



Adult Group Application

The California Historical Society (CHS) is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire and empower people to make California's richly diverse past a meaningful part of their contemporary lives.

We are at 678 Mission Street, between New Montgomery and 3rd Street. Buses may pull up and deposit the group at the front door (if the space for the bus is available). The docent will meet you at the Front Desk and begin the tour. No food or drinks are allowed in the galleries. Lunch spots include: Yerba Buena Gardens (1½ blocks away) and the Metreon Food Court (on Mission between 3rd and 4th Streets and Yerba Buena Gardens).

Our Current Exhibition

Vintage: Wine, Beer, and Spirits Labels from the Kemble Collections on Western Printing and Publishing



This exhibition explores CHS's exquisite collection of vintage wine, beer, and spirits labels produced by the now-forgotten Lehmann Printing and Lithographing Company of San Francisco. Designed during the terrible privation and unrest of the Great Depression, Lehmann's labels graced hundreds of thousands of bottles of mass manufactured, highly alcoholic wines and liquors, invoking deliciously unrealistic fantasies of peace, plenty, and the high-class life. Marrying design with consumer ideology, the Lehmann oeuvre represents a forgotten high point of American commercial art.

Founded in 1911 by Adolph Lehmann with an initial investment of \$190, the firm expanded into a major industrial printing operation valued at \$600,000 by 1935. A dazzled correspondent for the *Inland Printer* dubbed Lehmann "the printer who hasn't heard about the depression." The company employed one hundred people, including a permanent staff of anonymous artists who designed each custom label with skillful care. To meet an ever-increasing demand for labels, Lehmann also pioneered a stock label service in the mid-1930s, creating catalogs of generic labels with stock vignettes that could be applied to a wide variety of products.

The Lehmann art department flourished in the fast pace of mass production, finding in their daily grind opportunities for seemingly inexhaustible creative invention. Their visual vocabulary included certain recurring motifs—parted curtains, heavy vines, and peaceful fields—and surprisingly effective combinations of Art Deco design with romanticized references to the Middle Ages, the Mission Era, and the Gold Rush. The labels mythologized both California's past and present, illustrating a vision of social and industrial harmony from which the bitter realities of history were excluded.

The exhibition features hundreds of colorfully illustrated labels, ephemera, and stock label catalogue books from Lehmann Printing.

Docent Tour is \$5 per person. A docent tour is one hour long.

We are closed December 15, December 25 and 26, January 1 and January 2

All tours may be photographed. Complete page 2 of this application.



Please complete:

Group name: _____

Zip code: _____

in the group (15 is maximum for one docent): _____

Date of your tour:

First choice _____ Second choice _____ Third choice _____

Anything you would like us to know about your group or any particular interests your group may have?

Contact information of group leader for trip confirmation:

Name _____

Email: _____

Phone number _____

The date you provide is tentative. You will be contacted for verification. Please cancel tours by contacting 415-357-1848 ext. 222 or emailing ppforte@calhist.org.