

OCTOBER 2026 | FALL

THE LEGACY

COUSE-SHARP
HISTORIC SITE

Residency Program moves forward with major acquisition

Couse-Sharp Historic Site has taken a huge step toward becoming an even more dynamic center for scholarship, creativity, and learning: anchoring its Museum Research Residency Program in two historic homes.

“The program responds to a growing need,” said Davison Koenig, executive director and curator. “As interest in The Lunder Research Center, our archives, collections, and historic campus continues to expand, affordable and convenient housing in Taos remains a significant obstacle, for artists in residence and visiting scholars, researchers, fellows, interns, and project staff alike.”

The recently acquired “Kibbey Couse Houses,” located across Quesnel Lane from the Site and overlooking the Couse Pasture, provide an extraordinary solution. Built in the late 1920s for E. I. and Virginia Couse’s only child and his family, the historic property reconnects an important piece of family history with the Site and creates a permanent home for the residency program.

Once fully renovated, the property will offer residents prime access to the Site’s archives, collections, historic studios, and the cultural landscape of Taos, allowing them to spend the time necessary to pursue meaningful research, creative work, and collaboration. The renovation project also preserves an important early example of Pueblo Revival architecture and gives the buildings renewed purpose.

The program is already beginning to take shape: our 2026–27 Colby College Museum Fellow moved into the renovated guest house, affectionately known as “Casita Couse,” in August.

“Construction on the main house still lies ahead,” Koenig explained. “We invite you to help bring this vision to life through donations to the program. Your support will help create welcoming residences for the artists, scholars, and students who will deepen our understanding of Taos and the American West for generations to come.” For more information about the Residency Program campaign, please email giving@couse-sharp.org or call 575-751-0369.

BELOW: A recent photo of the main house. The smaller “guest house” is just to the east of this one. Photo by Kyle Brown



TOP: A circa 1925 photo of the newly completed main house with E. I. Couse (second from left) and J. H. Sharp (far right). The person at far left is unidentified; the person next to Sharp is likely Louise Sharp, his wife. Photographer unknown. Couse Family Photo Collection.



A larger team on a larger playing field



Dear Friends,

As you see in the list on this page, Couse-Sharp Historic Site now has a dozen permanent staff and a long-term museum fellow, and we also host seasonal fellows and interns. We are excited to welcome these new team members, and we extend our thanks to the granting entities and individual donors who have made these hires possible.

What will all these folks do? To put it simply, they will help achieve our mission, in ways we have been constrained from fulfilling in the past. Every year, we do more, reach more people, but always seem to be playing catch-up. Our core team now has more strength, and with the addition of a museum educator, we are expanding our reach into the community—both for adults and for our youth.

With enhanced staffing, we can work on many projects that we've never seemed to have enough time to do at the highest level—collections care, archive accessibility, policy and procedure, historic preservation, information technology, public communication, museum interpretation, staff and volunteer training, engagement with donors and visitors, collaborating with colleagues in other organizations, and so much more.

A key area is public programming, both in-person and online. Although preserving the national treasure that is our Site, in all its aspects, forms our foundation, our aim is to leverage the site both within our community and our nation to tell a more nuanced story of our shared history and the greater impact of Taos.

As we like to say around here, we've never had a shortage of ideas and the stories to bring them to life, just the perpetual challenge of not enough money and not enough people.

The support of folks like you has brought us to a place where we can maintain and expand our reach and relevance today and tomorrow. I thank you and invite you to continue with us on this amazing journey into a future where our organization touches more lives than ever.

Sincerely,

Davison Packard Koenig
Executive Director and Curator

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Executive Director & Curator

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Colby College Museum Fellow



In the first quarter, six lectures related to *Weaving the New World: Hispanic Textiles and Their Influence on the Northern Frontier* included four by guest curator Mark Winter (above), one by historian Juanita Lavadie, and the final by artists Irving and Lisa Trujillo.

PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING EXPANDS

Between January and October 2026, CSHS hosted a record 11 lectures, demonstrations, and panel discussions, many of them posted on our YouTube channel (see QR code for youtube.com/@couse-sharp). In addition to the *Weaving the New World* series described in the photo caption and the panel for *La Luz de Taos* (see page 4), visitors experienced:

- **July 11:** The panel, *Taos Society of Artists: In Pursuit of a National Identity*, invited attendees to contemplate the conflicts of identity, representation, and perception inherent in the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Panelists: Michael Grauer, Alicia M. Romero, and Jonathan Warm Day Coming.
- **August 1:** Demonstration of embroidery art by Sonrisa Rachel and Paula Claycomb of the Hacienda de los Martinez Colcha Group.
- **August 11:** Lecture by Juliana Trillo, CSHS's University of Oklahoma museum fellow, *Framing the Southwest: The Picture Frames of Eanger Irving Couse*, built upon research by the late Virginia Couse Leavitt. (See page 6.)
- **October 10:** Demonstration of wool dyeing by textile artist Carla Bogdanoff.
- **Upcoming November 14:** Demonstration by artist Jennifer Neil. (See page 5.)

Making our legacy your legacy

Some 25 years ago, a determined effort was launched to preserve the Couse House, led by our founders, Virginia Couse Leavitt, Ernie Leavitt, and Al and Carol-Ann Olson. That initiative has grown into a nationally recognized museum and research center.

Over the past decade, our mission has evolved from telling the story of E. I. Couse and J. H. Sharp, two founders of the Taos Society of Artists, to using this remarkable site to tell a larger story about Taos, the Southwest, and our nation. Couse-Sharp Historic Site and Taos as a whole are crossroads where many threads of American history and identity intersect, offering powerful opportunities for understanding and dialogue.

The Lunder Research Center amplifies our reach throughout the museum, academic, and arts communities. Programs, archives, collections, infrastructure preservation, educational outreach, visibility, and staffing levels grow as we mature as an institution. Financial sustainability must grow as well. We focus on raising annual operating revenue while advancing stability through an income-producing endowment and strengthening our legacy gift expectations for the long term.

CSHS seeks sustained partnerships rooted in shared stewardship of one of the most significant intact artists' homes and studios in the nation. Please consider becoming members of the Taos Society of Patrons (annual giving), participants in our Estate Art Program, and part of the Couse Legacy Society. We treasure those special friends of the Site who are committed to our sustainability through planned giving, including real estate, annuities, artwork, and other bequests. Consider this an invitation to reach out to our staff and our board of directors to discuss how you can help.

I thank all of you for being part of our success, and I'm excited for you to continue along on this adventure. Together, we foster the transformative power of art and education to inspire, enrich lives, and connect people.

With gratitude,
Elizabeth Crittenden Palacios
Chair of the Board of Directors



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La Luz de Taos 2026: Building relationships, preserving history

La Luz de Taos 2026 proved to be the most successful gala, exhibition, and sale in our organization's history. The event brought together more than 300 guests, including 47 of our participating artists, creating an unforgettable celebration of art, culture, and community.

"The energy throughout the weekend reflected the deep connection so many people feel to the artistic legacy of Taos," said Davison Koenig, executive director and curator, "and the widespread commitment to the important work of preserving and sharing that history for future generations."

We are thrilled to report that together we raised nearly \$400,000 to support the preservation of the historic Couse and Sharp properties, groundbreaking scholarship and research, exhibitions, and educational programming. If you missed the event and would like to contribute to our historic preservation efforts, see page 6 for ways you can give, use the enclosed remittance envelope, or follow this code.



From left, artists Carla Bogdanoff, Susan Folwell, Arthur López, and Jim Vogel in the June 6 panel discussion *What Is "Western Art" in 2026?* Other participants were moderator Michael Clawson, Michael Grauer, Ryan Suazo, and Ezra Tucker. You can watch on our channel youtube.com/@couse-sharp or use the code.



The exciting draw sale filled the El Monte Sagrado Resort ballroom.



Even a rain shower didn't dampen the spirits of those eager to dance to the music of the Arellano Brothers at the June 6 celebration.

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From the remarkable artwork generously contributed by 71 artists, to the meaningful panel discussion, to the enthusiastic support of our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and attendees, every aspect of the weekend demonstrated what is possible when a community comes together around a shared mission.

"We are particularly grateful to the co-chairs of our 2026 *Luz de Taos* Committee: Steve and Kathy Elliott," said Koenig. "Steve and Kathy are prominent art collectors and philanthropists who have become special friends of the site." In addition, the exhibition was dedicated to the memory of two founders of The Couse Foundation: Virginia Couse Leavitt and Alan J. Olson.

The success of *La Luz de Taos* extends far beyond a single weekend. The funds raised will help ensure that the Couse-Sharp Historic Site continues to bring the legacy of the Taos Society of Artists to life through historic preservation, collections stewardship, research, exhibitions, educational initiatives, and art-centered programming.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Tony Abeyta
Bill Acheff
Marla Allison
Mitch Baird
Katelyn Betsill
Del Vecchio
Carla Bogdanoff
Amery Bohling
Eric Bowman
Nocona Burgess
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Stephen Quiller
Ron Rencher
Andrew Roda
Eric Romero
Don Sandoval

Roseta Santiago
Billy Schenck
Ed Smida
Geraint Smith
Ryan Suazo
Vicente Telles
Ezra Tucker
Jim Vogel
Nathanael Volckening
Beth Wald
Jed Webster Smith
Angie Yazzie
Scott Yeager



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Taos News
Tres Estrellas Gallery
Tim Weddle & Donna Mullen Weddle

ENRICHING EXHIBITIONS

WEAVING THE NEW WORLD

Hispanic Textiles and Their Influence on the Northern Frontier

The Nuevomexicano portion of *Weaving the New World: Hispanic Textiles and Their Influence on the Northern Frontier* was held over by popular demand and through the generosity of guest curator Mark Winter. The Luna Chapel show remains on view through November 21.



THROUGH THE LENS OF TAOS DAY SCHOOL

Through the Lens of Taos Day School 2026 opens October 21 as a pop-up show in the Dean Porter Gallery, with a closing celebration on Halloween. *Through the Lens*

reverses the camera's "gaze" to showcase the perspectives of students at the Taos Pueblo school who participated in a photography workshop. Prints will be for sale with proceeds going to the artists. The workshop and exhibition are supported by Carol and Rich Rinehart and the Taos Pueblo Day School Arts Education Fund, an initiative of CSHS, Parsons Fine Art, and Mark Maggiori.



AN ARTISTIC LENS INTO THE MECHANICAL WORLD OF KIBBEY COUSE

An Artistic Lens into the Mechanical World of Kibbey Couse opens November 13 to showcase the work of Jennifer Neil, with a November 14 artist's demonstration. This artist in residence extensively photographed Kibbey Couse's machine shop and "Rosie" (the mobile version), then used a variety of techniques to process each photo to produce a unique artwork. All works will be for sale, and proceeds benefit the site's programs.

Jennifer Neil, *Untitled, Number 24 (Machine Shop)*, 22 x 15 inches, mixed media monotype, part of the upcoming exhibition *An Artistic Lens into the Mechanical World of Kibbey Couse*.



¡QUE VIVA LOS BAILES!

¡Que Viva Los Bailes! celebrates the traditional social dance forms that have enlivened northern New Mexico for centuries. Stay tuned for information about the exhibition, dance demonstrations, and programming centered on our *¡Que Viva!* community celebration June 12–13 and into the summer.

SKETCHBOOK: *News in brief*



Our Board of Directors is honored to welcome **Ross Harmon**, **David Scott**, **Ryan Suazo**, and **Don Zillioux, PhD**. Ross lives in Castle Rock, CO, and works in business development for a leading professional services firm focused on middle market organizations. David lives in Pilar, NM, and is a retired wholesale nursery owner (Joss Growers, Inc., Georgetown, TX). Ryan is a Taos Pueblo tribal member, artist, and reservation small business owner. Don, a psychologist who lives in Taos, is founder and chief scientist at Strategic Development Worldwide (organizational and leadership development).

As discussed in our executive director's column on page 2, CSHS has brought on five new permanent staff members this year. In order of hiring: **Cassy Shaffer**, development associate; **Glory Penington**, administration and finance coordinator; **Ilona Spruce**, deputy director (formerly a member of the Board of Directors); **Jerome Samora**, museum educator and education coordinator; and **Hannah Rosenberg**, archives and curatorial assistant (formerly our most recent Colby College museum fellow). We are thrilled to have all of them aboard!

In August, we welcomed our fourth one-year Colby College postgraduate museum fellow and curatorial assistant, **Haadi Khan**. **Juliana Trillo** returned for a second summer as our University of Oklahoma fellow, and **Annabelle Price** spent six weeks as our first intern from

Vassar College. CSHS appreciates the funding from The Lunder Foundation and the University of Oklahoma Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West, and the cooperation of Vassar.

Every Penny Counts

HELP PRESERVE OUR NATIONAL TREASURE

Financial support of Couse-Sharp Historic Site is not only a gift to the present but also an investment in the future. Every donation to The Couse Foundation is greatly appreciated.

Gold
Transparency
2026

Candid.

WE ARE A GOLD SEAL ORGANIZATION!

The Couse Foundation has achieved the designation of Gold Seal from Candid and GuideStar.org

COUSE LEGACY SOCIETY and ESTATE ART PROGRAM

We invite you to think about CSHS as a potential recipient for bequests and other vehicles such as real estate. Similarly, if you collect art and have been contemplating your estate planning, consider our program to coordinate the donation (full or partial) and sale of your artwork during your lifetime, thus enabling you to "do well and do good." Contact us at 575.751.0369 or giving@couse-sharp.org to inquire.

DONATE TODAY!

The Couse Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization; contributions are tax deductible. Donate by credit card at couse-sharp.org/donate (or use the QR code in this box). You can also donate by check or credit card with the enclosed remittance envelope to PO Box 1436, Taos NM 87571.

For information about gifts of securities or naming opportunities, see couse-sharp.org/ways-to-give



Couse: Framing the Southwest



Juliana Trillo, our 2025–2026 Couse-Sharp Historic Site–University of Oklahoma Russell Center Fellow, presented ***Framing the Southwest: The Picture Frames of Eanger Irving Couse*** in the 1915 Sharp Studio on August 19 to an appreciative audience of volunteers and staff. Built upon research by the late Virginia Couse Leavitt, the presentation details the origins and varying influences on the elaborate, handcrafted frames for Couse's paintings.

According to Juliana, her presentation and associated online exhibition "links Couse's French academic training to his approach to frame design, lists his history with commercial frame makers, and describes his own frame making process, informed by Pueblo aesthetics and made with local materials, and analyzes the lasting impression of Couse's frames in contemporary Southwestern art." You can access the exhibition at bit.ly/4cMNRdb or use the QR code.

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SEPTEMBER 2025–AUGUST 2026

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E. I. Couse, *Umatilla*, undated, oil on canvas, 22 x 16 in.

GENEROUS GIFTS TO OUR COLLECTIONS OR ESTATE ART PROGRAM

Larry Adamson: E. I. Couse, *Umatilla*, oil on canvas

Steve & Dottie Diamant: Julius Rolshoven, *Untitled (Pueblo Scene)*, oil on board

Fred & Phyllis Bachhuber: Josh Elliott, *A Friendship*, oil on canvas

Larry & Glenda Castle: E. I. Couse, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, oil on canvas

Dustin Leavitt: E. I. Couse, *Untitled (Field sketch with Randall View)*, oil on board



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Taos, NM 87571

info@couse-sharp.org

 thecousesharphistoricsite



Affiliate Site of the
**National Trust for
 Historic Preservation**

HISTORIC ARTISTS'
HOMES & STUDIOS

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

INSIDE

A watershed moment: Purchase of the "Kibbey Couse houses"

2026: The biggest La Luz de Taos ever

Thank you to all our volunteers, donors, and sponsors

More staff and new board members

An artistic perspective on Kibbey's workshops

OUR PURPOSE

Through its archives, collections, and programming, the Couse-Sharp Historic Site preserves and interprets Taos' crossroads of cultures, promoting research, education, and new perspectives on the Taos Society of Artists, early artists of Taos, and interpretation of Native communities in relation to the greater story of the multicultural American West.



The *La Luz de Trás 2026* exhibition spilled from the Dean Porter Gallery shown here into the 1915 Sharp Studio, delighting guests at the June 5 gala reception. See page 4 for more details.



If you'd like to sign up for our email or postal mailing list, visit course-sharp.org/signup



OCTOBER 2026 | FALL

THE LEGACY