

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

RESEARCH GUIDES

CALIFORNIA POETRY



[Visit Us](#)

California History Section

900 N Street Room 200

9:30-4 Monday-Friday

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Are you writing a paper about a famous California poet? Are you curious about how California gets portrayed in poetry? Maybe you're looking for inspiration for your own poem! Whatever the case, the [California History Section's](#) rich collections can help! If you have any questions about these or other resources please feel free to [contact us](#).

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ENJOY YOUR RESEARCH!

DIGITIZED RESOURCES

Can't come to the library just yet? No worries! There are a number of online resources you can explore related to California poetry!



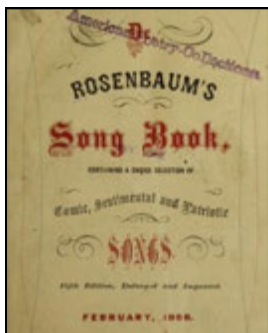
Digitized Images

We have scanned and digitized a portion of our extensive photograph collection, including portraits of California poets. You can see them on Calisphere!



URL: <https://calisphere.org/institution/51/items/>

Type in Refine Box: (Poets)



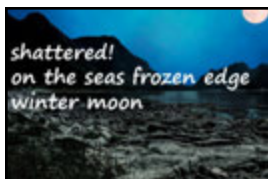
Digitized Publications

A few years ago we digitized some of our more fragile California poetry resources. You can see them on Internet Archive!



URL: <https://archive.org/>

Type in Search Box: (Poetry) AND collection: (californiastatelibrary)



haiku of the Week

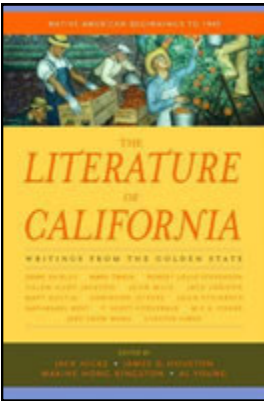
Do you just want a sample of the poems here at the library? Check out our staff's favorite haiku poems on our Tumblr account!



URL: <http://californiastatelibrary.tumblr.com/tagged/American-Haiku-Archives>

BOOKS

Want to get a sense of California's many poets but don't have the time to read a full book of poetry by any one person? Try one of these books to get a literary survey!

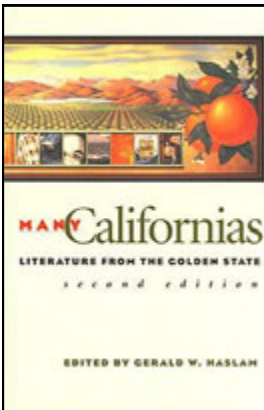


Hicks, J. (2000). [The literature of California](#). Berkeley: University of California Press.

A far-ranging, diverse and thorough anthology. In this volume you will find works by authors and poets from prehistoric California all the way through to the 1940s.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001117543



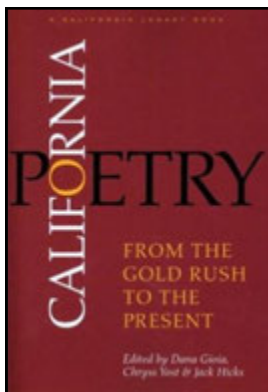
Haslam, G. (1992). [Many Californias: Literature from the Golden State](#) (Western literature series). Reno: University of Nevada Press.

A wide ranging anthology that includes lesser-known writers as well as the more famous ones. This book takes a geographical approach to California's literature and poetry.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000584950

BOOKS

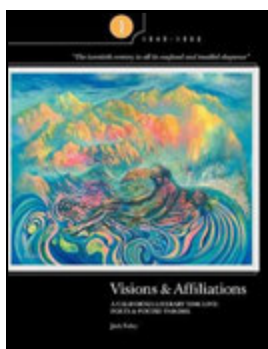


Gioia, D., Yost, C., & Hicks, J. (2004). [California poetry : From the Gold Rush to the present](#) (California legacy book). Santa Clara, Calif. : Berkeley, Calif.: Santa Clara University ; Heyday Books.

Edited by California's poet laureate, this sweeping anthology covers the history of California poetry from 1850 forward including poetic giants both old and new.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001211553



Foley, J. (2011). [Visions & affiliations : A California literary time line : Poets & poetry, 1940-2005](#). Oakland, CA: Pantograph Press.

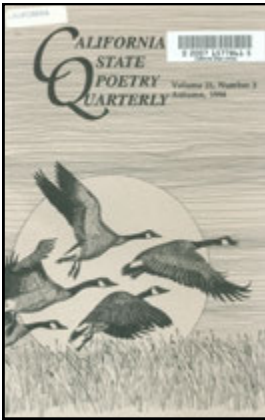
Do you always find yourself wondering who knew who or when a particular poet changed literary directions? Look no further than this detailed timeline tracking poetic events and people from 1940-1980.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001482569

PERIODICALS

Books are not the only way to read the work of or to learn more about California's poets. You can read also articles and poems in literary magazines and journals!

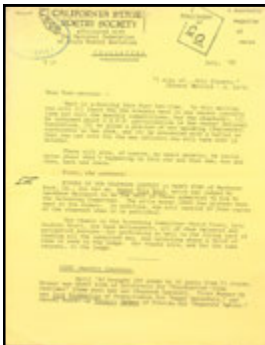


California Quarterly (1972-) Santa Barbara, Calif. : California State Poetry Society

Published under various titles from 1972-present, this journal includes poems from a wide variety of authors employing techniques as diverse as haiku and free-verse.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS=000144712 OR
SYS=001078308



CSPS Newsletter (1983-1993). Covina, CA : California State Poetry Society

Less about the final product and more about the process, this newsletter includes real-time information on workshops, publishing opportunities and competitions, from 1983-1993.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000558892

SPECIALIZED COLLECTIONS

The California History Section has two big collections devoted to California poetry! Whether you are looking for an unusual haiku, or other type of poem, these would be good places to start.



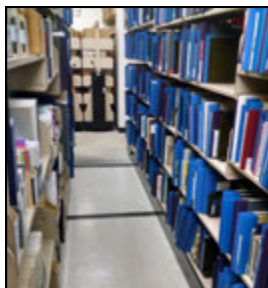
Ina Coolbrith Circle Collection

Containing over 300 works of poetry and literature, this collection of publications donated by the Ina Coolbrith Circle, serves as an example of the wide variety of poetry written by Californians.



URL: <http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-b-0>

Type in Search Box: Ina Coolbrith Circle



American Haiku Archives

With well over 2000 individual titles, this collection of haiku books and periodicals by authors both in the United States and abroad is the largest collection of haiku literature in California!



URL: <http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-b-0>

Type in Search Box: American Haiku Archives

CATALOG GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS

While many of our materials are online, even more are only in hard-copy. You can use the following resources to locate our books, articles, and manuscripts by and about California poets



[Catalog](#)

If you are looking for [images](#), [books](#) and [articles](#) on California poets, your best source is our [catalog](#).



URL: <http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-a-0>

Type in Subject Box: (Poetry OR Poets)

Limit: By place or specific author



[California Information File II](#)

Sometimes the catalog doesn't provide as much detail as you might like. This is why we created the California Information File II. In this resource, you can find catalog records on individual articles, pamphlets and more.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCalinfo.htm

Type in Subject Box: Poetry OR Poets

For a narrower search: Add a place or specific author to your keyword search

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC RESOURCES IN OUR CATALOG

California-born (or focused) poets not only have diverse origins, they cover a myriad of different topics. While these catalog links barely scrape their work, they are good starting points.



Poets:

[African Americans](#)
[Chinese Americans](#)
[Italian Americans](#)
[Japanese Americans](#)
[Latin Americans](#)
[Native Americans](#)

Poetry by Subject:

[Agriculture](#)
[Earthquakes](#)
[Education](#)
[Environment](#)
[Humor](#)
[Mining](#)
[Politics](#)
[Sixties](#)
[Transportation](#)
[Water](#)
[Wildflowers](#)
[Wildlife](#)
[Wine](#)

Resources by Type:

[Books](#)
[Images](#)
[Manuscripts](#)
[Periodicals](#)

WORKS BY SPECIFIC AUTHORS IN OUR CATALOG

Sometimes an poet is such a fantastic writer that he or she attains lasting fame. The following catalog links highlight the works of California poetic luminaries like Coolbrith and Soto.



Poets Laureate:

[Ina Coolbrith](#)
[Henry Bland](#)
[John McGroarty](#)
[Gordon Norris](#)
[Charles Garrigus](#)
[Al Young](#)
[Carol Muske-Dukes](#)
[Juan Herrera](#)
[Dana Gioia](#)

Other Poets:

[Addonizio, Kim](#)
[Alarcon, Francisco](#)
[Alpaugh, David](#)
[Barnes, Dick](#)
[Bierce, Ambrose](#)
[Bowers, Edgar](#)
[Brautigan, Richard](#)
[Broughton, James](#)
[Buckley, Christo-
pher](#)
[Bukowski, Charles](#)
[Burgess, Gelett](#)
[Coleman, Wanda](#)
[Coulette, Henri](#)
[Day, Lucille](#)

[Duncan, Robert](#)
[Everson, William](#)
[Ferlinghetti, Law-
rence](#)
[Flanner, Hildegard](#)
[French, Nora](#)
[Gerstler, Amy](#)
[Gilman, Charlotte](#)
[Graham, Taylor](#)
[Gunn, Thom](#)
[Harte, Bret](#)
[Hass, Robert](#)
[Hearle, Kevin](#)
[Hejinian, Lyn](#)
[Hirshfield, Jane](#)
[Inada, Lawson](#)
[Jeffers, Robinson](#)
[Kaufman, Bob](#)
[Kessler, Stephen](#)

[Lamantia, Philip](#)
[Levine, Philip](#)
[Lewis, Janet](#)
[Loden, Rachel](#)
[Lummis, Suzanne](#)
[Maio, Samuel](#)
[Markham, Edwin](#)
[McClure, Michael](#)
[McDaniel, Wilma](#)
[Miles, Josephine](#)
[Miller, Joaquin](#)
[Moore, Rosalie](#)
[Nathan, Leonard](#)

[Noguchi, Yone](#)
[Palmer, Michael](#)
[Reed, Ishmael](#)
[Rexroth, Kenneth](#)
[Ridge, John](#)
[Ridland, John](#)
[Snyder, Gary](#)
[Soto, Gary](#)

[Spicer, Jack](#)
[St. John, David](#)
[Stanford, Ann](#)
[Sterling, George](#)
[Stoddard, Charles](#)
[Welch, Lew](#)
[Winters, Yvor](#)

COUNTY-SPECIFIC RESOURCES IN OUR CATALOG

Are you interested in poetry about a specific place in California?
Check out these literary gems, as sorted by county! For even
more California poems, please search our catalog directly.



[Alameda](#)
[Butte](#)
[Contra Costa](#)
[Fresno](#)
[Humboldt](#)
[Imperial](#)
[Kings](#)
[Los Angeles](#)
[Marin](#)
[Mariposa](#)
[Mendocino](#)
[Monterey](#)

[Napa](#)
[Nevada](#)
[Sacramento](#)
[San Bernardino](#)
[San Diego](#)
[San Francisco](#)
[San Joaquin](#)
[Santa Barbara](#)
[Santa Clara](#)
[Santa Cruz](#)
[Siskiyou](#)
[Sonoma](#)

ON-SITE RESEARCH RESOURCES

Our collection predates computers and so do some of our access points! If you are in the library, be sure to check the following analog files for leads on more resources.



California Information File

In the library? Check the California Information File before you do anything else! This file indexes over 130 years of California articles, books, and manuscript collections related to California poetry.



Subject Headings:

1. Poetry (Various subdivisions)
2. Poets
3. Poets Laureate



Photographic File

Sometimes a picture is worth a 1000 words and not all of our pictures are online. To check the rest of the collection search our picture file card catalog.



Subject Headings:

1. Portraits: Individual names

OTHER ON-SITE RESOURCES

Despite our best efforts, some of our resources defy complete description. We suggest that you ask a librarian about any information related to California poetry in the following files



Vertical Files

Our massive collection of vertical files covers a wide variety of topics including fiction. You can check them for information on organizations, book signings, pamphlets and more.



Subject Headings: Check with librarians.



Postcard Files

Separate from our photo collection, our postcard collection contains a number of images of famous California poets or locations popularized in their poems.

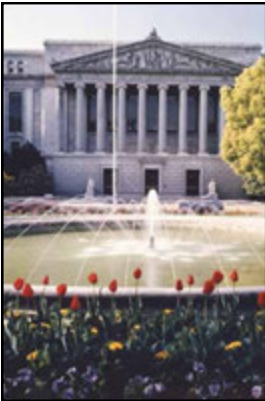
Most are not online.



Subject Headings: Check with librarians

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK

Of course the California History Section doesn't have everything, so we suggest that in addition to looking at our collections, you contact the following organizations



Other California State Library Sections

[Government Publications Section](#)

[Witkin Law Library](#)

[Sutro Library](#)

[General Information](#)



URLs:

- <http://www.library.ca.gov/government-publications/>
 - <http://www.library.ca.gov/law/>
 - <http://www.library.ca.gov/sutro/>
 - <https://www.library.ca.gov/services>
-



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This guide is also available online at:
<http://www.library.ca.gov/california-history/research-guides/>