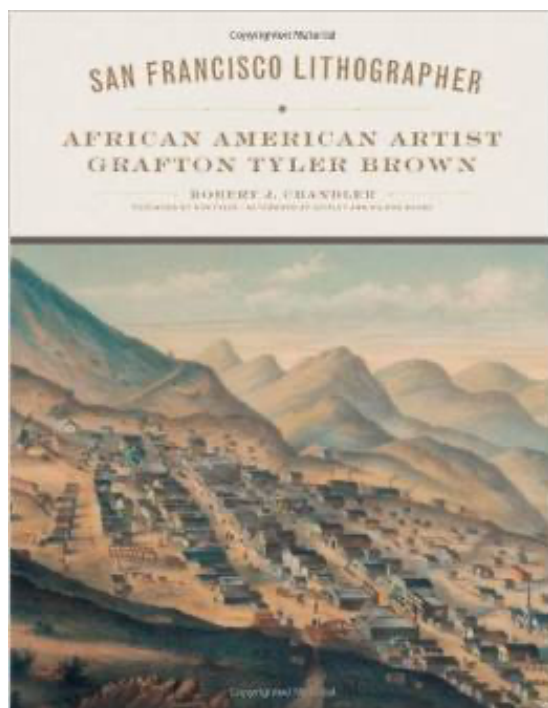


## San Francisco Lithographer: African American Artist Grafton Tyler Brown

by Robert J. Chandler. University of Oklahoma Press, February 2014. 264 p. ill. ISBN 9780806144108 (cl.), \$36.95.

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More than just a book about one man, *San Francisco Lithographer: African American Artist Grafton Tyler Brown* is about the emerging lithography scene in nineteenth-century San Francisco and Brown's role in it as a mixed race artist and businessman. Author Robert J. Chandler, previously the senior research historian for Wells Fargo Bank, has done extensive research on the life and times of Brown. Though other scholars have written about Brown, Chandler's work is the first comprehensive biography, which seamlessly references appropriate field literature to piece together Brown's life from his birth in Pennsylvania to his death in Minnesota.

Though not entirely chronological, the book's topical organization allows the reader to easily access information by subject. Interweaving of

historical facts with the narrative provides an interesting read with welcomed section and chapter breaks. At times the amount of numbers, mostly dates and monetary values, may feel slightly overwhelming. Despite this, the ideas are clearly presented and developed in a way that makes the book accessible to all readers rather than only appealing to researchers or art historians. Some background knowledge of lithography would be helpful as the process is only explained briefly within the third chapter.

Chandler supplies a wealth of full color reproductions of Brown's lithographic work and that of his competitors. Brown ventured into painting later in life and images of some paintings are also included. Captions fully explain each of more than 100 images. Chandler includes an index and a comprehensive bibliography that would be very helpful as a starting point for related

research. The full checklist of Brown's known works is an added bonus, since so many of the pieces he produced were ephemera that were discarded shortly after their intended use. The jacket, standard full-page size, stitched binding, and photo-quality paper make the book physically appealing.

This book is recommended for any libraries with a specific interest in lithography, Californiana, ephemera, post-Gold Rush San Francisco or African American artists.