Taos Municipal Schools Historic Art Collection: A Short History

Regina Tatum Cooke, former Taos teacher and author, delighted in telling the story of how the Taos Municipal Schools Art Collection came to be. Regina had invited members of the Taos art community to exhibit works in the high school auditorium in 1948. Superintendent Joe Otero, the local P.T.A. president Dorothy Brandenburg and many artists were pleased and eagerly seized on the idea.

The exhibit grew through further efforts of Alice Kinsinger (Taos’ first public school art teacher) and the generosity of the artists of our community. There are at the present time, one hundred pieces in what has become a significant and valuable collection.

The initial concept of hanging original works in the classrooms proved impractical and it has survived many adventures and misadventures throughout the years. A partial showing was presented at the Stables Art Gallery in 1965 and again at the old Taos Municipal Schools Administration Building in 1982. The first show of the entire collection was in 1986: “The Fire House Collection Presents: The Taos Municipal Schools Collection”. Later, in 1990, the Millicent Rogers exhibited a selected group of work.

The collection received wide-spread coverage in The Taos News in 1975 when a number of the donated pieces were to be sold to pay for school bleachers. As this collection was created with the intention of being a cultural trust for Taos youth, the action to sell the works triggered a great protest from the community and they were never sold.

In 2000, the Taos Municipal Schools Historic Art Collection Committee was founded and began a new chapter in the life of this collection. Now, with the professional direction of Rozx Gallegos and Lynn DelMargo, and other members, there are fresh ideas for the collections future and a mission that it will be preserved for all time. The support of the community, the Taos Municipal Schools Administration, and the Taos School Board assures us of this goal.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Aiello received his Bachelor of Arts degree from City College, New York in 1935. Aiello was a thoroughly urban New Yorker until he traveled up to Taos while on furlough from Fort Bliss Texas in 1943, and felt an immediate affinity for this valley and its people. He moved to Taos in 1946, began teaching art at the local schools in 1953, and quickly began accumulating a long list of honors as one of America’s premiere artists and creative writing teachers. Among these, his submissions won first place in nine consecutive New Mexico State Fairs, and were featured in international shows as far abroad as Leningrad, Buenos Aires, and Bali (not to mention Paris and London). In 1963 he parted ways with the Taos Municipal School System over a severe lack of program funding, and began setting up another world-class children’s art program for the Taos Pueblo, which he continued until his sudden death in 1974. He was extensively eulogized and deeply mourned by many in Taos as a man of great style, creativity, and energy, who drew these traits out of others. As Corina Santistevan said “He enhanced every life he touched.”

The simple, rather academic watercolor, “Green Brew”, presented in this collection is atypical of his work. Aiello worked more often in assemblage, collage, or fabric applique/embroidery construction, often using what would now be consider “found” and “recycled” inclusions. His fine textile pieces are especially prized.
Alexander, Malcolm (b. 1926). *Ait No Criche*. Oil. 11” x 18”

A native of Detroit, Michigan, Malcolm Alexander studied art at U.C.L.A., and continued working in Southern California until moving to Taos in the late 1950s, where he studied under Bisttram, Dasburg, Gaspard, and Doel Reed. Here, he developed a style that was both painterly and deeply worked, as well as a concern for strong, complex color. “Ait No Crick” is indicative of these effects.

His interest in Modern painting waned in the early 1970s as he became interested in the early trappers and traders of these mountains. He then began producing the large western sculptures that were to become his primary art form. Alexander moved to Santa Barbara in 1975 and to Santa Fe in 1983, where he is still a productive sculptor.
Austin, Harold (b.1925). *untitled*, 1954. Gouache. 12” x 18”

Harold Austin was a Modernist working in Taos in the 1950s and his untitled submission to the Taos Schools is an example of his Modernist work at that time. He produced a number of pieces involving semi-abstracted representations and highly simplified symbolic images incorporated into a semi-cubist composition of overlapping planes used as framing devices. Such work was popular in American Modernism during the 1950s.
Backer, Edmund (dates unavailable). *untitled*, 1925. Pastel. 23” x 18”

Little is known about Backer, biographically. This image of a train on medium toned paper, done in 1925, uses massing instead of a linear style with a stark contrast of shadow and light. At that time, it would have been considered a “stark reality piece” although now it is considered highly impressionistic.
While studying at the University of New Mexico after World War II, Berkman and his wife came to Taos in the mid-1940s to study with Louie Ribak at the Harwood Foundation. As an expressionist, his style was vigorous and forceful. He used a Fauvist palette in a very free, expressive way, and referred to color as “the life’s blood of painting”. Although he did some ‘plein air’ landscape painting, such as the piece in this collection, “Mountains and Horses”, Beckman was primarily a figure painter. He taught art both in Taos and at the University of North Carolina.

Charles started painting at a very young age, following in the footsteps of his father, Oscar E. Berninghaus. He spent summers in Taos while growing up in Saint Louis, Missouri and after studying at The Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League. He returned to Taos permanently when he was twenty-two.

Unlike the children of many famous artists, Charles developed a fine style of his very own, one which was much more Impressionistic than his father’s. Although Charles painted mostly in oils, and specialized in Southwestern themes like his father, he painted in a vignette style, often leaving a bit of bare canvas between strong, sure strokes of color. His palette was pure and spare, and he rarely resorted to cleaning his brush, but simply wiped it off between colors. His works achieve that illusive Impressionistic ability to dissolve into pleasing abstractions and surface interest when the viewer draws nearer, without sacrificing its realistic cohesion when viewed from more of a distance. The small watercolor in this collection is evident of this, although he is somewhat out of his medium. The artist may have donated a watercolor sketch because it was customary until the latter part of the 20th century for students to train first in watercolor before graduating on to oils.

Raised in working class St. Louis, Missouri, Oscar Berninghaus had relatively little formal art education, attending only three semesters of night school at the Washington University School of Fine Arts, while apprenticing with a lithography firm. Soon he began illustrating for various periodicals, always gravitating towards the more adventurous outdoor assignments. On such an assignment for the Missouri Pacific Railroad in the summer of 1899, Berninghaus got his first view of Taos Valley while strapped to the top of a Chile Line railroad car.

Berninghaus was impressed by this valley. In his work, he responded to the bright, spacious landscape of Northern New Mexico with a dynamism that defined his mature style. He returned to Taos for many summers, rejoicing in the development of the small artist community, “For now” he told friends back East, “Taos has everything to offer the artist.” Berninghaus became a member of the Taos Society of Artists in 1915, and a permanent resident in 1925

A great advocate of this collection, Berninghaus encouraged many other artists to donate their work. The piece, “Woodhaulers”, is in the thickly lined style of his wood block prints, however, it is an original work in black and white ink.

The Hungarian Bisttram family immigrated to New York in 1906, where young Emil quickly set about becoming an artist. He studied at the National Academy of Design, Parsons, and The Art Students League, while supporting himself working as a commercial artist, and also as a professional boxer. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1931 on which he went to Mexico City and did mural work under Diego Rivera. Visiting Taos on his return home, he decided to stay.

In Taos, Bisttram, being a Modernist “began turning the place upside down” as Andrew Dasburg once said. He established the Heptegon Gallery in 1933 – the first gallery in Taos. He began national recruitment for his workshops, co-founded the Taos Art Association in 1953, and generally put the “First Phase” western painters into an up-roar.

Despite these revolutionary acts, Bisttram was a rigorous academic. He believed students should become well acquainted with the basic forms of Modern and Classical Art before settling into a fixed style of their own.

This facility is evident in his own works, which were collected internationally and are retained in several collections here in Taos. One can view his work at the Harwood, at Holy Cross Hospital, and most impressively, at the Old County Courthouse, where in 1934 he, along with other artists, orchestrated the series of fresco murals that surround the courtroom. These powerfully structured humanitarian allegories do credit to his training under Diego Rivera two years earlier. His varied contributions to the Taos Schools show his talents as a painter, whether it be watercolor or oil, with emphasis on shape, value, color, and composition.
Bistram, Emil J. *Ranchos Church*. Watercolor. 17” x 23”

Bistram, Emil J. *Morning Light*, 1958. Oil. 18” x 32”
Blanc, Peter (b.1912). *Mountain Peak*, 1954. Ink. 13” x 8”

A graduate of Harvard, Blanc lived in Taos in the mid-1950s, working in oil, tempera, and ink. This study, “Mountain Peak”, is a bold, interesting value gradation, developing both a strong, simple form and misty atmospheric effect.
Blood, Kimball (b.1923). *untitled.* Gouache. 13” x 17”

Born in Lynn, Maryland, Blood studied at National Academy of Design and moved to Taos in the 1950s with his wife Buff Haney, another contributor to the Taos Schools Collection. Blood did oil paintings, drawings, and at least some works in gouache such as the untitled piece of a Dakota limestone formation found in this collection - a representational landscape with Modernist influence.
The daughter of Ernest and Mary Blumenschein, Helen spent most of her late childhood in Taos. Her formal art education took her back East, first to Packer Institute, and then to her father’s alma mater, The Art Students League. She also studied in Paris from 1929 to 1931.

A skilled landscape painter and printmaker, her works were exhibited nationally and abroad from 1936 to 1945. Two such pieces are represented here: “Boulder Dam”, a lithograph, and also a landscape in oil and pencil on masonite. Helen gradually moved on to work in Southwest history, archeology, and conservation. However, she continued to paint and was well known for her portraits of local friends.
Blumenschein, Helen Greene. *Landscape*, 1952. Oil. 15” x 22”

Blumenschein, Helen Greene. *Landscape*, 1952. Oil. 15” x 22”
Blumenschein, Mary Shepard Greene (1869-1958). *Flower Arrangement.* Oil. 15” x 18”

Mary Shepard Greene Blumenschein studied at the Pratt Institute, and in Paris for 12 years, where she showed at the Paris Salon in 1900 and 1902, an honor previously bestowed on only one other American woman - Mary Cassatt. Upon returning to America, she showed at the St. Louis Expo in 1904, and did book illustrations for such important authors as Willa Cather and O’Henry before moving to Taos in 1919 to be with her husband Ernest.

In Taos she generally gave up art in deference to Ernest’s career, immersing herself in the rigors of running the gracious Blumenschein home and studio. There, one can see a good selection of her work, be it her subtly rendered portraits, or her elegant Art Nouveau illustrations. The long attenuated curves in “Taos Valley” point to this, although it is much simpler than her more finished works. “Flower Arrangement”, on the other hand, shows a very skilled use of color and blending.
Born the Honorable Dorothy Eugenie Brett, the eldest daughter of an English Viscount, Brett had a very formal and sheltered upbringing. Then she met Katherine Mansfield while studying at the Slade School, and took up with the bohemian literati of the Bloomsbury group. Thus began her abiding fascination with famous, gifted people. In 1924 she followed Freida and D.H. Lawrence to Taos where she soon became a member of Mabel Dodge Lujan’s inner circle. She spent most of the rest of her life here, eking out a meager living from her painting. “The Brett” as she was called, suffered some rather famous contempt from those she idolized, but was also increasingly appreciated for her wry sense of humor, her great natural style, and her gentle eccentricities.

Her paintings in this collection are as eclectic and eccentric as she was and include portraits, such as the “Portrait of E. Young” and stylized renderings with mystical symbols incorporated into them like “The Golden Images and the Moons of Troy…”
Brett, Dorothy. *Portrait of E. (Ella) Young*, 1930. Oil. 13” x 8”

Brett, Dorothy. *The Twelve Moons of Troy*, 1939. Oil. 36” x 36”

Her father was the Oxford psychology professor William McDougall, a colleague of Carl Jung. Brown moved to Harvard with her family in 1920, and enrolled in Boston School of Fine Arts for two years of study with William James II, whose style greatly influenced her own work.

Brown came to Taos with her children Kristina, Eric, Malcolm, and Bruce in the mid-1940s at the invitation of her brother Angus McDougall, an artist working at the Harwood compound on Ledoux Street. Her most successful works were her bold, loose watercolor landscapes of the Taos Valley such as “Under Dark Trees Swiftly Riding to What Unknown Destination”. One of the founding members of the Taos Art Association in 1953, Brown was an active member of the local community, as her daughter Kristina Wilson is today.
Butnick, Samuel (b. 1921). *Landscape*. Watercolor. 13” x 19”

Butnick lived in Taos during the 1950s, where he painted rather stylized, abstracted compositions in oils or watercolors, such as the untitled landscape in this collection. Similar in style to his Taos contemporaries, Butnick combined both Modernist and naturalistic elements into his work. After leaving Taos, he moved to New York, where he soon became a color master for commercial prints.
Christensen, Ted (1911-1998). *Winter Gloom*. Oil. 32” x 40”

A native of Vancouver, Washington, Christensen studied in Los Angeles at the Art Center and Otis University. He lived in Taos only two years, first in 1967, and then in 1972, producing landscapes in an impressionistic style. “Winter Gloom” is one such example of this work.

Born into the Potawatomi tribe in Lexington, Oklahoma, Woodrow Wilson Crumbo was orphaned at the age of seven and went to live with distant Sioux relatives in South Dakota. There, he was chosen for a scholarship at the prestigious American Indian Institute in Wichita, Kansas. He subsequently studied at the University of Kansas, and the University of Oklahoma under Oscar B. Jacobson. Crumbo was very facile with the delicate, curvilinear illustration then taught to Native American students at such Western art education centers. This highly marketable art form was intended as a way of preserving important cultural information while simultaneously extending the accepted definition of Native American Arts to include fine arts. Crumbo is one of the most historically significant Native American painters to have worked here in Taos. He first came to Taos in 1933 and kept a studio here until 1938, when he began directing and curating at various museums and cultural institutions in the Southwest.

Most of Crumbo’s works portray Native American ceremonials, mythical and religious symbols, or document traditional activities. He worked mostly in colored pencils or in silkscreen, many of which were sophisticated multi-color productions, such as we see here in “Medicine Song.”
Dasburg, Andrew (1887-1979). *Mountain Landscape*, 1947. Graphite. 11” x 16”

Dasburg had a difficult early life. Born in Paris and emigrating to New York with his widowed mother in 1892, he injured his hip at the age of six, and attended the New York School for Crippled Children. There he learned some technical drawing under “Miss Mackenzie”, who helped him enroll in The Art Students League in 1902. An extremely industrious student, Dasburg also attended night school with Robert Henri, summer programs at Woodstock under Birge Harrison, and studied anatomy at public libraries during holidays.

In 1909, he traveled to Paris where his horizons began to expand. He met Leo and Gertrude Stein who introduced him to Matisse, Picasso, and, most importantly, the works of Cezanne. Dasburg then began his life-long search for the “underlying geometric mechanism” of nature. This resulted in what Dasburg termed his “cubic” phase, consisting of highly modeled compositions of strong basic shapes with the subtle, deeply worked coloration of Cezanne. His sculptural contribution to the groundbreaking Armory Show in 1913 is pure Cubism. This heavy modeling was furthered by a visit to Diego Rivera in 1932.

Dasburg first came to Taos in 1918 at the invitation of Mabel Dodge Lujan, thus becoming Taos’ first and most famous “modern” artist. He gradually gave up painting in favor of ‘plein air’ drawings, like “Taos Landscape”, as his work became progressively linear and spare.
A modern sculptor, Emma Lou Davis attended Vassar, Pennsylvania Academy of Art with Charles Grafly and Albert Laessle. Then, at the invitation of Buckminster Fuller, she went to work in his Dymaxion “factory” in 1933, where she learned the basics of abstract sculpture. She was also interested in social anthropology and traveled a great deal, interpreting various cultural art forms in her art. She worked in many museums, from the Beijing Institute of Fine Arts to the Whitney to the Museum of Modern Art.

Davis lived in Taos in the 1950s, and donated the piece “Three Figures” to this collection. Although atypical of her work, it is a good example of light upon figures creating negative and positive space.
Degen, Mabel (1885-1954).  *Still Life*, 1930.  Oil.  32” x 21”

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Mabel Degen studied in Paris before World War I. She and her husband moved to Taos in the late 1940s, and lived on Ledoux Street. After her death, the home was donated to the University of New Mexico and briefly became part of the Harwood Foundation.

Degen did not promote herself as an artist or paint professionally, but she was still quite an accomplished oil painter. Her style, as depicted in “Still Life” was formal and realistic, with a tight curvaceous line.
DePuy, John (b.1927). *Seascape*, 1959. Monotype. 19” x 22”

A native of New Brunswick, New Jersey, DePuy attended The Art Students League and also studied independently with Hans Hofmann and Morris Kantor. DePuy works primarily in oil and monoprints (such as “Seascape”), doing expressionistic and semi-abstract representations. His oils have strong, definitive colors and images, presented with a relatively heavy impasto, and his expressions retain a bold, unselfconscious quality.

Finding that Taos was growing too big for him, DePuy moved first to El Rito and then to Mora, New Mexico. His work can be seen at New Directions Gallery on the north side of Taos Plaza.
Dodge, Frances Farrand D. (b. 1878). *Landscape*, 1916. Oil. 12” x 8”

Dodge, born in Lansing, Michigan, was an etcher, illustrator, and painter of landscapes. She studied at Michigan State University, Syracuse University, the Cincinnati Art School, as well as the Art Students League. Dodge also studied under Frank Duveneck and her works earned her numerous national awards. Dodge’s rendering of an open and atmospheric landscape demonstrates her abilities to create impressionistic, dreamlike scenes.
Dolmith, Rex (1896-1955). *Guadalupe*. Oil. 24” x 20”

Born in Canton, Ohio, Dolmith studied at the University of Colorado and the Chicago Musical College. He lived in Taos in the 1950s, doing representational works in oil, pastel, and charcoal and is well known for his portraits. His contribution to this collection, “Madonna”, an oil on linen canvas, is expressive and distorted.

Raised on his grandfather’s farm in Augusta, Maine, Dunton was always an avid outdoorsman, and a self-taught artist. At eighteen, he began traveling extensively throughout the west doing commercial illustrations for such distinguished authors as Zane Grey, and national magazines like the Saturday Evening Post.

In 1902 he studied briefly at The Art Students League under Ernest Blumenschein, who convinced him to come out to Taos in 1912. He was one of the six founding members of the Taos Society of Artists, although he resigned in 1922. A fine colorist, Dunton was concerned with authenticity, narrative, and dramatic impact. He is best known for his western scenes of active figures dwarfed by a huge landscape. However, “Old Taos Pueblo Indian Man”, a portrait of Brown Elk, is an example of his illustrative talents in portraiture.
du Tant, Charles (1908-unavailable). *Clinical Seclusion*. Oil. 22” x 28”

du Tant was born and raised in rural Oklahoma, and attended Oklahoma State University, where he studied art and journalism. He lived in Talpa from 1945 to 1951 and served as the publisher of the Taos News from 1948 until 1950. His piece in the collection, a Modernist and expressive landscape, uses strong coloration and outlining.
Egri, Ted (b. 1913). *Sunset Through an Artist's Eye*. Oil. 25” x 38”

A son of Hungarian immigrants living in New York, Egri attended the Roerich Museum Institute. There Egri developed his abiding interest in color theory and “Dynamic Synergy”. He and his wife Kit moved to Taos to study with Emil Bisttram under the G.I. Bill in 1950. He has been an active member of the modern art and art education community ever since. Most notably, he was a founding member and a constant supporter of the Taos Art Association.

Egri is a very enthusiastic, energetic man, and this is reflected in his works, which focus on the innovative and the dynamic. Most of his pieces are abstract, or semi-abstract, in metal, wood, synthetic materials, or, in this case, canvas, such as “Sunset Through an Artist’s Eye.”
Ely, Wolcott (b. 1923). *From the Seas that are South*. Acrylic. 24” x 32”

Born in Hutchinson, Kansas, Ely attended the Kansas City Art Institute, The Institute of Design in Chicago, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, The University of Illinois, and Northwestern University. He joined the Air Corps in World War II, and flew many missions in the South Pacific. In 1951 he studied in France and married Georgette Delenue there in 1952. They moved to Taos in 1954 where Ely studied under Andrew Dasburg, and showed frequently at the Stables Gallery.

Ely worked in oil, acrylic, and pencil and produced abstract constructions of complex, seemingly organic, flowing images, somewhat like those of deKooning and Kandinsky. “From the Seas That Are South” is one such image in the collection. In the late 1960s Ely gave up professional painting for Architectural Design, though, as his wife noted “he was seldom without a sketchbook”. He currently lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico with his wife, Georgette.
Fischer, Martin (dates unavailable). *The Big Top*, 1926. Oil. 29” x 32”

A member of the Duveneck Society in Cincinnati, Ohio, the artists of that group produced successful paintings of genre, portraits, figures, and landscapes. The Cincinnati Museum became the center for Duveneck studies in 1919. Done in a very romantic style, Fischer depicts the American West of that era in “The Big Top.”
Fleck, Joseph Amadeus (1892-1977). *A Road to Taos*. Oil. 25” x 30”

A native of Siegless Austria, Fleck attended the Vienna Royal Academy of Fine Arts, studying under members of the Austrian Succession group and the Institute of Applied Arts in Vienna. He moved to Taos in 1923 and while here, he produced several murals, as well as oil paintings and lithographs. In the 1940s he left Taos and took a position as Dean of Fine Arts at the University of Missouri for three years. Fleck returned to Taos after World War II, and served as Taos Valley Artists’ Association President from 1947 to 1949. In Taos, he evolved from a stylized and academic realism to a unique, thoughtful, Impressionistic style. “A Road to Taos,” although undated, shows something of this later Impressionism.

A native New Yorker, Ganthiers studied at the Brooklyn Museum and The Art Students League. There she studied under Vaclav Vytlacil and Rufino Tamayo who encouraged her to visit Taos. She spent ten years working as a textile designer for Deering Milliken, and it was her abiding interest in Mexican textiles that finally brought her out West in 1949.

Ganthiers’ work was fairly well received, and she won several prizes, including the 1958 Oakes Purchase prize at the Stables Gallery in Taos. She was closely connected with the California Expressionists, and became known for her non-linear, painterly style, often with a heavy impasto, and her strong use of color and composition. Her encaustic on masonite, “The Domes” is an example of this.
Garel, Leo (1917-1999). *Green Valley Landscape*. Oil. 17” x 26”

Born and raised in New York City, Garel attended the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts, and the Art Students League, studying under George Grosz and Vaclav Vytlacil. He came to Taos to study under the G.I. Bill immediately after World War II, and his work caught the attention of Mabel Dodge Lujan and later, Alfred Stieglitz. Garel was an active painter and poet throughout his life. His semi-representational paintings have often been compared to the works of the German Expressionist, Emil Nolde. Later he did some more abstract and symbolic combinations reminiscent of the paintings of Paul Klee. He worked mostly in oils and gouache. The oil on linen in this collection, “Green Valley” is a Modernist landscape, bold in its composition with strong emphasis on line, plane, and color.

Gibberd worked as an advertising executive until after World War II, when his wife convinced him to become a painter. He sought out training from several masters around the globe, and in 1954 came to Taos to study with the renowned Emil Bisttram.

Gibberd was not an Abstract Expressionist like so many of the Modernists in Taos at that time. His art was representational and, as Lemon Saks said “dedicated to the splendor of nature, the wonder of its color, the clearness of air and water, its moods…its ever changing drama. It is obvious that his wide experiences and sense of observation while traveling have abundantly contributed to his making.” Gibberd worked with a Cubist influence, with an emphasis on geometric forms.
Gibberd, Eric. *Simple Wreath*. Oil. 47” x 32”

Grant, Blanche Chloc (1874-1948). *Where Indians Dance*, 1924. Oil. 30” x 30”

Born in Leavenworth, Kansas, Grant attended Vassar College, Boston Museum Art School, and the Art Students League. She lived in Taos from 1920 until her death, and her realistic oil paintings have a painterly, romantic quality. She is most noted for her images of the Taos Pueblo Indians and culture, and landscapes of the Southwest, such as “Where Indians Dance” painted in 1924. In 1922 she began editing the El Crepusculo (now the Taos News), and consequently began writing more and painting less. Her books on Taos history are still important references, particularly “When Old Trails Were New.”
Haas, Les (1911-?). *Portrait*, 1951. Oil. 28” x 20”

Haas attended the University of California in his hometown of Berkeley, and then studied under Hans Hofmann in Provincetown, Rhode Island. He worked mostly in watercolor, and came to Taos as the director of the University of New Mexico’s Summer Field School in the late 1940s. In the early 1950s he moved to El Rito, New Mexico. His contribution to this collection, an oil and wax on linen utilizes geometric figure and shape with contrasting, complementary colors.
Haney, Buff (b. 1916). *Blossoms and Trees*, 1950. Oil. 19” x 23”

Haney was born in Ada, Oklahoma, and lived in Taos in 1947. She attended the University of Oklahoma, and the California School of Fine Arts at Berkley, where she met her husband Kimball Blood, another contributor to this collection. She uses pastels and oil in a representational style, doing portraits and landscapes, such as her impressionistic piece, “Blossoms and Trees”. Haney currently resides in Mexico.
Hanson, Roy (dates unavailable). Cat. Oil. 23” x 10”

Hanson worked in Taos in the 1950s. His stylized representation of “Cat” from this collection is an oil on paper, almost Cubist yet with very subtle color.
Hennings, E. Martin (1891-1956). *The Frozen Stream*. Lithograph. 10” x 10”

The son of German immigrants, Hennings was born and raised in Pennsgrove, New Jersey. He graduated with honors from the Art Institute of Chicago before traveling to Germany in 1917. He studied with Walter Thor at the Munich Academy and Angelo Junk at the Royal Academy, where he adopted Franz Von Struck’s theories of beauty based on patterning and draftsmanship.

Hennings was perhaps the finest of what was then called “The Aspen Painters”. His subjects were usually Native Americans in natural surroundings. The sepia toned lithograph, “The Frozen Stream” depicts his skills as a draftsman and lithographer.
James, Rebecca Salsbury (1891-1968). *The New Plant*, 1947. Oil reverse on glass. 15” x 19”

James was born and raised in London, and first traveled to America as a young girl in 1899 with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show, managed by her father Nate Salsbury. She was educated primarily in New York City where she married photographer Paul Strand in 1922. In 1924 she began painting on glass, and continued in this painstaking medium for over 35 years.

She came to Taos with Georgia O’Keefe in the summer of 1926, and there is a similarity between their painting styles; a certain smooth, clean formality. In 1933 she moved to Taos, where she remained until her death.

“The New Plant” is a fine example of her mature painting, which was inspired by Taos’ Hispanic Culture. “A walking woman, a waiting woman, a watching woman…adobe, old dry wood, I love these things. They have made me a painter and I am grateful.”

Klein was born in Copenhagen, Denmark. His father was an art teacher and Klein enjoyed art, but also loved the sea, so during World War I, he went off with the Merchant Marines at the age of 15. At the end of the war, he decided to become a painter, and obtained a scholarship to the Art Students League in 1923.

From 1953 until 1965, he lived in Taos and married Dora Kaminsky. While in Taos, Klein worked extensively in ceramic, such as “Pescado Azul” but he was also known as a very inventive artist, using a variety of media, including some exceptional collages on glass.

A native Californian, Kloss attended California School of Fine Arts and University of California at Berkeley, where she studied under Perham Nahl. Upon seeing her first etching he said “Well, if this is your first, you’re going to be an etcher”, “And that’s all I needed!” Kloss would later say, “I’ve been doing it ever since.”

In 1925 she married the writer Phillip Kloss. They honeymooned in Taos, and moved here a year later. Kloss was already a superlative etcher of linear work. In Taos, she perfected her aquatint skills, which allowed for shading and nonlinear masses of values in etching. In this difficult field, Kloss became an American Master. She won numerous awards and honors throughout her long career. Most notably, she was elected an Associate in the National Academy of Design in 1950, and made a Full Academician in 1972.

A very prolific artist, Kloss produced over 625 editions of copperplate etchings, in addition to some watercolors and oil paintings. Kloss is most well known for her depictions of life in Northern New Mexico’s Hispanic and Pueblo cultures.
Kloss, Gene. *All Saints Day Mass-Taos Pueblo*, 1934. Etching. 10” x 14”

Kloss, Gene. *Church of the Storm Country*, 1941. Etching. 10” x 14”
Kloss, Gene. *Penitente Good Friday*, 1934. Etching. 11” x 14”

Kloss, Gene. *Christmas Eve Taos Pueblo*, 1934. Etching 11” x 14”
Laks, Victor (1920 -1978). *Fish*, 1948. Oil. 21” x 29”

Born in Paris, Laks studied at the Academie de la Grand-Chaumiere at Montparnasse with Emile-Othon Friesz, and the School of the Louvre. He came to New Mexico in 1947 to teach at the University of New Mexico and lived in Taos for only one summer before moving to Brazil to produce sets for its National Ballet. He later moved on to New York in 1950, and eventually back to France in 1955.

His painting of a blue fish, contributed to the collection, is done in oil on masonite, and is brightly colored with a heavy impasto style.
Larrinaga, Mario (1895-1979). *Intersection*. Oil. 18” x 24”

Born in Los Flores, Mexico, Larrinaga attended Chouinard School of Art. He then worked for Universal Pictures under Pruitt Carter where he designed movie sets and special effects. Among his film credits, he painted sets for the original King Kong and Seven Wonders of the World. He came to Taos in 1951 with his wife Isabelle, studied under Emil Bisttram, and began concentrating on fine arts oil painting. Larrinaga co-founded Gallery A with Mary Lowe Sanchez and Eric Gibberd in 1960, and stayed in Taos until 1976 when he and his wife moved back to Southern California.

Larrinaga’s style is clean and bold, and the subject matter for his paintings is quite diverse. His interest seems to be in the abstract forms found within nature, and the level of abstraction he presents on the canvas varies considerably. His piece, “Intersection”, is an almost electric composition with diagonals overlapping vertical components.
Latham, Barbara (1896-1989). *November Trees 1*. Watercolor. 13” x 19”

A native of Massachusetts, Latham attended The Art Students League like so many artists in this collection. Also, like many Taos artists, she originally studied commercial art, and had a successful career in graphic illustration before moving to Taos with her husband Howard Cook in 1935. Only then did she begin a career as a fine artist. In Taos, she quickly achieved her mature style under the tutorage of Andrew Dasburg. Latham’s works have been shown in many prestigious institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum and the Whitney Museum. Her untitled watercolor in this collection is lively and energetic and yet has a control of line and space.

Latham, Barbara. *Landscape with cow*. Watercolor. 14” X 20”
Lockwood, J. Ward (1894-1963). *Autumn in Talpa*. Oil. 16” x 25”

Born in Atchinson, Kansas, Lockwood studied at the University of Kansas, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, and the Academie Ransom in Paris. He studied under Andrew Dasburg at Woodstock in the summer of 1925, and came to Taos annually from 1926 to 1938. His watercolors were highly successful, winning him many accolades, including first prize in watercolor at the 1931 Art Institute of Chicago International Exhibition. In the early 1930s, Lockwood also produced civic murals, among them a section of the fresco series at the Taos Court House produced under Emil Bisttram in 1934. In the 1950s and 1960s, his work became primarily abstract.

Lockwood was a well-spoken and inspiring teacher and he espoused the virtues of practical knowledge and intuition over extensive academic training. “Autumn” is less highly structured than most of his works, which have very strong color panels, heavily worked over with complex burnished hues much in the style of Cezanne.
Loeffler, Gisella (1903-1977). *Fiestacita*. Oil. 24” x 24”

Born in Wertherberg, Austria, Loeffler moved to St. Louis, Missouri as a child of five, and spent the rest of her life trying to recreate the magical folk art of her grandparents’ inn in Austria. During her long and successful career, her art was a consistent collection of bright, universal, decorative motifs, evoking images of a happy childhood. Her materials, however, varied a great deal. She worked with oils, ceramic design, applique, and most importantly, illustrated several children’s books such as *Franzie and Giza*, which were very popular in the 1960s.

Loeffler studied at The Art Institute of Chicago and subsequently traveled a great deal, collecting folk art. As with so many other artists, it was Mabel Dodge Lujan who brought Loeffler out to Taos.
Mandelman, Bea (1912-1999). *Landscape*. Oil. 20” x 30”

Mandelman was born into an interesting group of Jewish immigrants and liberal intellectuals such as her father’s friend Louis Lozowick. She was quite well prepared for the “isms”: Futurism, Constructivism, Social Realism, Fauvism, Cubism, etc… that were rocking the Art Students League when she attended in 1934. But in 1944, much against the advice of her friends, Mandelman and her new husband Louis Ribak packed up and moved to Taos in order to escape all those “isms” and thereby make a fresh start at their art. Mandelman and Ribak were instrumental in opening Taos up to the “3rd Wave” of Modernism that proliferated after World War II. They opened Taos Valley Art School, helped open the Blue Door, Gallery Escondido, and the Taos Art Association.

After coming to Taos, Mandelman went back to doing some landscape, such as the untitled landscape found in this collection. This representation of the Taos Mountain may have come from this period although certainly atypical of Mandelman’s work in general, which was increasingly abstract and expressionistic.
Martin, Agnes Beatrice (b. 1912). *Mid-Winter.* Oil. 33” x 48”

Born in Saskatchewan, Canada, Martin studied at Columbia University. Certainly the most successful modernist to live in Taos, she first came as a student in 1947, then lived here from 1952 to 1956, where she lived a poor, reclusive life working almost constantly. At this time she painted pictographic and biomorphic forms, such as those in “Mid-Winter”. Although she had not yet invented the grid paintings which were to become her most recognized artwork, it is clear that she was increasingly concerned with proportion and with structural elements very carefully placed within the format of her canvas, and the emotions this kind of relationship can evoke. In 1957 she moved to New York, and with the help of the art dealer Betty Parsons, became a major force in modern art.

According to Martin “My paintings have neither object nor space nor line nor anything-no forms. They are light, lightness, about merging, about formlessness, breaking down form...like an ocean you can go into, an ideal emptiness.” Little wonder then, that she destroyed most of her earlier biomorphic painting, which often present formal relationships out of harmony and in conflict. “Mid-Winter” is a rare survivor.

Martin has moved back to Taos. She still paints regularly, and contributes greatly to the community, especially to the children of Taos.
McAfee, Ila (1897-1995). *Palominos and Chestnuts*. Oil. 21” x 32”

Born and raised in the ranchland near Gunnison, Colorado, McAfee quickly developed the fascination for animal forms, especially those of horses, which motivated her to sketch. She attended West Lake School of Art, The Art Students League, and the National Academy of Design. Her carefully drafted representational works often convey the character of the subject in a playful romantic light, and are especially delightful to young animal lovers. She moved to Taos in 1928, and soon set up her White Horse Studio. Her contributions to the collection show her broad range of skill, style, color, and technique. “Palominos and Chestnuts” illustrates her masterful ability to depict one of her favorite subjects.
McAfee, Ila. *Horses Near the Foothills*. Oil. 18” x 24”

McAfee, Ila. *Picuris Peak Light and Shadows*. Oil. 15” x 26”
Meek, James M. (1928-1985). *Rio Grande Gorge*. Oil. 44” x 36”

Born in Tennessee, Meek was something of a musical child prodigy, giving his first public violin recital at the age of seven. He received a Bachelors Degree in psychology and a Masters degree in Art from Murray University in Tennessee, and subsequently worked as a psychologist during World War II. In 1951 he studied art at Union University under Clara Eagle. Meek arrived in Taos in 1958, and shortly thereafter became a full-time painter. His work was generally regarded as abstract expressionism. “Rio Grande Gorge” is a large, colorful representation with an emphasis on contrasting form and color.

Mendoza was born and raised in Ranchos de Taos, and enjoys painting only second to his primary art form of classical guitar. He currently lives in Santa Fe, and plays at the Hotel El Dorado and many other venues. His impressionistic representation of the St. Francis de Assisi church illustrates the enormity and beauty of the structure and its importance in the community.

Mendoza, Antonio. *Untitled*. Oil. 36” x 54”
Merrill, Art (1885-1973).  *Street.*  Watercolor.  14” x 21”

A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Merrill attended The Art Students League and studied under Julina Yaghigian. He came to Taos in 1946, and painted primarily in watercolors. His style was representational and his subjects were mostly landscape, still life, and portraiture.

Merrill’s submission to the collection, a watercolor featuring a house near the Taos Plaza, is vibrant and reminiscent of the region’s territorial style.
Moose, Philip A. (1921-2001). Taos Pueblo. Oil. 16” x 20”

Moose was from Newton, North Carolina, and although he is not well known here in Taos, he was a nationally recognized artist in the 1950s and 1960s. Moose studied extensively at several art schools in North Carolina, Columbia University, Taxco School of Arts, Munich’s Academy of Fine Arts, and the National Academy of Design. He received many national awards including a Pulitzer Prize in 1948, and a Fulbright Award in 1953. His mediums were generally acrylic and oil.

He lived in Taos only in the summer of 1948, although Eulalia Emetaz at Gallery Escondida carried his work for some time after his departure, and it was she who donated “Taos Pueblo” to the Taos Schools. This piece is indicative of Moose’s work during his travels in the Southwest and Mexico at the time, which concentrated on figurative treatments of Native American and Hispanic life.
Morang, Alfred (1901-1958). *Street Scene*, 1947. Oil. 18” x 15”

Raised in rural Maine, Morang had health problems that prevented him from attending school for many years. He studied violin and art with private instructors, and in 1918 painted under Impressionist Carol S. Tyson, and landscape painter Henry B. Snell. Morang continued his studies in Boston during the 1920s and there he married Dorothy Clark. The couple moved back to Maine, where he developed his mature style of painting. Morang used a strong palette and applied his paint with an unusually uniform, ultra-thick impasto, creating a great deal of texture. The attitude of his work was very Impressionistic, almost Pointillist, involving the viewer in the optical mixing of the colors.

In 1938 he was diagnosed with tuberculosis, and the Morang’s moved to arid Santa Fe, where he found the strong light well suited to his style. His common subjects were prosaic landscapes, and simple, impressionistic street scenes, such as the untitled piece presented in this collection.
Mygatt, Toni (b.1921). *Windy Day*, 1947. Watercolor. 15” x 20”

Born in Pelham, New York, Mygatt studied primarily at the Art Institute of Chicago and came to Taos in 1943. She was a student of Andrew Dasburg and although her work is basically abstract, she often shares his concern for line as a suspended element set against soft color fields, as seen in “Windy Day”. Much of her later work is copperplate etching. Mygatt still makes her home in Taos.


Nordfeldt was born in Sweden and came to the US in 1891. He attended the Art Institute of Chicago, and then traveled a good deal. He studied in Paris at Le Académie Julien where he discovered the French Impressionists. Like Dasburg, Nordfeldt was especially inspired by the works of Cézanne. From Paris he went to England where he learned etching, lithography, and woodcut under F. Morley Fletcher. He and his wife came out to New Mexico in 1918 and lived in Santa Fe for 20 years, occasionally visiting Taos. His work, which was becoming progressively Modern during this period, was well received. His lithograph in this collection is a simple and haunting genre representation of neighbors meeting on the street.
Otto, Curtis (dates unavailable). *Iris*. Watercolor. 19” x 13”

Although not much information is available on Otto, he did submit a piece to the Taos Municipal Schools sometime in the 1950s. It is an untitled watercolor of iris flowers using a broad, simple brush technique.
Phillips, Bert Geer (1868-1956). *Pacific Coast near La Jolla.* 30” x 30”

Born in Hudson, New York, Phillips sketched the surrounding woodland areas before studying at The National Academy of Design, The Art Students League, and Le Academie Julien with B. Constant and Jean Paul Laurens. There he met Ernest Blumenschein and Joseph Sharp, and at the urging of Sharp, he and Blumenschein ventured out to Taos in 1898. Phillips settled in Taos immediately, thereby becoming the first artist from the “Taos Six” to keep a studio in Taos. He was one of the six founding members of the Taos Society of Artists, and a reliable mainstay of the early Taos Art Colony. Here his work came to focus on the lives and lore of the local Native Americans. Phillips’ painting style, which presented important images in crisp detail and lesser elements in a painterly haze, intensified the romantic aura of these scenes.

In 1949, Phillips moved to San Diego to be near his son and daughter-in-law, and there he painted “Pacific Coast”, a traditional coastal landscape.
Quist, Stanley (dates unavailable). *Mountains and Landscape*. Oil. 10” x 45”

Quist painted in Taos in the 1950s and 1960s. Not much is known about his personal life, but he was noted for his florals and his landscapes, such as the one represented in this collection, a panoramic view of a landscape suggestive of Northern New Mexico.

Ravagli met D.H. and Freida Lawrence in his native town of San Casciano in Northern Italy in 1925. He eventually moved to Taos and married the widowed Freida Lawrence in 1934. While in Taos, he kept a ceramic studio in El Prado, producing bright festive folkloric pieces. He went out painting only occasionally with friends. He was, according to Freida, “a social painter”. “*Kiowa Ranch Corral*” could have come from one of these outings. Ravagli returned to Italy after Freida’s death in 1956.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Rednick studied at Cooper Union, as well as under Charles Hawthorne at the National Academy of Design in New York. After finishing his fine art studies, he worked for The Christian Science Church for seven years. He was then inducted into the Army during World War II, and then spent several years in San Francisco, where he painted and studied Eastern Philosophy.

Rednick moved to Taos in 1949, and established quite a following as a mystic, conducting classes “synthesizing a Christian focus with Eastern meditation techniques”. His paintings are generally mystical, symbolic scenes meant to aid in meditation and spiritual channeling. “On the Threshold” is an example of this type of work, which usually depicted a good deal of what he considered the “pure spiritual fire of love.”
Reed, Eleanor (1910-1976). *Seashells*, 1948. Oil. 31” x 35”

Born in Massachusetts, Reed was one of many artists who came to Taos after World War II, and studied with Louis Ribak on the G.I. Bill. She remained in Taos through the 1950s and attended the Taos Valley Art School founded by Louis Ribak and Bea Mandelman. Her work was mostly semi-realistic or abstract using floating elements and a Chagall-like palette, as seen in her painting of seashells contributed to the Taos Schools.
Ret was born in France. His schooling is unknown, but he worked as a goldsmith and a poster designer before 1927, when he became a painter. Although Ret was a Modernist, he was not a dogmatic one. As he wrote in his book, Advice to Young Artists in 1951, “What is good is always modern. I’m against any kind of ‘isms’ because they are fences. No creed separates the birds of God.”

He traveled to the United States in the late 1930s, and lived awhile in Taos in the mid-1950s, exhibiting at Gallery Escondida. At this time he donated “Bretagne Fisher Woman” to the Taos Schools at Eulalia Emetaz’s urging.
Although he was interested in art from a young age, Reynolds initially followed his parents’ wishes, studying business and administration, and subsequently applied himself to various business endeavors in his hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma until enlisting in the army at the beginning of World War II. After the war, Reynolds decided to study art under the G.I. Bill. He attended The Art Institute of Chicago briefly in 1946, and then came to the Taos Valley Art School. A very active member of the Taos community, Reynolds was the founding president of the Taos Art Association in 1953, and later started the Taos Humane Society. He painted mostly realistic landscapes, like “Sunshine Valley” and opened Reynolds Gallery in Taos.
Riccio, Ernesto (1887-1943). *Roman Scene.* Oil. 35” x 30”

A Brazilian painter, Riccio painted the image in oil of a classical Roman forum seen here in this collection. It is done in a light palette heavily applied in an Impressionistic manner.
Rowe, William (1910-1955). *Batroom Fantasy*. Oil. 10” x 27”

Rowe taught art at The Art Institute of Buffalo, New York until enlisting in the Army in World War II. Released from the Army with tuberculosis, Rowe traveled to Taxco, Mexico, and then came to Taos with his good friend Inez Shearer, another contributor to this collection. His pieces were mostly dreamlike biomorphic abstractions, such as “Batroom Fantasy.”

Ruthling was born and raised in Santa Fe, and still lives there. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, and is talented in many media, but is most well known for producing a series of U.S. Postal Stamps with images of American Indian Pottery. His piece represented here, a whimsical image of a green goat and a blue duck is a mixed media work of watercolor, leaves, flowers, and seeds.
Shaffer, Martin (1913-1985). *Pilar*. B&W Photograph. 15” x 19”

Born in Mountainair, New Mexico, Shaffer studied photography and fine arts at the University of New Mexico, and came to Taos with the University of New Mexico Summer Program in 1930. He lived in Taos from 1932 until his death, working in commercial and art photography, iron mongering, and some oil painting.

Shaffer, Martin. *La Fonda Hotel*, 1944. B&W Photograph. 19” x 15”
Sharp, Joseph (1859-1953). *Amole*. Oil. 30” x 36”

From his hometown of Bridgeport, Ohio, Sharp attended the McMicken School of Design in Cincinnati, and the Cincinnati Art Academy. In 1881, he began traveling to Europe for art studies between forays into the American Frontier. In 1893 Sharp first came to Taos on one of these sketching trips. Upon returning to Paris in 1895, he praised Taos so heartily to his young friends, Ernest Blumenschein and Bert Phillips that they made a point of visiting the valley during their 1898 trip out West, and subsequently opened their own art studios in Taos. However, Sharp did not keep a permanent residence in Taos until 1912.

Sharp was one of the founding members of the prestigious Taos Society of Artists, and a well-liked member of the community. His contribution to this collection, “Amole” is in a traditional, Paris style of still life painting.
Shearer, Inez (dates unavailable).  *Crusade 1*.  Oil.  39” x 28”

Although not much is known about her, Shearer was a friend of Alice Kissinger, who was instrumental in helping organize the Taos Public Schools Art Collection. Shearer came to Taos with her friend William Rowe after World War II. Her piece, “Crusade I” is dreamlike with a bold use of color and image.
Bourne in Toledo, Ohio, Stewart studied at the Toledo Art Museum, and then served five campaigns as a tank destroyer in World War II. Later, in 1945, he attended the Art Students League on the G.I. Bill. In 1950, he studied at the Taos Valley Art School with Louis Ribak, and stayed in Taos until about 1990, when he moved to Todos Santos, Mexico. Stewart’s art is often spiritual and highly charged, emotionally. The religious subject matter of his submission “Life, Death, Resurrection” is typical of his work in the 1950s. His more recent works often represent the spiritual aspects and symbols of Native American culture. A sculptor as well as a painter, Charles often gives his paintings a sculptural, faceted feel that is almost Cubist.
Stroh, Earl (b. 1924). *Green Hills*. Multimedia. 18” x 23”

A native of Buffalo, New York, Stroh attended the Art Institute of Buffalo, the Atelier Friedlander in Paris, and the University of New Mexico. He traveled up to Taos in 1947, and studied under Andrew Dasburg, who said in 1973 “The beauty of Stroh’s work is largely in its technical execution whether in oil, silver point, or pastel. No matter what the medium, the result is a unity unique in its simplicity.” Stroh’s work has always progressed towards its current form, which is the spare, essential distillation of line and color in a series of tight, curving lines, carefully placed within their format. He works in a variety of media, and currently shows in Taos at the Fenix Gallery.

Stroh is increasingly recognized as an important force in the American Modernist movement. According to David Witt in 1998 “Along with Dasburg, Bisttram, and Ribak, Stroh is one of the most important Modernists to have worked in Taos”. His diversity as an artist is demonstrated in his varied and eclectic contributions to this collection.
Stroh, Earl. *Landscape*. Watercolor/Ink. 10” x 12”

Stroh, Earl. *Mozart’s Requiem*. Oil. 16” x 20”
Stroh, Earl. *Penitente*, 1948. Crayon. 15” x 12”

Stroh, Earl. *The Country Kitchen*. Pastel. 15” x 20”
The son of a Philippine banker, Tabuena studied extensively, first in the Philippines, and then at the Art Students League, and the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere. He lived in Taos briefly in the mid-1950s. Tabuena is a highly respected and influential artist, especially in the Philippines and in Mexico, where he spent two decades after he left Taos. His many accolades include being named “Man of the Year” by the American Biographical Institute in 1991.

Although Tabuena works in various styles and media, he is generally a Neorealist, and is best known for his watercolors. Some of his earlier works are characterized by a dark expressive quality that demonstrates both a Modernist’s influence and are considered social commentaries such as the painting, “Mourning”. It is a dark figural work, stylized with repetition of shape, form, and color. He now lives in Mexico with his wife Nina.
Trowbridge, Gail (dates unavailable). *Black Cat*, 1944. Watercolor. 20” x 27”

Although we don’t know much about Trowbridge, her contribution to the collection, “Black Cat”, done in 1944, is a graphic illustrative watercolor with a decorative quality.

A native of Southbridge, Maryland, Wells studied at Harvard University. He came out to New Mexico in the 1940s, and painted light, airy watercolors such as this mesa landscape although his later work became increasingly somber and abstract. Wells first came up to Taos in 1932, studying under Andrew Dasburg, but he was never a permanent resident.

Wells settled in Santa Fe, where he was well known not only as an important artist, but also as a knowledgeable collector of New Mexican Hispanic Art, hence his other contribution to the Taos Schools of “Santa Rita,” an oil on canvas board.
Wells, Cady. *Portrait of Santa Rita*. Oil. 24” x 20”