

history of santa anita race track

The Fascinating History of Santa Anita Race Track

history of santa anita race track unveils a captivating journey through one of America's most iconic horse racing venues. Nestled in the scenic San Gabriel Mountains foothills near Arcadia, California, Santa Anita Park has long been a centerpiece of thoroughbred racing, blending rich traditions with stunning architecture and world-class competition. Whether you're a lifelong racing fan or just discovering the allure of the sport, understanding the origins and evolution of Santa Anita offers deep insights into why it remains a beloved destination for horse racing enthusiasts.

The Origins of Santa Anita Race Track

The story of Santa Anita begins in the early 20th century, a time when horse racing was rapidly gaining popularity across the United States. The land on which Santa Anita Park now stands was originally part of a vast ranch belonging to Elias Jackson "Lucky" Baldwin, a pioneering businessman and landowner in Southern California. Baldwin's estate, known as the Rancho Santa Anita, was rich in history, having been a significant agricultural and equestrian hub since the 19th century.

In the late 1920s, the vision for a grand race track took shape under the guidance of developer and entrepreneur Charles Howard, best known for owning the legendary racehorse Seabiscuit. Howard, along with a group of investors, saw the potential for a premier racing venue that could rival the East Coast tracks. Construction began in 1934, and Santa Anita Park officially opened its doors on Christmas Day of that year.

Architectural Marvel and Design

One of the standout features of Santa Anita is its remarkable Art Deco architecture, designed by the firm of Gordon Kaufmann. The track's grandstand and clubhouse exude a timeless elegance, with sweeping views of the racetrack and the majestic San Gabriel Mountains providing a breathtaking backdrop. This design not only enhanced the spectator experience but also cemented the track's reputation as a jewel of racing venues.

The track layout itself was innovative for its time, boasting a one-mile dirt oval and a turf course that could accommodate various race lengths. Its facilities were state-of-the-art, reflecting the ambition to make Santa Anita the premier racing destination on the West Coast.

Santa Anita During the Golden Era of Horse Racing

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Santa Anita quickly established itself as a major player in the American horse racing scene. The track attracted top trainers, jockeys, and horses from around the country. It became famous for hosting prestigious races such as the Santa Anita Handicap, often dubbed the "Big 'Cap," which offered some of the largest purses in the sport at the time.

The Impact of World War II

The outbreak of World War II had a profound impact on many facets of American life, including horse racing. Interestingly, Santa Anita was repurposed during the war years, serving as a temporary assembly center for Japanese Americans before they were relocated to internment camps. This chapter of the track's history is a poignant reminder of the complex social history intertwined with the venue's legacy.

Despite the challenges, racing continued at Santa Anita during and after the war, symbolizing resilience and the enduring appeal of the sport.

Modern Developments and Continued Legacy

As the decades rolled on, Santa Anita evolved to meet the changing demands of the racing industry and its fans. The track underwent several renovations to upgrade its facilities, enhance safety measures, and incorporate modern technology. These improvements helped maintain its status as a top-tier venue.

Hosting Major Races and Events

Santa Anita has been home to numerous significant races beyond the Santa Anita Handicap, including the Santa Anita Derby, an important prep race for the Kentucky Derby. The track has also hosted the Breeders' Cup multiple times, cementing its role on the national and international stage.

Moreover, Santa Anita's picturesque setting and rich history make it a popular location for film and photography, further embedding it in popular culture.

Tips for Visitors Exploring Santa Anita's Historical Roots

If you're planning a visit to Santa Anita Race Track and want to immerse yourself in its history, here are a few insider tips:

- **Take a guided tour:** Many tours offer behind-the-scenes access and highlight historical landmarks within the park.
- **Visit the Racing Museum:** Learn about legendary horses, jockeys, and memorable races that shaped Santa Anita's legacy.
- **Attend a historic race day:** Experience the thrill of live racing while soaking up the atmosphere of this storied venue.
- **Explore the architecture:** Spend time appreciating the Art Deco design and the stunning views that have made Santa Anita unique.

The Future of Santa Anita Race Track

The history of Santa Anita race track is not just a tale of the past—it's an ongoing story. In recent years, the management has focused on enhancing horse and rider safety, expanding fan engagement, and embracing sustainability. These efforts ensure that Santa Anita remains relevant and revered in the 21st century.

Despite facing challenges such as economic shifts and evolving entertainment preferences, Santa Anita continues to attract top talent and passionate fans, bridging its illustrious history with a dynamic future.

Exploring the history of Santa Anita race track reveals much more than a venue for horse racing—it's a reflection of cultural shifts, architectural ambition, and the enduring spirit of competition. Whether you're drawn by the sport or the stories, Santa Anita offers a glimpse into the heart of American racing heritage.

Frequently Asked Questions

When was the Santa Anita Race Track established?

The Santa Anita Race Track was established in 1934 and quickly became one of the most famous horse racing venues in the United States.

Who founded the Santa Anita Race Track?

The Santa Anita Race Track was founded by real estate developer and racing enthusiast Charles H. Strub.

What is significant about the location of Santa Anita Race Track?

Santa Anita Race Track is located in Arcadia, California, at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, providing a scenic backdrop that has become iconic in American horse racing.

How did World War II impact the Santa Anita Race Track?

During World War II, the Santa Anita Race Track was used as a temporary detention center for Japanese Americans, known as the Santa Anita Assembly Center, before they were relocated to internment camps.

What major horse racing events are held at Santa Anita Race Track?

Santa Anita is home to several major horse racing events, including the Santa Anita Handicap, the Santa Anita Derby, and it frequently hosts the Breeders' Cup.

How has Santa Anita Race Track contributed to horse racing history?

Santa Anita Race Track has been pivotal in American horse racing history by hosting numerous prestigious races, setting track records, and being a venue where famous horses like Seabiscuit and Zenyatta competed.

Additional Resources

****The History of Santa Anita Race Track: A Legacy of Thoroughbred Racing Excellence****

history of santa anita race track is a narrative steeped in tradition, architectural grandeur, and a profound impact on American horse racing. Nestled in Arcadia, California, this iconic venue has been a cornerstone of the sport since its inception in the early 20th century. The story of Santa Anita is not only a chronicle of racing events but also a reflection of evolving cultural, economic, and sporting trends in the United States.

Origins and Founding of Santa Anita Race Track

The roots of Santa Anita Race Track date back to the late 1930s, a period of recovery and optimism following the Great Depression. The track was the brainchild of Charles Howard, a wealthy industrialist and horse owner best known for owning the legendary Seabiscuit. Howard envisioned a racetrack that would combine top-tier thoroughbred racing with unparalleled spectator amenities.

Construction of Santa Anita began in 1933 on the grounds of the former Santa Anita Golf Course, and the track officially opened on December 25, 1934. Designed by architect Gordon Kaufmann, the racetrack's distinctive Art Deco style and the majestic backdrop of the San Gabriel Mountains quickly set it apart from other venues. The grandstand, with its sweeping views and elegant design, was an architectural marvel of its time.

Early Years and Significant Milestones

Santa Anita quickly established itself as a premier racing venue on the West Coast. The track introduced the Santa Anita Handicap in 1935, often referred to as the "Big 'Cap," which would become one of the richest and most prestigious races in the United States. This event attracted top horses and jockeys nationwide, helping to elevate the track's reputation.

During World War II, the track temporarily closed for thoroughbred racing and was repurposed as an assembly center for Japanese Americans before their relocation to internment camps, a somber chapter in its history. Racing resumed in 1945, and Santa Anita went on to host some of the sport's most memorable moments, including the Triple Crown hopefuls and record-setting performances.

Architectural and Design Features

Santa Anita Race Track's design has played a crucial role in its enduring appeal. The oval track measures $1\frac{1}{8}$ miles, featuring a dirt main track and a turf course inside it. This dual arrangement allows for a variety of race types and distances, enhancing the strategic complexity for trainers and jockeys.

The grandstand, initially completed in the 1930s and expanded over the decades, offers seating for over 26,000 spectators. Its Art Deco elements, combined with modern amenities, create a unique atmosphere that blends historic charm with contemporary comfort. The picturesque setting, with the San Gabriel Mountains visible from much of the facility, adds to the track's distinctiveness.

Technological Innovations and Upgrades

Over the decades, Santa Anita has embraced technological advancements to improve racing conditions and spectator experience. Innovations such as photo finish cameras, electronic wagering systems, and enhanced lighting have been integrated thoughtfully.

The track's commitment to safety has also evolved, with the installation of improved track surfaces, railings, and veterinary facilities. These measures aim to reduce injuries to both horses and jockeys, reflecting a broader industry trend towards enhanced welfare standards.

Santa Anita's Role in American Horse Racing

The history of Santa Anita race track is deeply intertwined with the development of thoroughbred racing in the United States. It has served as a premier venue for important stakes races and has been a proving ground for many legendary horses.

Notable Races and Champions

Several landmark races have been hosted at Santa Anita, including:

- **Santa Anita Derby:** A key prep race for the Kentucky Derby, often spotlighting future champions.
- **Santa Anita Handicap:** Known for attracting top older horses with substantial purses.
- **Breeders' Cup World Championships:** Held multiple times at Santa Anita, showcasing the best international competition.

Champion horses such as Seabiscuit, Zenyatta, and California Chrome have graced its tracks, each leaving an indelible mark on the sport's history.

Economic and Cultural Impact

Beyond horse racing, Santa Anita has contributed significantly to the local economy and culture. The track generates substantial revenue through gambling, tourism, and employment. It acts as a cultural hub, hosting events that attract visitors from across the nation and around the world.

Moreover, Santa Anita's influence extends to popular culture, having appeared in films, television, and literature, further embedding it within the American sporting landscape.

Challenges and Controversies

Despite its storied past, Santa Anita Race Track has faced numerous challenges. The history of Santa Anita race track includes periods of financial difficulty, shifts in ownership, and controversies related to horse safety.

In recent years, the track came under scrutiny following a series of horse fatalities during the winter racing seasons. These incidents sparked industry-wide debates on track conditions, medication policies, and animal welfare. In response, Santa Anita implemented comprehensive safety reforms, including enhanced veterinary oversight, improved track maintenance, and revised racing protocols.

Modern Developments and Ownership Changes

Santa Anita has experienced changes in ownership, most notably its acquisition by The Stronach Group, a major player in North American horse racing. This transition brought increased investment and modernization efforts aimed at sustaining the track's legacy while adapting to contemporary demands.

Efforts have included upgrades to wagering technology, improvements in hospitality facilities, and expanded marketing to attract new audiences, including younger demographics and international fans.

Santa Anita Race Track in the 21st Century

Today, Santa Anita continues to be a vital institution within the thoroughbred racing community. Its blend of historical significance, architectural beauty, and competitive racing ensures its place among the elite racetracks in North America.

The track's ability to adapt while honoring its past exemplifies the dynamic nature of horse racing as a sport and entertainment form. As the industry faces ongoing challenges such as evolving betting landscapes and animal welfare concerns, Santa Anita's role as a leader remains crucial.

The history of Santa Anita race track is a testament to resilience, innovation, and a deep-rooted passion for horse racing. Its enduring presence not only preserves a rich heritage but also shapes the future trajectory of

the sport on the West Coast and beyond.

History Of Santa Anita Race Track

history of santa anita race track: *Jockey's Guild - History of Race Riding* , 1999-06-15

history of santa anita race track: **History of Monrovia** John L. Wiley, 1927

history of santa anita race track: **Then and Now** Mrs. A. S. C. Forbes, 1939

history of santa anita race track: **Anthropology of Los Angeles** Jenny Banh, Melissa King, 2017-01-23 The Anthropology of Los Angeles: Place and Agency in an Urban Setting questions the production and representations of L.A. by revealing the gray spaces between the real and imagined city. Contributors to this urban ethnography document hidden histories that connect daily actors within cultural systems to global social formations. This diverse collection is recommended for scholars of anthropology, history, sociology, race studies, gender studies, food studies, Latin American studies, and Asian studies.

history of santa anita race track: *California's Deadliest Earthquakes: A History* Abraham Hoffman, 2017 Home to hundreds of faults, California leads the nation in frequency of earthquakes every year. Despite enduring their share of the natural disasters, residents still speculate over the inevitable big one. More than three thousand people lost their lives during the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Long Beach's 1933 earthquake caused a loss of nearly \$50 million in damages. And the Northridge earthquake injured thousands and left a \$550 million economic hit. Historian Abraham Hoffman explores the personal accounts and aftermath of California's most destructive tremors.

history of santa anita race track: *Crown Jewels of Thoroughbred Racing* Richard Stone Reeves, 1997 Includes articles about twenty five of the world's most famous racetracks, along with paintings of many of the world's most famous race horses.

history of santa anita race track: *Asian American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia* Huping Ling, Allan W. Austin, 2015-03-17 With overview essays and more than 400 A-Z entries, this exhaustive encyclopedia documents the history of Asians in America from earliest contact to the present day. Organized topically by group, with an in-depth overview essay on each group, the encyclopedia examines the myriad ethnic groups and histories that make up the Asian American population in the United States. Asian American History and Culture covers the political, social, and cultural history of immigrants from East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Pacific Islands, and their descendants, as well as the social and cultural issues faced by Asian American communities, families, and individuals in contemporary society. In addition to entries on various groups and cultures, the encyclopedia also includes articles on general topics such as parenting and child rearing, assimilation and acculturation, business, education, and literature. More than 100 images round out the set.

history of santa anita race track: **The Handy California Answer Book** Kevin Hile, 2016-09-19 Hollywood. Silicon Valley. The cities, beaches and redwoods. An enlightening look at the Sunshine State, people, history, and culture! California is the country's most populous state. The home of the entertainment industry and silicon valley. It's known for its beaches, its redwood forests, and as the "land of fruit and nuts." Its people, industries, politicians, climate, and allure captivates the world and draws millions of visitors each year. Exploring the state's fascinating history, people, myths, culture, and trivia, The Handy California Answer Book takes an in-depth look at this fascinating, quirky, and diverse state. Learn about the original Indigenous peoples, the Spanish explorers, the independence from Spain, the secession from Mexico, the Gold Rush, the building of the Los Angeles Aqueducts, the earthquakes, the water shortages, and much, much more. Tour landmarks from Disney Land to the Golden Gate Bridge to Yosemite National Park. Learn about famous sons and daughters, including Ronald Reagan, Jeff Bridges, Tony Hawk, and John Steinbeck.

Sports (college and professional) are illuminated. The government, parks, and cultural institutions are all packed into this comprehensive guide to the state of California. Find answers to more than 1,100 questions, including: How did "Eureka!" become the state motto? Why is a grizzly bear on the state flag when no grizzlies exist in California? Was the coast of California ever attacked by pirates? How did Russians come to colonize part of what is now California? How did the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad drastically transform the state? Does the ghost of Cary Grant still roam his favorite home in Palm Springs? Is the "Big One" earthquake inevitable, and are Californians prepared for it? How did Silicon Valley become a center for the high tech industry? Can you eat the snails in your backyard in California? Why do so many Californians want to divide the state into smaller states? What is a "Valley Girl" fer shur fer shur? Why did the Brooklyn Dodgers move to Los Angeles? Did anyone ever escape the island prison on Alcatraz? When you order your fast-food burger at In & Out "animal style," what will land on your plate? A convenient place to go to look up the basic—and fun—facts about California, its history and culture, *The Handy California Answer Book* illustrates the unique character of the state through a combination of facts, stats, and stories, as well as the unusual and quirky. This informative book also includes a helpful bibliography and an extensive index, adding to its usefulness.

history of santa anita race track: Summary of Mark Paul's The Greatest Gambling Story Ever Told Milkyway Media, 2024-01-28 Get the Summary of Mark Paul's *The Greatest Gambling Story Ever Told* in 20 minutes. Please note: This is a summary & not the original book. At the 110th Kentucky Derby, Althea, trained by D. Wayne Lukas, was a favorite but finished 19th, while Swale won. Two years later, Lukas, now a celebrated trainer, and billionaire Eugene Klein, attended the Keeneland sales auction, facing wealthy competitors. They opted to buy fillies, considered more affordable, and acquired *Winning Colors* for \$575,000. *Winning Colors* was a strong filly with a temperament like a male racehorse...

history of santa anita race track: Shelby County, Indiana History & Families Shelby County Historical Society (Shelby County, Ind.), 1992

history of santa anita race track: *The History of the Kentucky Derby in 75 Objects* Kentucky Derby Museum, Jessica K. Whitehead, 2024-04-30 To understand the Kentucky Derby is to understand the contemporary American spirit. One hundred and fifty years have passed since the Thoroughbreds of the inaugural Kentucky Derby sprang from the starting gate to race beneath the iconic Twin Spires of Churchill Downs. But the story of the greatest two minutes in sports is more than the pageantry of the horses and thrill of the people who love and celebrate the event. Through the decades, the Derby, like the state that founded it, has experienced profound moments of social, economic, and cultural change. As one of Kentucky's flagship cultural and economic institutions, the Thoroughbred racing industry must constantly reconcile with its past and think critically about the stories that have traditionally made it into the winner's circle. In the right hands, artifacts of material culture related to the Derby have the power to inspire nuanced stories of the past and shed light on marginalized voices in the industry's history. In *The History of the Kentucky Derby in 75 Objects*, Jessica K. Whitehead sets out to recover the accurate history of America's longest continuously held sporting event and establish a balance between well-known narratives and those that are less widely shared. Whitehead, curator of collections at the Kentucky Derby Museum, gives readers a personal tour of 75 objects from the museum. Her selections place Black, Latin American, and female riders, owners, and trainers closer to the center of the Derby story, spotlighting the contributions and achievements of groups that have played an increasingly important role in shaping the legacy of the Run for the Roses.

history of santa anita race track: The Story of the Exposition Frank Morton Todd, 1921 Series of volumes describe the Panama-Pacific International Exposition from idea to inception.

history of santa anita race track: *California Dreamin' Along Route 66* Joe Sonderman, 2019-05-27 The California Dream made Route 66 the most famous road in the world. Flappers dreamed of stardom under the bright lights of Hollywood. A wave of families fleeing the Dust Bowl transformed the state during the Great Depression. During World War II, another wave followed

Route 66 seeking opportunity in the massive wartime industrial plants. Thousands of soldiers trained in the Mojave Desert and then returned amid the postwar prosperity to blossoming housing developments that replaced the vast orange groves. While Nat King Cole sang (Get Your Kicks on) Route 66, the newly prosperous middle class hit the road headed for the dream land constructed by Walt Disney. Inspired by the Beat poets, the hippies, and the adventures of Buz and Tod on the CBS television show *Route 66*, a new generation took to the open road. Those who savor the journey as much as the destination still seek it out on Route 66 today.

history of santa anita race track: *The Seabiscuit Story* John McEvoy, 2023-11 Using firsthand accounts of Seabiscuit's life and racing career—including his epic head-to-head victory against Triple Crown winner War Admiral—*The Seabiscuit Story* tells the amazing rags-to-riches story of this 1930s horse-racing phenomenon. This is you-are-there reporting that brings to life an American legend.

history of santa anita race track: *The Lucky Thirteen* Edward L. Bowen, 2019-06 In more than a century of American Thoroughbred racing, only thirteen horses have won the Triple Crown (the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes, and the Belmont Stakes, all won in the same season). Veteran turf writer and racing historian Edward L. Bowen takes us through the rich history of one of the most formidable and exciting challenges in all of sport. Bowen covers the trainers, owners, and jockeys who etched their names into the annals of thoroughbred racing, and the "lucky thirteen" who captured all three jewels of the Triple Crown, racing's most prestigious prize.

history of santa anita race track: *Landaluce* Mary Perdue, 2022-07-12 When Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew retired from racing in 1978 to stand at stud at Spendthrift Farm, no one could be certain he would be a successful sire. But just four years later, his dark bay daughter Landaluce won the Hollywood Lassie Stakes by twenty-one lengths—a margin of victory that remains the largest ever in any race by a two-year-old at Hollywood Park. California horse racing had a new superstar, and Slew was launched on a stud career that would make him one of the most influential sires in North America. Like her father, Landaluce soon became a national celebrity, and was poised to become the next American super-horse. But those dreams ended when the two-year-old died in her stall at Santa Anita four months later, the victim of a swift and mysterious illness. Today, with her I Love Luce bumper stickers long gone, the filly has been largely forgotten. In *Landaluce: The Story of Seattle Slew's First Champion*, Mary Perdue tells the story of a horse whose short but meteoric career could have changed racing history forever. Sparking comparisons to Ruffian, Landaluce helped elevate California horse racing to the national stage and could have been the first filly to ever win the Triple Crown. Perdue explores the lives and careers of Landaluce's breeders, owners, and trainer, D. Wayne Lukas, as well as her famous sire, Seattle Slew—and shows not only how one filly captured the imagination of racing fans across the country, but also set the stage for another filly turned super-horse, Zenyatta, in the decades to come. Find out more at landalucebook.com

history of santa anita race track: *Arcadia* , 2008 Santa Anita Rancho's famously ambitious and colorful owner, Elias Jackson Lucky Baldwin, had established a popular tourist attraction on his productive working ranch by the late 1800s. Baldwin planned to incorporate the section of his ranch known as Arcadia, but opponents feared that he would turn such a city into a gambling hell and booze pleasure park. However, the vote for city-hood was virtually unanimous, and Baldwin took over as mayor on July 27, 1903. Arcadia flourished as alcohol sales were approved, saloons and gambling halls remained open 24 hours a day, and Baldwin's ranch, racetrack, and Oakwood Hotel became popular with society's elite. After Baldwin's death in 1909, Arcadia's new leaders prohibited the sale of alcohol and steered the city in a less controversial direction. Agriculture, poultry farms, dairies, and land development became staples of the economy, and Arcadia gradually lost its rural simplicity, growing into a sophisticated, bustling city.

history of santa anita race track: *The Muleskinner and the Stars* Ronald L. Voller, 2015-08-28 This is the story of the astronomer Milton La Salle Humason, whose career was integral to developing our understanding of stellar and universal evolution and who helped to build the

analytical basis for the work of such notable astronomers and astrophysicists as Paul Merrill, Walter Adams, Alfred Joy, Frederick Seares, Fritz Zwicky, Walter Baade and Edwin Hubble. Humason's unlikely story began on the shores of the Mississippi River in Winona, Minnesota, in 1891 and led to the foot of Mount Wilson outside Los Angeles, California, twelve years later. It is there where he first attended summer camp in 1903 and was captivated by its surroundings. The mountain would become the backdrop for his life and career over the next six decades as he helped first build George Ellery Hale's observatory on the summit and then rose to become one of that institution's leading figures through the first half of the twentieth century. The story chronicles Humason's life on Mount Wilson, from his first trip to the mountain to his days as a muleskinner, leading teams of mules hauling supplies to the summit during the construction of the observatory, and follows him through his extraordinary career in spectroscopy, working beside Edwin Hubble as the two helped to reconstruct our concept of the universe. A patient, knowledgeable and persistent observer, Humason was later awarded an honorary doctorate for his work, despite having no formal education beyond the eighth grade. His skill at the telescope is legendary. During his career he photographed the spectra of stars, galaxies and other objects many thousands of times fainter than can be seen with the naked eye and pushed the boundary of the known universe deeper into space than any before him. His work, which included assisting in the formulation of Hubble's Law of redshifts, helped to set the field of cosmology solidly on its foundation. Milton Humason was one of the most charismatic characters in science during the first half of the 20th century. Uneducated, streetwise, moonshining, roguish, humble and thoroughly down to earth, he rose by sheer chance, innate ability and incredible will to become the leading deep space observer of his day. "The Renaissance man of Mount Wilson," as Harlow Shapley once referred to him, Humason's extraordinary life reminds us that passion and purpose may find us at any moment.

history of santa anita race track: The Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes

Richard Sowers, 2014-02-18 This is the definitive history of thoroughbred racing's three premier events, which have never before been explored in such detail. This book gives the history of America's classic races from the inaugural Belmont Stakes in 1867 through 2013, identifying which equine participants were truly worthy of lasting acclaim and which were one-hit wonders. Perhaps even more compelling are the stories of the men and women who rode, trained, owned, or bred classic winners, including their exploits on the turf and their triumphs and failures in arenas far removed from horse racing.

history of santa anita race track: Everything She Touched Marilyn Chase, 2020-04-07

Everything She Touched recounts the incredible life of the American sculptor Ruth Asawa. This is the story of a woman who wielded imagination and hope in the face of intolerance and who transformed everything she touched into art. In this compelling biography, author Marilyn Chase brings Asawa's story to vivid life. She draws on Asawa's extensive archives and weaves together many voices—family, friends, teachers, and critics—to offer a complex and fascinating portrait of the artist. Born in California in 1926, Ruth Asawa grew from a farmer's daughter to a celebrated sculptor. She survived adolescence in the World War II Japanese-American internment camps and attended the groundbreaking art school at Black Mountain College. Asawa then went on to develop her signature hanging-wire sculptures, create iconic urban installations, revolutionize arts education in her adopted hometown of San Francisco, fight through lupus, and defy convention to nurture a multiracial family. • A richly visual volume with over 60 reproductions of Asawa's art and archival photos of her life (including portraits shot by her friend, the celebrated photographer Imogen Cunningham) • Documents Asawa's transformative touch—most notably by turning wire – the material of the internment camp fences – into sculptures • Author Marilyn Chase mined Asawa's letters, diaries, sketches, and photos and conducted interviews with those who knew her to tell this inspiring story. Ruth Asawa forged an unconventional path in everything she did—whether raising a multiracial family of six children, founding a high school dedicated to the arts, or pursuing her own practice independent of the New York art market. Her beloved fountains are now San Francisco icons, and her signature hanging-wire sculptures grace the MoMA, de Young, Getty, Whitney, and

many more museums and galleries across America. • Ruth Asawa's remarkable life story offers inspiration to artists, art lovers, feminists, mothers, teachers, Asian Americans, history buffs, and anyone who loves a good underdog story. • A perfect gift for those interested in Asian American culture and history • Great for those who enjoyed Ninth Street Women: Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Joan Mitchell, and Helen Frankenthaler: Five Painters and the Movement That Changed Modern Art by Mary Gabriel, Ruth Asawa: Life's Work by Tamara Schenkenberg, and Notes and Methods by Hilma af Klint

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