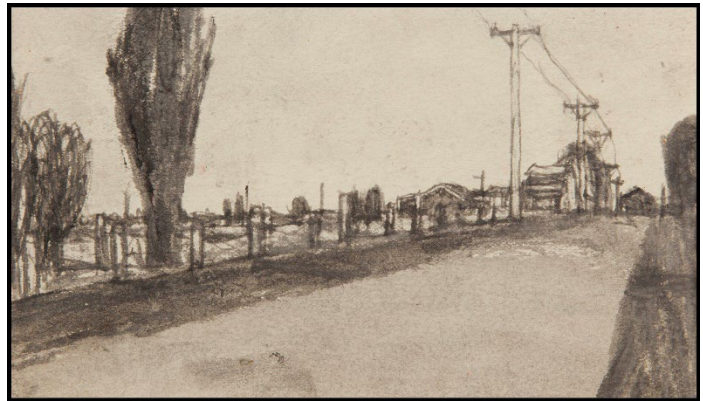




Contact: Katrina Carl
Director of Communications
805.884.6430
kcarl@sbma.net



Left: James Castle, *Farmscape*, n.d. Soot on blue-tinted found paper. William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation. Right: James Castle, *Landscape with Fence-Lined Road*, n.d. Soot with wash on found paper. Collection of Phoebe Louis-Dreyfus.

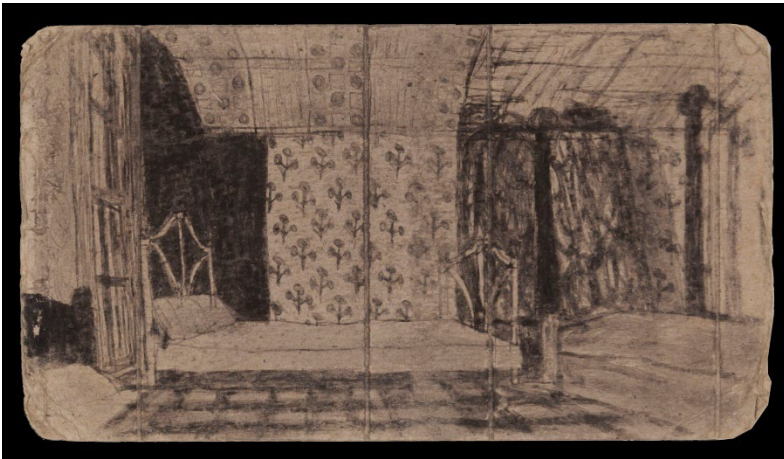
Santa Barbara Museum of Art Presents
The Private Universe of James Castle:
Drawings from the William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation
and James Castle Collection and Archive

SBMA represents the sole venue for this presentation and is the first exhibition of the artist's work in Southern California

On View June 25 – September 17, 2023

October 17, 2022 — With more than 90 works, this exhibition features many of the most beautiful and accomplished drawings created by the extraordinarily gifted, self-taught artist James Castle. The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) represents the sole venue for this show, which highlights the artist's remarkable technical skills and attempts to foster a better understanding of his evocative and unconventional images, particularly his landscapes and architectural interior scenes. Unfortunately, the common perception of Castle and his art has tended to be very limited due to emphasis on his physical impairments—he was profoundly deaf and largely mute—and his geographic isolation, working in rural Idaho.

The exhibition and accompanying scholarly catalogue places Castle in a larger artistic and cultural context and explores the imaginative innovations of his works, mainly drawings produced with soot from a woodstove and his saliva, rendered on scraps of found paper. The astonishing descriptive and expressive effects that he achieves in these soot drawings can be compared to the studies of such earlier major masters as Rembrandt. The show and catalogue also aim to dispel some of the misconceptions and over-interpretations of Castle's works, such as the notion that his empty interior scenes should be read as projections of artist's own feelings of loneliness. A much more psychologically complex portrait of the artist emerges, along with a greater insight into the complicated and highly inventive and resourceful aspects of his art.



James Castle, *View of Bedroom*, n.d. Soot on found paper. William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation.

The majority of objects in the exhibition are on loan from the two preeminent depositories of James Castle's art, the collections of the William Louis-Dreyfus Foundation in Mount Kisco, New York and the James Castle Collection and Archive in Boise, Idaho. A number of other drawings in the show are borrowed from private collections, including a group of heretofore never publically displayed or published works owned by members of the Castle family. Castle's artworks have previously been featured in shows at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, and are found in many museum collections, including those of the Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. This is the first exhibition of Castle's works in Southern California.

The catalogue for the exhibition is over 130 pages, with more than 100 color illustrations, including reproductions, in some cases actual size, of all of the objects in the show. Larry J. Feinberg, the Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Director and CEO of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, is the organizer of the exhibition and author of its catalogue.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is one of the finest museums on the West coast and is celebrated for the superb quality of its permanent collection. Its mission is to integrate art into the lives of people through internationally recognized exhibitions and special programs, as well as the thoughtful presentation of its permanent collection.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.
Open Tuesday – Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Free Thursday Evenings 5 to 8 pm
805.963.4364 www.sbma.net

Connect: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)