

Al Farrow

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Art Nouveau Ceramics, Scheherazade in Gilded Age Art and an Artist's White House Coming Up at the Crocker



Al Farrow, *The White House*, 2018. Guns, gun parts, shell casings, and steel, 69 x 77 x 36 in. Courtesy of the artist and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco.

While the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, Calif., is currently closed and preparing to reopen, a suite of new summer [exhibitions](#) await visitors. A major exhibition celebrating the 100th birthday of California artist [Wayne Thiebaud](#) is also planned for the fall. "Al Farrow: *The White House*" is a new exhibit. Using guns and ammunition, Al Farrow transforms the tools of destruction into creation in his sculptures of cathedrals, synagogues, mosques, mausoleums, and other architectural monuments. By doing so, he denigrates no one belief, being mindful and respectful of all. His 2018 sculpture *The White House* is replete with irony, marked by the contradiction between its title and the somber, rusted exterior that insinuates the corrosion of long-held ideals.



Wilhelm Vita, Scheherazade, ca. 1891. Oil on canvas, 74 x 114 in. Sandy and Bram Dijkstra Collection.

Also, the exhibition "Scheherazade and Her Sisters: Real and Imagined Gilded Age Women from the Dijkstra Collection" opens. In "One Thousand and One Nights," the strong-willed Scheherazade saves herself and many other women by outsmarting a brutal king with her fascinating tales. This exhibition of paintings explores fantasy images of the seductive power of women in late 19th- and early 20th-century art, and places them next to those of real working women of the Gilded Age, who survived in a world far removed from the Orientalist dreams and supernatural settings popular with the artists of this period. But, whether real or imaginary, these women, depicted with fierce conviction by a wide range of European and American artists, retain their allure even today.



[left] Zsolnay, Double Tulip Vase, ca. 1895. Ceramic, 13 1/2 (height) in. Private collection; [center] Villeroy and Boch, Mettlach, Vase with Iris, n.d. Ceramic, 11 1/2 (height) in. Collection of Jeffrey Ruda; [right] Keller and Guérin, designed by Ernest Bussière, Floral Vase, ca. 1900. Ceramic, 13 1/4 x 4 1/8 in. Private collection.

During the late 19th century, artistic rebellion against mass production took many forms. In the world of design, shapes reflecting nature and growth, experiments with techniques, and influences from non-European cultures led to the flowering of Art Nouveau. Focusing on ceramics from the United States and Europe, the exhibition "Flowers from Fire: Ceramics and the International Art Nouveau" explores the artists and innovations that led to a new international style.

Check the [Crocker website](#) for reopening updates, visitor protocols and digital resources.

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