

Summer 6-10-2013

Fire and Earth: Native American Pottery from New Mexican Pueblos - Press Release

Mike Horyczun
Fairfield University

Jill J. Deupi
Fairfield University

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Recommended Citation

Horyczun, Mike and Deupi, Jill J., "Fire and Earth: Native American Pottery from New Mexican Pueblos - Press Release" (2013). *Fire & Earth – Ephemera*. 3.

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Media Contact: Mike Horyczun, 203.254.4000, ext. 2647
mhoryczun@fairfield.edu

New Exhibition!

Fire & Earth: Native American Pottery from New Mexican Pueblos
June 27, 2013 – October 3, 2013
Bellarmino Museum of Art
Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (June 10, 2013). For hundreds of years, the native inhabitants of the American Southwest have cultivated a tradition of pottery that continues today as a vibrant, highly skilled art form. For its latest exhibition, **Fairfield University's Bellarmino Museum of Art** presents ***Fire & Earth: Native American Pottery from New Mexican Pueblos***, which features nearly three dozen potted vessels from ten different Pueblos in New Mexico. Drawn from a private collection, these objects inspire not only with their formal values but also through their rich cultural histories. The exhibition is on view from **Thursday, June 27, 2013, through Thursday, October 3, 2013**. The Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center is a Community Partner for this show. Exclusive media partner is Morris Media. There will be an opening reception on June 27, 2013 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

A wide range of styles and forms of traditional and contemporary pottery are on view and include works by noted 20th-century artisans such as Maria and Julian Martinez, Helen Naha, and Robert Tenoria. Historical works from the late 19th and early 20th century are also featured. Bellarmino Museum Director Dr. Jill Deupi notes: "Pueblo pottery bears witness to the incredible legacy of the Pueblo people. It is a testament to the strength of their ancient roots and rich cultural heritage. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to showcase these remarkable objects in our gallery and to provide our visitors, who may not yet be familiar with this class of objects, with new opportunities to broaden their horizons, both aesthetically and intellectually."

Using techniques and styles passed from one generation to the next, modern Pueblo artists have created pottery characterized by graceful forms and decorated with geometric patterns and stylized symbolic forms drawn from nature. Fascinated with Pueblo pottery, European-Americans began actively collecting such objects around 1880, when the expanded rail network opened up the West and ended the relative isolation of most Pueblos. Private collectors, such as Albert C. Barnes, formed extraordinary collections of historical and modern pottery to incorporate into their collections of paintings and decorative arts. Historical museums such as the Smithsonian began collecting and documenting the work of various Pueblos and of individual artists. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS related to the exhibition include:

Family Day. Sunday, Sept. 14, 2013. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Native American Pottery. (best for ages four and up). Children can design “pots” using modeling clay and child-safe pigments inspired by works on view in the galleries. Age-appropriate gallery talks that address materials, methods, and culture in addition to story-times featuring two titles related to Native American art and history. The Museum is open to the general public from 12 to 5 p.m. Free admission.

Lecture. Wed., Sept. 25, 2013. 5 p.m. Dr. Bruce Bernstein, independent curator and Native American pottery expert, will speak about the materials and methods used in the creation of Pueblo pottery. Free admission.

Film screening: “Classic Martina Martinez: Native American Pottery Maker of San Idefonso” (1999). All screenings take place at 12 noon; Fri., June 28, Thurs., July 25, Wed., Aug. 28, and Tues., Sept. 24, 2013, in the museum's on-site, smART classroom. Free admission.

An essential component of **Fairfield University**, the **Bellarmino Museum of Art** cultivates, inspires, and enriches its many audiences while stewarding the artistic and cultural objects entrusted to its care. The **Bellarmino Museum of Art** is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., , and on select Saturdays. Admission is free. For more information, call the Bellarmino Museum of Art at (203) 254-4046, or visit www.fairfield.edu/museum. The **Bellarmino Museum of Art** is located in Bellarmino Hall on the campus of Fairfield University, 1073 North Benson Road in Fairfield, Connecticut. For directions, visit

http://www.fairfield.edu/arts/bell_info.html#directions

Fairfield University is a Jesuit University, rooted in one of the world’s oldest intellectual and spiritual traditions. More than 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students from 36 states, 47 foreign countries, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are enrolled in the University’s five schools. In the spirit of rigorous and sympathetic inquiry into all dimensions of human

experience, Fairfield welcomes students from diverse backgrounds to share ideas and engage in open conversations. The University is located in the heart of a region where the future takes shape, on a stunning campus on the Connecticut coast just an hour from New York City.

Vol. 45, #300