

Images of the California Missions by Steve Sout

Stretching from San Diego to Sonoma, the 21 California missions are reminders of California's past. Few regions of the world possess a similar physical and visual representation of a region's growth and development.

In 1769, under order of the Spanish King, sea and land expeditions left Mexico for California. They met in San Diego where the first fort and mission were established to serve as frontier outposts. The King sent military troops and Franciscan missionaries to the new land to colonize the territory and convert its Indian inhabitants to Christianity.

During a 54 year period, four forts (or presidios) and twenty-one missions were founded along the California coast. Some of these sites eventually evolved into major California cities, including San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Jose and San Francisco.

Founding of the California missions began 7 years before the American Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. It ended 25 years before gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848. Mission expansion came to an end in 1823, after the Sonoma mission was completed.

The photographs of the California missions in this show are part of a much larger body of work spanning several years. The earliest photographs in the show were made at Mission San Juan Bautista in 1979. The most recent photographs in the show were made at Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 2002.

About the Prints

All of the images were made with either a Hasselblad or Rolleiflex 2¼ x 2¼" roll film camera and printed on traditional silver gelatin photographic paper. Archival processing techniques and materials were used to produce the prints.

The techniques used to produce the prints are described by Ansel Adams in his book [The Print: Contact Printing and Enlarging](#), originally published in 1968 by Morgan & Morgan, Inc. He also provided personalized instruction and darkroom demonstrations during the Ansel Adams' Workshops, held at Yosemite in the early '70s.

The process of making a fine art B&W print is very labor intensive and time consuming. For this reason the number of prints made from each negative is very limited. The individual print number for each of the prints in this show is provided on the signed Certificate of Authenticity attached to the back of each print.

About the Artist

Steve Sout began his work in serious photography in 1967. Since that time he has traveled extensively, creating photographs of subjects located both domestically and abroad. His photographs adhere to the West Coast tradition in fine art B&W photography.

Two important goals of photography, as an artistic medium, are mastery of photographic composition and mastery of photographic technique. In order to achieve these goals, he has studied with some of the prominent leaders in fine art B&W photography including: Ansel Adams, Morley Baer, Wynn Bullock, and Al Weber.

Steve Sout has had one-man shows in Illinois, Louisiana, and California. He is currently a member of the Los Gatos Art Association, the Morgan Hill Photography Club, and the Valle del Sur Art Guild in Morgan Hill.