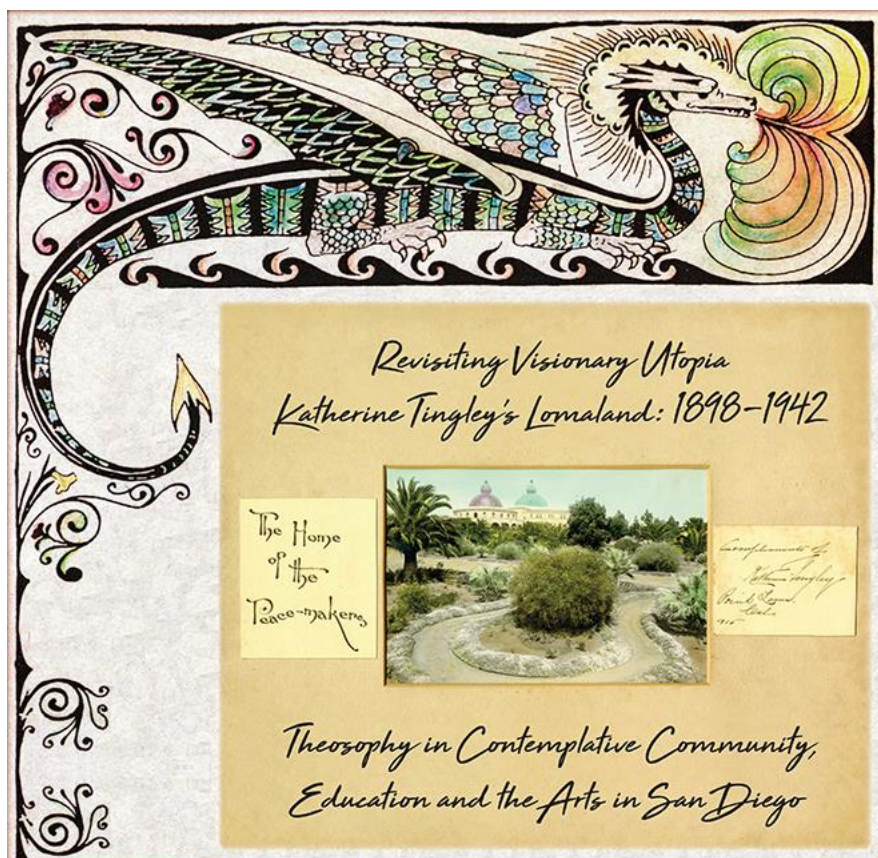




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Revisiting Visionary Utopia: Katherine Tingley's Lomaland, 1898-1942

Revisiting Visionary Utopia: Katherine Tingley's Lomaland, 1898-1942 is a new exhibit on display in the Kenney Reading Room of the Department of Special Collections at the SDSU Library.



The exhibit explores the Theosophical community of Lomaland, which flourished on Point Loma, San Diego from 1898 until 1942. A contemplative, intentional community, Lomaland was an experiment to make Theosophy “intensely practical,” according to its founder and spiritual leader, Katherine Tingley. Inspired by the ideals found in late 19th century Theosophy and the

New England Transcendentalism of her childhood, Tingley's charismatic personality and vision drew together participants from more than twenty countries. She established the 'School for the Revival of the Lost Mysteries of Antiquity' and the 'Raja Yoga School' for children, which embraced dramatic productions, music, art, and literature. Reaching its peak of nearly 500 residents by 1920, Lomaland developed into a vibrant community based on Universalist ethics and altruistic ideals, and became the cultural and educational hub of a growing San Diego.

This is the first exhibit to be curated by a university in the United States on the cultural history of Lomaland and its creative arts. It is also the first time primary source archival material on the history of Theosophy has been made available for study to a United States academic institution. This unique convergence, in the academic setting of the University, offers students, faculty and researchers the opportunity to study a unique cultural phenomenon from San Diego's early history.

The exhibit was made possible through a generous gift of materials from Mr. Kenneth Small, whose parents were longtime residents of Lomaland. The curators also wish to thank the San Diego History Center for a gracious loan of items from its collections.

Special guest speakers will be a feature of the exhibit, which will be on display throughout 2018.

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