

Susie Reneau

Meet the Artist

Susie Reneau has had over 60 one-woman shows, and numerous joint shows, including one with her teacher and mentor, the renowned Sister Corita, in Florida.

Susie studied art at Immaculate Heart College under Sister Corita, where her creativity blossomed. From Corita she learned to juxtapose words and graphics to create a visual/verbal form of art. All art majors were required to minor in English, Philosophy and Theology—which explains where a lot of these quotes come from.

In the summers, Susie apprenticed with Corita in her studio—cleaning screens, hanging prints and even cutting a few of her stencils. Sister Corita Kent has designed posters, book covers, murals, the 1985 LOVE stamp and a 150 foot high gas tank in Boston. The New York Times has said that “Sister Corita is to bread and wine what Andy Warhol is to tomato soup.”

Susie continued her studies in Boston with Norman La Liberte, international distinguished designer; a fantastically vibrant, colorful and imaginative teacher who encouraged her to always push beyond her limits to explore new possibilities. His son was one of the founders of the Cirque de Soleil (no wonder all those colors!)

There have been parallel experiences in connection with Susie and Sister Corita. Both entered a religious order at the age of 18 (Susie entered an Anglican Order). There is even a picture of Susie (Sister Christian) in one of Corita's books. Both lived and worked in Los Angeles and Boston. It was in Boston that Susie taught silk-screening in college and arts and crafts in junior high and high school. Both have created several hundred serigraph designs and been listed in 2 books on American Folk Calligraphy together (with Corita many more).



Of all
the wild
beasts
of land
or sea,
the
wildest
is woman.

menander
342-291 B.C.

Susie has created over 800 silk screen prints, 250 post card designs, a few record covers, art for a cook book, and has created a calendar with original art, now in its 30th year, which are considered extremely desirable by a knowledgeable core of collectors

Susie has produced more than 230 postcard designs which sold at Sea World for 11 years as well as Natural History Museums and shops across the U.S. and internationally. She has done wedding invitations, poetry magazines, record covers, one calligraphy book and her famous calendar. When she was a freshman in college, Susie won the school poetry contest—the prize being a print of her poem by Corita.

Famous psychologist, Carl Rogers, was part of Corita's classes in the 1960's. 12 years later, Susie was the coordinator of the La Jolla Women's Center, part of Carl's Center for the Study of the Person. This is where the idea for this show began—she wanted to do a special series for women. A very small room in the L.A. Women's Building 30 years ago was the start of it all. Now expanded, her work has come full circle to the Women's History Museum in 2008.

Susie was a part of the Women's History Museum where her friend, Laurel Mannen, who worked with Mary Maschal back in the beginning, used Susie's artwork on the fliers many times. Susie was curator of the Muriel Fisher doll show in homage to women in the arts in April 2008 and is glad to be back again participating in promoting the *Women's History Museum and Educational Center* with her own art.

Author C.M.E.R. Rigg wrote about Susie in her book “*A Ben Shahn Alphabet Workbook—Second in a Series of Alphabet Letter forms designed by Americans*” (Possum Press, 1991). The book's forward states, in part “... in the U.S., F.W. Goudy and Ben Shahn, chiefly, found and designed new forms of alphabet letters fully conscious of the historic traditions. The letterform evolution continues best in the hands of arts professionals. New letter forms must reveal deep connections to our human sense of worth in a given time... Ben Shahn's work on new letter forms is appropriate for 20th century America and exceptionally valuable. Others are Corita Kent, Jan Steward,

Susie Reneau & of course F. W. Goudy... they are to American calligraphy as Edward Johnston and Nicolette Gray are to British Development and Renewal in the U.K. We today are indebted to them all.”

Thinking of Corita and Immaculate Heart's influence these words come to Susie's mind: inspiration, motivation, perseverance, caring, friends, love, hope, change, profound respect for all people, all creative talents, curiosity, pushing beyond all limits.

Come to the Museum on September 13, 2008 for the opening of “Women's Words & Witticisms, Out of the Mouths of Babes”, view her work and see for yourself why **Susie Reneau** is considered a San Diego institution. Susie will be at the Museum on Saturdays and Sundays (12-4pm) throughout the September run of the Show. Many of her works will be available for purchase. Susie be reached at P. O. Box 2488, La Jolla, CA 92038 and at reneauart@gmail.com.

SUSIE RENEAU ♥

