



Jessie Arms Botke (1883 - 1971)

Born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1883, Jessie Arms began sketching and painting at a young age. She enrolled in the Art Institute of Chicago in 1902, and spent several summers with renowned artists and teachers John C. Johansen and Charles Woodbury. In 1911, Jessie went to work for Albert Herter of Herter Looms in New York City. She later assisted Herter on a series of wall murals for the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

Upon returning to Chicago, Jessie Arms met artist Cornelis Botke. Their marriage the following year was the start of what was to be a very productive and happy lifelong partnership. In 1929, the Botke family settled on a peaceful ranch in Wheeler Canyon in Santa Paula, California.

From her home and studio in Santa Paula, Jessie Arms Botke became one of the most extraordinary decorative painters of the twentieth century. Botke is best known for her bold, decorative works of exotic birds surrounded by carefully painted flora. Inspired by Japanese screens, Jessie often utilized gold-leaf as background for her oil compositions. It was not until later in her career that Botke proved herself to be a master watercolorist and printmaker as well. Regardless of the medium, Botke's paintings are a unique and wonder-filled world all their own.