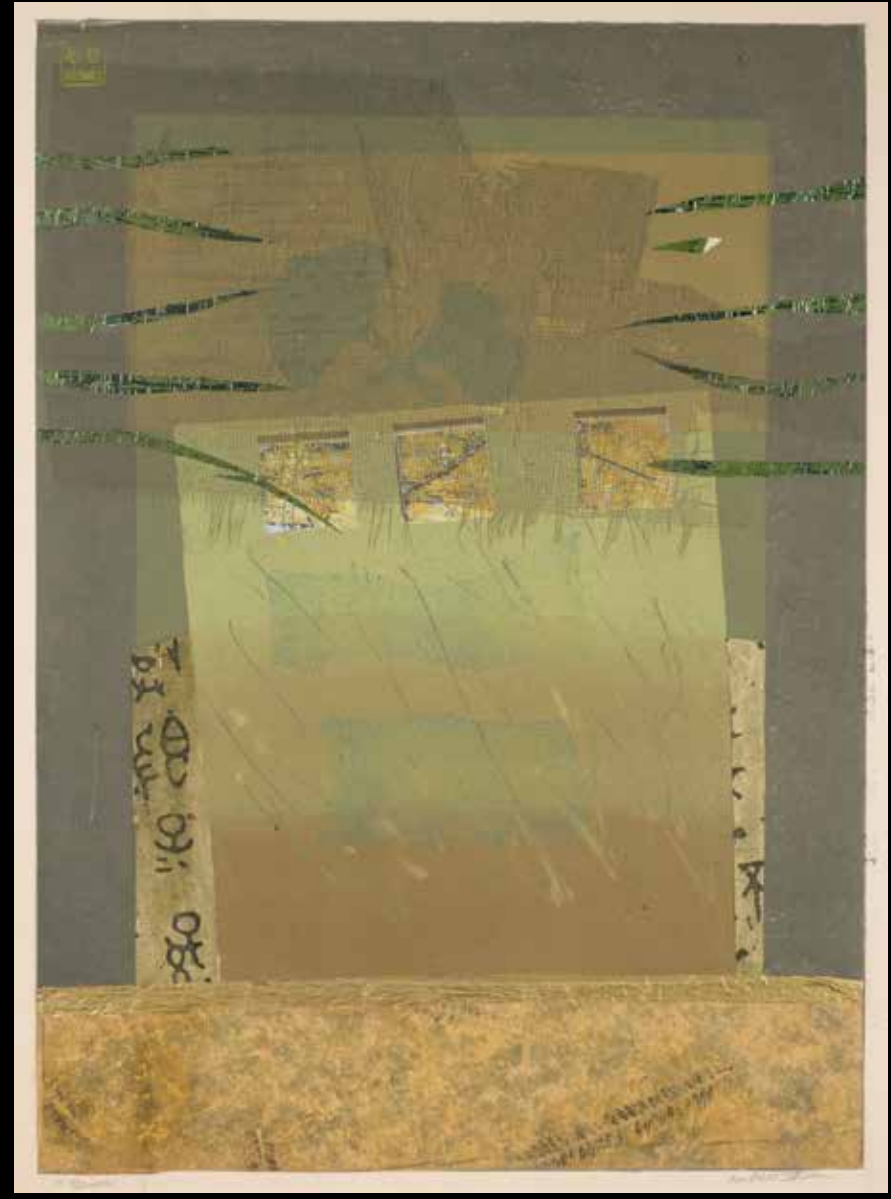
Remembrance, Past and Present, Monoprint with Collage, 19 x 15 1/2 inches



Nature Trail, Monoprint with Collage, 23 x 16 3/4 inches



**Solitude On The Bay**, Monoprint with Collage, 20 1/2 x 16 1/2 inches



**Memoir**, Monoprint with Collage, 22 3/4 x 16 1/2 inches



**View from Fort Ord**, Acrylic on Panel, 30 x 40 inches



**Mona Lisa**, Acrylic on Panel, 30 x 40 inches



**Black Bull**, Acrylic on Panel, 24 x 24 inches



This Page: **Two White Bulls**, Acrylic on Panel, 24 x 48 inches  
Front Cover: **Light**, Monoprint with Collage, 22 3/4 x 22 inches  
Back Cover: **White Bull**, Acrylic on Panel, 30 x 24 inches

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