

HISTORIC SANTA FE

MONTHLY E-MAGAZINE OF THE HISTORIC SANTA FE FOUNDATION MARCH 2016



INSIDE HISTORIC SANTA FE

In this issue of the eZine we feature an interview with Irvin Trujillo, a seventh generation Rio Grande weaver whose tapestries are currently on display at El Zaguan. Deborah Lawrence shares a review of Jann Haynes Gilmore's book *Olive Rush: Finding Her Place in the Santa Fe Art Colony*. We also welcome Anna Booth as our new artist-in-residence. We hope you enjoy this March issue of the eZine.

-Caitlin Olsen, Development Associate

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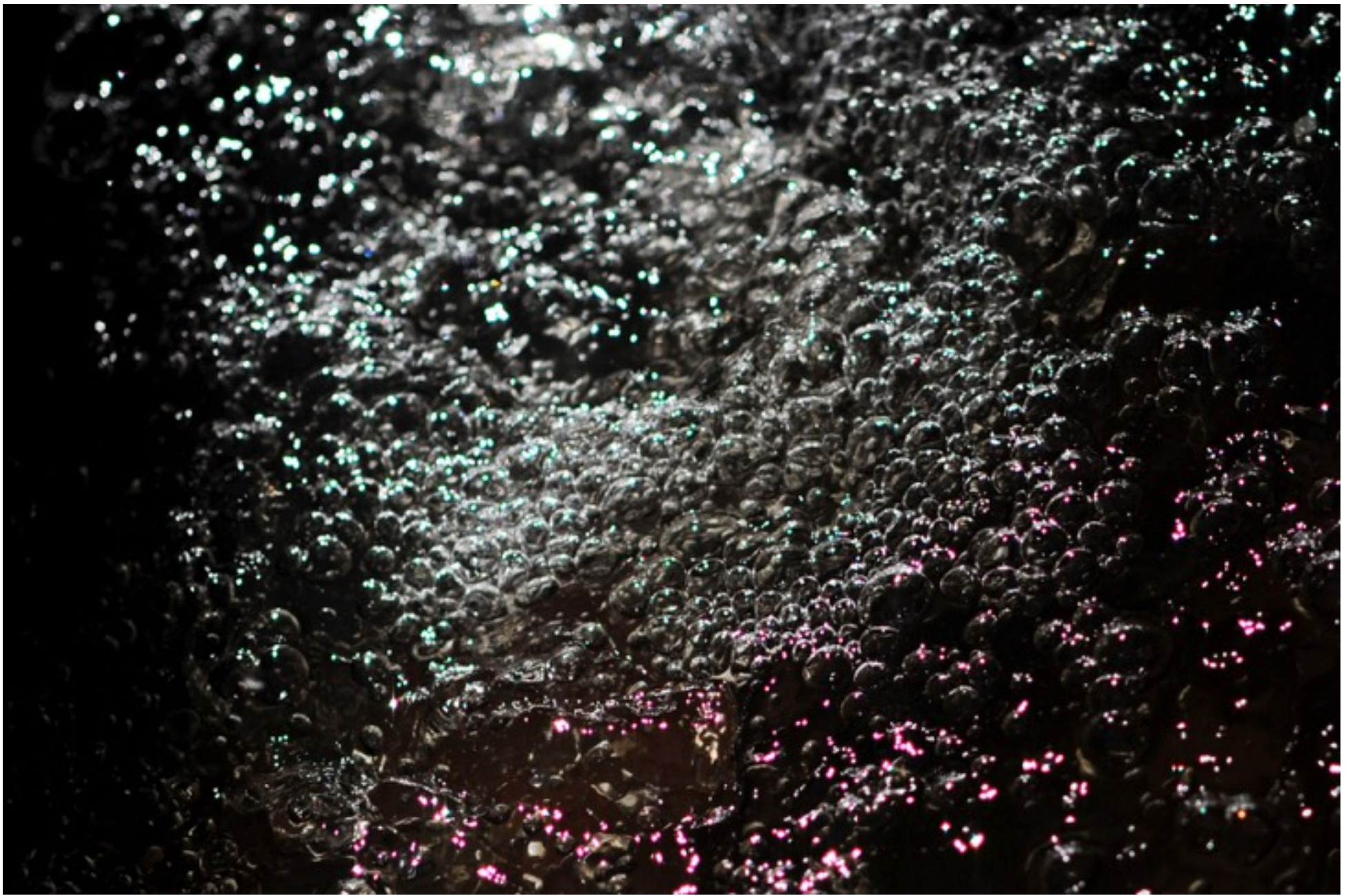
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INTERVIEW OF OUR FEATURED ARTIST IRVIN TRUJILLO

Q: Please share some of your family's history and connection to weaving.

My grandmother Maria Fancisquita Ortega came from the Ortega family who settled Chimayo in 1706. The earliest examples of weaving in that family came from the 1700's, but nobody knows who actually wove the pieces. My grandfa-

ther was from the Trujillo family who settled in the mid 1700's on the east end of Chimayo in what is known as Rio Chiquito.

The first stories were that Diego Trujillo, who lived in the mid 1700's, had six looms. I assume that they produced weavings, but I haven't seen the looms or any pieces earlier than 1830. My mother and father were given this weaving as a gift on their wedding. I have pieces from my grandparents which were made in the late 1800's and into the 1900's. My father started weaving in 1925. I learned to weave in 1965. My

kids learned to weave in the late 1990's at John Hyson School in Chimayo.

What initially drew you to the art form?

Growing up, I was made aware that my family had a weaving history. When I was 10 years old my family lived in Los Alamos during the week and in Chimayo on the weekends. My father worked for the Los Alamos Labs. When my sister got a job at the restaurant in Chimayo in the summer of 1965, she came to Chimayo to live with my Aunt and left her bedroom open in Los Alamos. My father set up his 54" loom and started to weave when he came home after work. I was 10 years old and had never seen my dad weave (or at least I never paid attention).

I was bored from just watching cartoons and soap operas during the day. One night I heard the noise my father made weaving on his loom and I went to see what he was doing. I watched him the whole evening. On the second evening I went to watch him again and he asked if I wanted to learn and I said yes. I wasn't tall enough to reach where he was weaving so he put a chair for me to stand and that's how I started. I really liked it and that became my summer job.

Please describe the weaving process.

First of all, our looms are home made. We have different sizes for each width of material. The first step is to thread the loom with warp. The warp is the set of threads that, for most blankets, gets covered by the weft thread which forms the outside surface of the weaving. Each warp thread has to pass through the harness and the reed which are parts of the loom. Then the warp is tied to an apron on the loom so that each thread is the same tension. This requires some skill if we want the surface of the weaving to be nice and smooth. If the weft thread is handspun, the fleece has to be selected, washed, carded, and spun the thickness of thread desired. If the weft is dyed, the dyestuff has to be gathered (collected certain times of the year), then the yarn is mordanted by boiling with alum (predominantly). The dyestuff is boiled, then the yarn is boiled in the dye vat. The yarn is then rinsed and dried. Then we select the colors we want to work with and come up with an idea for the design of the weaving.

I was taught to design on the loom without drawings. For a traditional piece, this requires a large vocabulary of design which come from looking at a lot of old weavings and experience. After the weaving is complete, the piece is cut off

the loom, a fringe is tied, and the piece is finished by steam ironing. The piece is photographed for archiving and is now ready for showing, trading or given as a gift. The receiver is now responsible for the care and preservation of the piece.

What is the story behind one of your more memorable pieces?

Some my pieces express my culture or certain events celebrating my culture (la entriega, los matachines, la piñata).

Some have something happening in my life (for example, midlife crisis, father's death, cousins wedding, etc.). Some were woven when something happens in history (eg. Space shuttle crash, Haley's Comet).

Some pieces are inspired from art that I see in books, magazines, anime, and exhibits. Some pieces are named from what I see in the design.

Thank you for your time.



**Emergence 48x84, Irvin Trujillo
Merino wool silk**



BOOK REVIEW **OLIVE RUSH: FINDING HER PLACE IN THE SANTA FE ART COLONY** JANN HAYNES GILMORE

Reviewed by Deborah Lawrence

**Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico
Press, 2016
ISBN-13: 978-0890136201**

The first professional female artist to settle in Santa Fe, Olive Rush (1873-1966) is our town's first lady of the arts. She was a painter, illustrator, muralist, Native American art historian, social activist, and the first woman artist to have a solo show in New Mexico (1914). As Jann Gilmore points out, Rush today is largely ignored by art historians. With the exception of Peggy Siegel's informative article, "Olive Rush's Long Love Affair with Art" (Indiana Magazine of History, 110, September 2014), there has been little study of her work. *Olive Rush: Finding Her Place in the Santa Fe Art Colony* provides an in-depth look at this beloved Santa Fe artist.

The biography begins with Rush's birth and early life. Reared by Quaker parents on a farm in Indiana, Rush knew from an early age that she wanted to be an artist. In Indiana, she studied at the Fairmount Academy – a Society of Friends school established by her parents – and at Earlham College. Later she was a student at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C., and at the Art Students League in New York where she worked as an illustrator for Harper's Weekly and the New York Tribune. In 1904 she moved to Wilmington, Delaware, to study with illustrator Howard Pyle at whose art colony she met her life-long friend Ethyl Pennewill Brown Leach. Rush studied British and French painters in Europe in 1910 and furthered her skills upon return to the states with Edmund Tarbell, Frank Benson, and William Paxton at the Boston Museum School. She made her first trip to Arizona and New Mexico in 1914.

In Santa Fe, Paul A.F. Walter arranged a show for Rush at the Palace of the Governors. It was the first solo exhibition of a woman artist in New Mexico. In the summer of 1919 she went to Brown County, Indiana, where Gustave Baumann also worked before moving to the Southwest. She next went to the art colony in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and then to Windsor, Vermont.

At 47 years old, Rush made a permanent move to Santa Fe in the summer of 1920. Acquiring a studio in the Palace of the Governors, she stayed first at La Villa Real and then at 138 Canyon Road, a living space that adjoined Gustave Baumann's rooms. Shortly thereafter, she purchased an old adobe farmhouse at 630 Canyon Road. Formerly owned by the Sena and Rodriguez families, the property extended west to what is today the oldest operable ditch in Santa Fe, the Acequia Madre. A 1923 article for The Indianapolis Sunday Star described the thick walls and deeply recessed windows of the house, the doors opening to the portal from the studio, and the indigenous themes that Rush had painted over the doorway into the dining room.

By 1924, Rush's work was nationally exhibited and recognized in prestigious art publications. The increased recognition of her murals and easel art allowed her to become financially secure. In 1929, she received a commission by Mary Colter to paint wall decorations in Hotel La Fonda's Santa Fe Room as part of John Gaw Meem's 1928 remodeling of the hotel. In the early 30s, she taught the students at the Santa Fe Indian School to paint wall decorations and worked on her own commissions, including murals for Los Poblanos, the Albuquerque

ranch of Albert Gallatin Simms and Ruth Hanna McCormick Simms.

During the Depression she did several government-supported jobs: the 1934 fresco murals in the entrance of the original Santa Fe Public Library— what is now the Fray Angélico Chávez Library; murals for the biology building at New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in Las Cruces (today's New Mexico State University) the following year. Ina Sizer Cassidy later compared these murals to the work of Thomas Hart Benton. Rush painted frescoes at the Sandia School for girls (now the Kirtland Air Force Base). She created a mural for a post office building in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, and a mural for a post office in Florence, Colorado. In 1939, Rush painted a mural for Maisel's Indian Trading Post in Albuquerque, a building designed by her friend John Gaw Meem. And in 1946 she did one of her last mural projects on the walls of El Nido in Tesuque.

Gilmore's sources include the correspondence between Olive Rush and her friend Ethel Pennewill Brown Leach, the Olive Rush Papers 1879-1967, which are housed in the Archives of American Art (part of the Smithsonian Institution), and the Ethel Pennewill Brown Leach Diaries. Where Gilmore's biography truly shines

is where she incorporates anecdotes and reminiscences directly from the correspondence. Well structured, the book is also profusely illustrated.

Together with Jane Baumann, Rush co-founded The Religious Society of Friends Meeting group. She took pleasure in her garden, her cats, and her friends, especially Ethel Leach. Worrying that Canyon Road was being over developed, she spoke before the Santa Fe Council, saying that "one Cerrillos Road is enough." In 1930 Rush purchased property adjacent to her house on Canyon Road in order to protect her view of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and to enlarge her garden oasis. Mary Austin, who also was an enthusiastic gardener, brought Rush "little apricot trees grown from pits in her own yard," which she planted in Rush's garden. Her garden was a gathering place for her many friends and collaborators, including such notables as Gerald and Ina Cassidy, Sheldon Parsons, Will Shuster, Gustave and Jane Baumann, Eugenie Shonnard, Laura Gilpin, Peggy Pond Church, Mary Austin, Witter Bynner, John Gaw Meem, and Georgia O'Keeffe (with whom she shared a cat).

Upon her death in 1966, Rush bequeathed her property at 630 Canyon Road to the Santa Fe Friends Meeting.

Modifications over the years since Rush's death have been minor and some of her furnishings, paintings, and wall decorations are still intact. The house and studio remain virtually unchanged and are listed on HSFF, state, and national registers of historic places. Unlike Gilmore, this reviewer feels that the Olive Rush house, studio, and gardens continue to be lovingly maintained by the Friends Meeting. Rush's Quaker beliefs shaped her art. It is significant and fitting that the property is being cared for by Quaker custodians.

I highly recommend *Olive Rush: Finding Her Place in the Santa Fe Art Colony* to

anyone—specialist or layperson—with an interest in the intersection of Santa Fe's art, tradition, and culture.



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SPECIAL THANKS



We say goodbye to our artist resident Dominic Cappello who has been designing our eZine since its inception as part of his community service to HSFF. We

wish him well in his new home base of Seattle.

HSFF MISSION

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the historic properties and diverse cultural heritage of the Santa Fe area, and to educate the public about Santa Fe's history and the importance of preservation.

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All photos by Anna Yarrow



WELCOMING **ANNA BOOTH** EL ZAGUAN ARTIST RESIDENT

Anna's painting practice has its roots in her early Waldorf education in New York. Regular wet into wet watercolor painting beginning in Kindergarten, with simple color palettes, were a chance to dive into color, and to express the form and beauty of the natural world.

Photo by Bill Stengel

A mathematician father, who vividly described the fourth dimension over dinner, a mother who closely studied plants, older siblings all adept at sketching what they saw and imagined, a primary teacher who actively worked at honing her artistic skills, were all early influences along an artistic path that was never a question, always a given.

In 2010, Anna moved from Brooklyn NY to Northern New Mexico, where the landscape, quality of light, and rich art history inspire her work. She graduated with an Associates Degree in Fine Arts, from Munson Williams Proctor Institute, and holds a BFA in Painting from Pratt Institute, in Brooklyn, NY.

March Calendar of Events

El Zaguán Show of Weavings by Irvin and Lisa Trujillo – Showing now.

Salon El Zaguán Presentation by Irvin and Lisa Trujillo – Thursday, March 16, 2017

Irvin and Lisa Trujillo will discuss the processes involved in the creation of their weavings done in the traditional Chimayo and Rio Grande styles. This event will occur on Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 3:00p.m. at El Zaguán, 545 Canyon Rd. Suite 2. This is a members-only event.