

HOPÍ SILVER OVERLAY

It was Museum co-founder Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton who first suggested to Hopi silversmiths that they develop a style of jewelry more thoroughly their own, and clearly distinct from the work produced by Zuni and Navajo smiths. Inspired by the traditional designs on Hopi ceramics and basketry, Colton, with Curator of Fine Art Virgil Hubert suggested some design ideas, and committed to buying from jewelers exploring the new approach. Reception of the idea was luke warm—and production was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. After the war, industrious Hopis used the GI Bill to establish the Hopi Guild, dedicated to teaching the fine arts, and to ensure that standards were maintained. At this time, Hopi overlay jewelry was developed, perfected, and became the signature style of work produced by Hopi silversmiths up to this day.

The Museum was recently offered the opportunity to purchase this collection of approximately half of the holdings of the Guild when it was shuttered about a decade ago. Because of MNA's proximity to Hopi, and because of its initial encouragement of Hopis exploring a new approach to jewelry, it is fitting that these early works find their permanent home here at MNA. If you have an interest in helping to see this important collection come to MNA permanently, please reach out to our Development Department at development@musnaz.org.

DEDICATED COLLECTORS

On occasion, the Museum of Northern Arizona is gifted significant private collections of art work and ethnographic objects. On view in *Out of the Vault* are some examples of such generous and notable collections. Phil Smith was a friend, patron, and collector of works by the Namingha family. From 2008 until 2013 he donated eighty-eight pieces to the fine arts collection!. His 2013 gift included paintings by Dan Namingha, sculpture by his son Arlo, and photographic works by younger son Michael. As a body of work, the gift has substantially expanded MNA's holdings by the Namingha family and has created a comprehensive selection of works from Dan Namingha's remarkable career.

Former Museum board member and advocate Margaret L. Taylor was an avid collector of Native American basketry, pottery, and paintings by a number of artists, including those of Navajo artist Baje Whitehorne, Sr. The paintings by Whitethorne on exhibit represent a portion of the fine arts items the Museum acquired from her estate. This donation is one of many she made to support the Museum's fine arts and ethnology collections, including a beautiful collection of Native American miniature baskets and pots.

Robert and Cecelia Hawk are long-time supporters of the Museum and its work. This is reflected in two major, comprehensive donations. The first gift consists of more than 500 Hopi Katsina dolls. This collection is encyclopedic in its depth and will be a source for scholarly and other research in perpetuity. The second donation, made just this year, comprises 1,020 Zuni carvings from more than 250 Zuni artists, of which a small sample are on display.

COMPLEMENTING EXISTING COLLECTIONS

Famed Santa Clara painter Pablita Velarde and her daughter Helen Hardin have been represented in the Museum's fine arts collection for many years. Recently, we acquired a number of new paintings by each that expand our holdings significantly—including Hardin's *Old Age* and *Reunion of the Brothers* (both on view). Like much of Hardin's work, they are visually intriguing images with rich color and complex space including figures reminiscent of ancient rock art imagery and pottery designs.

As the Museum expands its collection of an individual artists, it considers how a new work will help to "complete" that artist's "story," ensuring that museum's holdings represent the arc of their career: stylistic periods, genre, and mediums. The Museum of Northern Arizona currently has the largest collection of paintings by Swedish-American painter Gunnar Widforss. Other artists well-represented in the collection on view here include Dan Namingha, Fred Kabotie, Bahe Whitethorne, Sr., and MNA co-founder Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton.

Helen Hardin Tsa-Sah-Wee-Eh, Santa Clara Pueblo (1943–1984)

Old Age, n.d.

Mixed media on board

Fine Arts Collection, IL2016-77-2

Museum purchase

FAMILY RELATIONS

The Museum of Northern Arizona has enjoyed long relationships with a number of Native American families including the Kaboties and Naminghas. Fred Kabotie was a prolific and widely exhibited painter who participated in MNA's Hopi Festivals from their inception in 1933. MNA also collaborated closely with his son Michael who, with Delbridge Honanie, painted an expansive mural for the Kiva Gallery (currently closed). Today, Michael's son Ed Kabotie is MNA's artist-in-residence. Fred Kabotie's painted deer hide is on view on the other side of the gallery.

Dan Namingha comes from a long line of artists. His mother is potter Dextra Quotskuyva and he is a great-great-grandson of famed potter Nampeyo. (A ceramic canteen attributed to Nampeyo is on view on the other side of the gallery.) Namingha is a critically acclaimed artist whose work has found an international audience. His work ranges from highly abstract and symbolic, to others like *South of Hopi* that are truly poetic in their representation.

Dan Namingha, Hopi-Tewa (b. 1950)

South of Hopi, ca. 2008

Acrylic on canvas

Fine Arts Collection, C2517

Bequest from the estate of Philip M. Smith

INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

In 1904, Louis Akin was working in New York City as a fine artist and illustrator. He was commissioned by the Santa Fe Railroad to go to the Hopi Pueblo in northern Arizona to produce paintings that could be used for marketing purposes by the railway. After arriving, Akin wound up spending several years living there. He invited several artist friends, including Kate Thomson Cory, to join him, with the goal of establishing an artists' colony. While the colony never materialized, artist Kate Thomson Cory did travel to the Hopi Pueblo and spent the rest of her life in northern Arizona painting and documenting the life of the Hopi people photographically. See *Woman and Child, Moqui, Arizona* to the right.

After leaving Hopi, Akin came to Flagstaff where he lived for the remainder of his short life. Museum co-founders Harold and Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton purchased property from Akin, including a barn, which became the Museum's. For a time, Akin lived in the barn on the north side of the highway.

Louis Akin, American (1868–1913)
Song of Old Oraibi, ca. 1903–1911
Oil on canvas
Fine Arts Collection, C2351
Gift in memory of Joanne Lightfoot

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Museum of Northern Arizona research projects often lead to new acquisitions, particularly in the fields of archeology, natural science, and paleontology. Materials collected in the field by Museum scientists and researchers often come to the Museum outright, or there may be shared ownership with other organizations or agencies involved in the project. The Museum also accepts materials collected by other groups or agencies into its collections under curation agreements, allowing objects to be safely housed and cared for when those entities do not have their own repositories. As a part of such curation agreements, the Museum facilitates access to these materials for researchers.

Object labels that will need to be re-printed

Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, American (1889–1971)
Sullen Sea, n.d.
Oil on board
Fine Art Collection, IL2017–53–1
Gift of Dean G. Taylor

Ted Wadsworth, Hopi
Necklace, Earrings, and Brooch Set, n.d.
silver overlayEthnology Collection, IL2016-12-1A-D
Museum purchase

Chelichnus bucklandi
Tracks in Coconino Sandstone
Paleontology Collection, MNA.V.10797
Gift from Clancy Wendt

This Early Permian aged Coconino Sandstone was deposited in an ancient, desert, dune field. On close inspection, these tracks display both claw marks and raised sediment behind the heel, the latter of which indicates the animal, a mammal-like reptile, was walking uphill. This 260-million-year-old fossilized trackway was generously donated to the museum by Mr. Clancy Wendt.

See other *Chelichnus* tracks in the Jaime Major Golightly Courtyard