

OCT/NOV 2018

NATIVE

AMERICAN ART



Taos Contemporary

The Couse-Sharp Historic Site highlights the region's living artists.



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TAOS, NM

Joseph Henry Sharp (1859-1953) visited the Southwest in 1883 and returned to visit Taos in 1893. Studying at the Académie Julian in Paris he met Ernest L. Blumenschein (1874-1960) and Bert Geer Phillips (1868-1956). He also met Eanger Irving Couse (1866-1936).

Sharp's tales of the West inspired Blumenschein and Phillips to tour the area. When a wagon wheel broke outside of Taos, Blumenschein took it into town on horseback to be repaired. He wrote, "No artist had ever recorded the New Mexico I was now seeing. No writer had ever written down the smell of this air or the feel of that morning's sky. I was receiving...the first great unforgettable inspiration of my life." He decided to settle there and was soon joined by a group of fellow artists.

In 1915 they formed the Taos Society of Artists "to promote and stimulate the practical expressions of art—to preserve and promote the native art."

The artists developed abiding bonds with the people



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of Taos Pueblo who became their models and their friends. Impressed by their integrity, they later became advocates for Native rights against the harsh policies of the federal government.

The Couse-Sharp Historic Site in Taos is hosting an exhibition, *Full Circle: Taos Pueblo Contemporary* through November 3 in the Luna Chapel. The building was built in 1835 as a family chapel. Sharp purchased it in 1909 and converted it for his studio.

The site's executive director and curator, Davison



1. *Full Circle* on display in the Luna Chapel.
2. **Maria Samora (Taos)**, *Narrow M-Strata Cuff*, 2018, sterling silver
3. **Michael and Causandra Dukepoo (Taos)**, *Blue Lake Blossoms concho belt*, 2018, silver leather, lapis and red coral
4. **Sean Rising Sun Flanagan (Taos)**, *Thunderbird*, 2018, steel

Koenig, says, "TSA artists became strong advocates for Native rights and sovereignty. The exhibition *Full Circle* honors those relationships and the many artists from Taos Pueblo who continue to redefine Native art and identity."

John Suazo (*Hunter Watching*) has been sculpting since the 1970s. He draws on the cultural traditions of Taos Pueblo and simplifies the human and animal forms. He has said, "Each piece is a reflection of my inner self. A lot of my work involves stories I've heard from older people in my tribe. I never plan a sculpture, but when I finish it, to my amazement, it somehow perfectly fits a story I've heard from my grandfather." Suazo's grandfather was the inspiration for the great novel *The Man Who Killed the Deer* by Frank Waters.



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The family of Sean Flanagan (Rising Sun) has run the Wahleah Taos Pueblo Gallery for generations. Known for his traditional drums—a skill he learned from his grandfather and his uncle—he also makes stylized sculptures. In *Full Circle* he is represented by *Thunderbird*, a cut metal sculpture with elements of Art Deco and Native symbols.

Maria Samora's elegant jewelry is highly sought after. Growing up in Taos she felt she had no talent for art although her mother was a seamstress and a jeweler and her brother went to IATA. When her interest began to awaken she apprenticed to G. Phil Poirier who inspired her aesthetically and mechanically. She says, "My training has given me the technique to actually produce what's in my head." Her work has begun to incorporate geometric Native patterns.

Ira Lujan interprets traditional pottery shapes and designs in glass—and takes off from there. He is represented in *Full Circle* by a stunning 90-inch glass sculpture *Feathers and Antlers* that hangs like a chandelier from the gallery ceiling. «



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5. Edna and Bennie Romero (Taos), *Fluted Jar*, 2017, micaceous clay
6. John Suazo (Taos), *Waiting for Grandfather*, 2018, limestone
7. Ira Lujan (Taos), *Feather Chandelier*, 2018, glass, metal
8. Yellowbird Samora (Taos), *Untitled*, 2010, micaceous clay



||||| **Through November 3, 2018** |||||

Full Circle: Taos Pueblo Contemporary

The Couse-Sharp Historic Site, 146 Kit Carson Road
Taos, NM 87571, (575) 751-0369, www.couse-sharp.org

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