

Taos museum to host Jicarilla Apache artists

M. Elwell Romancito May 19, 2016



Courtesy Millicent Rogers Museum
"Abiquiu Moment" painting by Darren Vigil Gray

There has always been a special relationship between the people of Taos Pueblo and the tribe known as the Jicarilla Apaches.

For the Jicarilla Apaches, Taos has a special place in their oral history and traditions. Some of their ancient stories center on this area as being a place of sacred and cultural importance.

Exchanges between Taos Pueblo and Jicarilla Apaches are woven so tightly into the two tribes' past, their places and the ways of their people have been woven into their names like a tightly woven basket.

Micaceous clay pottery making was a mainstay of the Jicarilla economy and people relied upon it to generate income for their families. Commenting on Jicarilla pottery making in 1865, Father Antonio José Martínez of Taos said the Jicarilla Apaches had always lived between the villages and the intermediate mountains, “working and selling pottery to our people.”

For three nights and two days, Friday through Sunday (May 20-22) Millicent Rogers Museum will host a group of Jicarilla Apache artists. They range from traditional to contemporary styles. This will be the third annual Jicarilla Apache show and sale at the museum.

The event will open Friday (May 20) from 5-7 p.m. and will continue through the entire weekend during the museum’s regular hours. This gives the Taos community and visitors an opportunity to meet award-winning artists and shop for unique works of art. The pieces in the show are comparable to pieces exhibited in the museum’s permanent collection, boasts the museum’s press release.

The Jicarilla Apache Artist Show and Sale is modeled after the museum’s annual event for Taos Pueblo artists during the Pueblo’s annual ceremonial closure. By hosting Jicarilla Apache artists at the museum, the artists will benefit from having their work shown during the beginning of Taos’ late spring and early summer tourist season.

“This show is very similar to the Taos Pueblo artists show and sale. We’ve invited artists from the Jicarilla Apache artists community to come have a show and sale. Artists can come and set up their booths and have a sale and collectors and visitors can come and hopefully maybe add to their collections,” Millicent Rogers Museum Executive Director Caroline Jean Fernald said.

“This should be a really fun weekend event, which is also connected to the museum’s ongoing commitment to sharing and celebrating the arts and cultures of the Southwest. This represents the special relationship we not only have with Taos Pueblo but also the special relationship between Taos Pueblo and the Jicarilla Apache Nation,” she added.

Millicent Rogers Museum has recently been awarded the Best Museum in Taos and the second Best Place to Buy a Taos Souvenir by readers of The Taos News.

According to the museum’s office manager and the Jicarilla Apache Show and Sale event manager, Kathleen Michaels, the show started as a recognition of the history of the Jicarilla Apache and the people of Taos Pueblo.



Baskets by Rowena Mora
Courtesy Millicent Rogers Museum

“The Millicent Rogers Museum has had a longstanding relationship with Taos Pueblo, and as a tribute to the history between Taos Pueblo and the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the museum is thrilled to host this event,” Michaels said.

Though many of the artists in the exhibit have been part of previous shows, Fernald said, she added that there will be a couple of new artists that Kathleen has managed to bring us and we really look forward to seeing their work,” she said.

Apache Nation artists included in the show includes Rowena Mora, Melborne and Lydia Pesata, Melanie Pesata, Felix Vigil, Darren Vigil Gray, Cris Velarde, Judith Vicente, Rod Velarde, Cougar Vigil, JC Knighthawke, Shelden Nunez-Velarde, and Cody Saint Arnold.

The kinds of artwork that will be shown and available for purchase range from baskets, beadwork, pottery, leatherwork, weavings, prints, drawings, photographs, to fine paintings.

Millicent Rogers Museum, located at 1504 Millicent Rogers Road in El Prado, is open daily from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Admission is complimentary to Taos County residents. Visit millicentrogers.org or call (575) 758-2462 for more information.

