

**This letter from William Zorach dated March 12, 1964, discusses his visit to Tucson, Arizona, to attend the opening of an exhibition of his most recent watercolors at the University of Arizona art gallery. His reflections on his time at Yosemite in 1920 are on page 2.**

The Tucson Citizen published an interview with Zorach on 22 February 1964, who was 77 years old at the time. The article noted:

*Despite critical acclaim in the 1920s and 30s for his "Yosemite" series of watercolors (when I "leaped like a goat from ledge to ledge," guided by photographer Ansel Adams), Zorach's paintings are not as well known as his sculpture.*

The article continued:

*Visitors to the university gallery ... will marvel at the vitality, humanity and sensitiveness of his recent works. They are as fresh and dynamic as if they were done today by a young man caught with nature's first revelations and enchanted by his ability to communicate its marvels in near-abstract expression.*

The latter paragraph refers to Zorach's reaction when presented with the overwhelming beauty of Yosemite in 1920. He talked about this experience and the feelings it stirred within him in his biography:

*I spent five months in the Yosemite Valley sketching, drawing, painting, and doing watercolors. Every now and then in life we have an experience that moves us so deeply, that holds us with such sheer, transcendent beauty, that it takes us completely out of this world. ... I climbed all over the mountains with a pack of sketching materials and blankets on my back, and slept out under the stars. The loneliness and vastness was overpowering. I sketched and painted in ecstasy.*

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WILLIAM ZORACH  
276 HICKS STREET  
BROOKLYN 1, NEW YORK

March 12, 1964

Mr. Bill Steadman -  
We got back to New York and  
the flight was very pleasant & perfect.  
It was foggy & raining when we landed &  
we got home & found everything just as we  
left it. I could just have gone for a  
walk around the block - Our stay in  
Tucson was wonderful & we are very  
grateful for your introduction to Mrs.  
Paulina Bennett - She treated us royally  
and all but my angina which acted  
up every now & then all was perfect -  
Marguerite tells everyone that I had  
a show of my Tucson Watercolors at  
the airport. If so it was a private  
view for you & Bob - all though I did  
show them to Bob & his girl friend  
the night before at the guest house -  
We had a few rough nights since  
I'm back with the doctor coming in  
on an emergency call one night when



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"When I think of spending five months in the Yosemite Valley in 1920 packing on foot 40 miles to the big trees & packing up alone up the mountain top & sleeping alone along side a fire I built & waking before dawn to paint the sunrise over the tops of the mountains..."



Zorach at the Wawona Tree in Yosemite, 1920

2  
When the pain in my chest got unbearable -  
I'm now on three different pills - which  
seem to be very effective & I feel pretty  
normal again - I am very grateful  
to you for Bob Frick he is a  
wonderful young man & I don't know  
what we would have done without him -  
guiding us around. When I think of  
spending five months in the Yosemite  
valley in 1920 packing on foot 40  
miles to the big trees & packing up  
alone up the mountain top & sleeping  
alone along side a fire I built & waking  
before dawn to paint the sunrise over the  
tops of the mountains - and our trips up  
to Maine Christmas & New Years in an  
open old Maxwell - with 2 kids dogs  
cats & guinea pigs - through the ice & snow  
up to the hub caps - those days are  
gone by - My daughter in law Peggy  
that is Margaret Zorach is librarian  
at the Brooklyn Museum of Art & she  
would like a set of those catalogues you  
gave me for the library - I do not want  
to part with mine - Will you send her  
a complete set of the following & charge  
me to 3





Edith Gregor Halpert Sam Falk/The New York Times (1964)

Edith Halpert was a pioneering New York art dealer of American modern art. She brought recognition and market success to many avant-garde American artists, including William Zorach. When she founded Downtown Gallery in Greenwich Village in 1926, it was the only New York gallery dedicated exclusively to contemporary American art by living artists.

"P.S. - I haven't seen or talked to Edith Halpert as yet. I understand that she received an invitation from the university museum to meet the artist - I'll just wait until she cools off - she's quite different when cool than when she is hot - WZ"

**Comment: It would appear that Zorach neglected to mention his appearance at the exhibition--and possibly the exhibition itself--to Edith in advance. Receiving notice from an invitation to "meet the artist" likely didn't go over well, particularly given that their close relationship dated back to the 1920s.**

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WILLIAM ZORACH  
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BROOKLYN 1, NEW YORK

and charge them to me. Send me  
the bill & I will mail a check to the  
Museum - 1 - 1765 - 1963 Fleischman  
collection

2 John Marin

3 Winslow Homer

4 Edward Hopper

was there an Andy Weath? I do not  
have that. I may be mistaken -

Mail the catalogues to  
Mrs. Tessim Zorach  
14 Sidney place

Brooklyn 1 New York.

P with kindest regards  
to all the good people at  
the Museum  
cordially

Bill Zorach

P.S - I havent seen or talked to Edith  
Halpert as yet. I understand that she received  
an invitation from the university museum to  
meet the artist - I'll just wait until  
she cools off - shes quite different when  
cool than when she is hot -

WZ