

# Palace of Fine Arts

By Michele M. Bresso, PhD

The most beautiful building I have ever seen is the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. One of the showpiece structures for the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the building's majestic columns, sky-touching dome, and expansive grounds make for a breathtaking stroll. It is the only surviving exposition building.



Published by Tichnor Brothers, Inc., Boston, (1908-1987), one of the major producers of souvenir postcards of American cities in the 20th century.



Scott 397 on cover with a promotional machine cancel that reads, "World's Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco 1915."

A five-stamp 1913 U.S. commemorative set promoted the Pan-Pacific Exposition, including this 1-cent stamp. Postal cancels also touted the event. The promotion worked. Some 18 million visitors saw the Palace of Fine Arts in the exposition's 11-month run. The RPPC below shows the Palace in its 1915 nighttime glory.



Gelatin-print real photo postcard, published by That Man Pitts, San Francisco, bears the AZO trade name (1904-1918).

The Palace of Fine Arts, designed by Bernard Maybeck, was a recognized example of how Roman architecture could dwell in the California setting.



Scott 1928-31 (Palace of Fine Arts stamp is Scott 1930), 1981 misperforator.



The Palace of Fine Arts is largely an event venue today, but it stands as a testament to the enduring vision of romanticism in structural design.

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