

Millicent Rogers hosts Taos Pueblo artists

- Teresa Dovalpage
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- Courtesy image

'Fall Colors -Taos Pueblo' painting by Jocelyn Martinez, one of the works in the Millicent Rogers Museum show

With the upcoming 60th anniversary of the Millicent Rogers Museum, there is a sense of celebration in the air. "We are doing a number of shows that go along with our mission to promote and represent local artists," said Executive Director Caroline Jean Fernald.

As part of the ongoing anniversary events, the museum will host its fourth annual Taos Pueblo Artists

Winter Showcase. The exhibition and sale event opens with a reception Friday (March 11), 5:30-7 p.m., and then continues during regular hours through Sunday (March 13). The museum is located at 1504 Millicent Rogers Road, four miles north of Taos Plaza via Paseo del Pueblo Norte in El Prado. The museum's permanent galleries will be open to the public during the showcase.

"We are honored to partner with Taos Pueblo Tourism to welcome once again the Taos Pueblo artists to the museum," Fernald said. "This is a very unique show, with original pieces available for purchase directly from the artists. Visitors will have the opportunity to talk to them and find out more about their pieces and techniques."

The museum has had a long-standing relationship with Taos Pueblo. The museum's namesake, Millicent Rogers, was a major collector of locally made art. Many works from her private collection were donated to the museum after her death by her son, Paul Peralta-Ramos.

"We call her our patron saint of acquisitions," said Kathleen Michaels, a Taos Pueblo tribal member and office manager at the Millicent Rogers Museum. "The showcase was created in the spirit of Millicent's passion for the local arts."

The first showcase took place four years ago, when Michaels teamed up with Taos Pueblo Tourism representatives Noreen Mirabal and Ilona Spruce. (However, the first "Art of Taos Pueblo" show at the museum was curated in the 1980s by Rick Romancito, now editor of Tempo.)

"Our main goal from the beginning was to support and promote artists from Taos Pueblo during their annual ceremonial closure," said Michaels.

The event is becoming a local favorite for Pueblo artists and the entire community as well. It began with 12 artists, and this year's showcase includes 20.

"We believe that Millicent herself would be delighted to see the direction that this show has followed," Michaels said. "Besides, its success has inspired other museums in Taos to do similar events. We are proud of the fact that our museum remains a trendsetter and leader like Millicent Rogers herself."

The showcase is sponsored by Taos Mountain Casino. It is free to Taos County residents, with no additional admission fee. "Plus, all visitors will receive a complimentary \$5 free play credit from the casino," said Michaels.

There is also an opportunity to win artwork by Taos Pueblo artists. Tickets at \$10 each will be available during the duration of the exhibit. A drawing is planned Sunday (March 13) at 2 p.m.

Due to limitations in space at the museum, only a select number of artists have been invited to participate. "We selected them based on authenticity and took into account the kind of medium that they use because we wanted to have a variety of pieces, techniques and styles," said Mirabal. "We also considered their

artistic quality, so we chose fine art artists. We want to get away from the stereotype that Natives Americans only do arts and crafts.”

The full list of artists includes Patricia Michaels, Ira Lujan, John Suazo, Jacqueline Gala, Jonathan Warm Day Coming, Ryan Suazo, Jocelyn Martinez, Cassandra Dukepoo, Luis Romero, Dawning Pollen Shorty, Josh Concha, Lisa Martinez, Debbie Lujan, Suann Davin, Glenn Gomez, Albino Lujan, Olivia Martinez, Shaunte’ Bernal, Rodney and Mary Concha.

Award-winning designer Patricia Michaels will bring more than 40 pieces of her signature garments and textiles. “There will be scarves, jewelry, dresses and much more,” she said. Among them are some pieces from her last bridal show, including five Cuban-inspired works. “It’s important for artists to recognize other cultures,” she said, “and to celebrate how people find different ways to express themselves.”

Admission is free to Taos County residents.

For more information, call (575) 758-2462 or visit millicentrogers.org.

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