members of the early Taos Art Colony, all of whom gave American art a groundbreaking and indelible connection between the modern Southwest and the world beyond it. Parsons concludes, "The Taos Founders lived here, they created art here; most of them died here. They established Taos as a place where it was not only acceptable to be an artist, it was celebrated."

Parsons relates that the artists in Taos had elements of both serendipity and fate. Fellow American artists Joseph Henry Sharp, Ernest Blumenstein, and Bert Geer Phillips first made acquaintance with each other at l'Académie Julian in Paris. Sharp, who had traveled through the West, encouraged the others to do the same when they returned to the United States. In 1898, Blumenstein and Phillips arrived unannounced in Taos, though they kindly recalled the name from Sharp they instead planned to pass through to Mexico. A broken wagon wheel ensured they would be sequestered for a few days in a place that would ultimately seduce them with its seemingly endless panorama and enigmatic inhabitants. Phillips quickly decided to remain, a move which would write the preface to the chronicle of Taos's rise as an art colony. Blumenstein and Sharp were also present, and, spurred by the trio's passion, as did Oscar E Berninghaus, G. Irving Glass and William Herbert Dunton.

"Blumenstein and Phillips had originally conjured the idea of the Taos Society of Artists," recalls Parsons, the mission of which would be to present artistic excellence and open avenues through which the artists could bring their work to the public's attention.