

OCTOBER 2024 | FALL

THE LEGACY

COUSE-SHARP
HISTORIC SITE

Vecinos y Amigos

PHILLIPS EXHIBITION EXPLORES A TSA MEMBER'S WORK WITH HISPANIC MODELS

Bert Phillips' life in Taos is well known. In the summer of 1898, he and fellow student Ernest Blumenschein came to Taos on a painting trip, a legendary event that marks the origin of the Taos Society of Artists (TSA). He married and remained in the town until shortly before his death in 1956.

Vecinos y Amigos: Bert Geer Phillips and His Neighbors, on view through February 28 at The Lunder Research Center (LRC), instead seeks to expand our knowledge of the context of his paintings in which people in the Hispanic community modeled. "We aimed to identify them and to enrich Bert's stories with theirs," said Davison Koenig, executive director and curator. "And we're fortunate that it's also a beautiful show featuring some of his best work, plus key objects and archival material."

Guest Curator James C. Moore, PhD, noted, "These paintings are not portraits as such, but imaginative tableaux in which people served as actors in stories that Phillips felt would have success in broadening his reputation on the exhibition circuit." He said Phillips also kept in mind that his buyers were part of a mainstream US public fascinated by, but largely ignorant of, the cultures of the American Southwest.

When he first arrived in Taos, Phillips exhibited bigotry toward many of his neighbors, famously helping to provoke a deadly riot when he refused to remove his hat for a religious procession on the street. In time, "He learned to appreciate the area's cultural milieu and foster more respectful relationships," Koenig said.

"Paintings of Hispanic subjects are rare within the work of the TSA," Moore said. "Research into the models' families and recognition of who they were allows a new understanding of Bert's working method and greater insight into how paintings were conceived to fit the existing market—and appeal to the stereotypes held by potential buyers."

"Knowing these people gives significance to those who have long been anonymous, broadening our view of the larger social dynamic of Taos," Koenig said. He lauded CSHS Site Coordinator Jake Cisneros, archive staff, and members of the organization's Hispano



Bert Geer Phillips, *The Washerwoman's Family* [Tomás and Guadalupe Barela and family], ca. 1918, oil on canvas, 40 1/2 x 41 5/8 inches. On loan from New Mexico Museum of Art (Gift of Governor and Mrs. Arthur Seligman)

Advisory Council for their additional research into the models, their descendants, Phillips's life, and his paintings, including objects depicted in them.

Koenig concluded, "Their work has broadened the scope of The Lunder Research Center here on our campus, and is a perfect illustration of the kind of enrichment of narratives that we aim for."

VECINOS Y AMIGOS: Bert Geer Phillips and His Neighbors | Open Tues–Saturday 1–5 pm except major holidays

See couse-sharp.org for details

As always, free admission (donations welcomed!)

YOUR SUPPORT SAFEGUARDS THE LEGACY OF TAOS ART



As we approach the end of another remarkable year, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and commitment to Couse-Sharp Historic Site. Your generosity and enthusiasm have been essential to our journey. Let me share some of the highlights and future aspirations your support has helped make possible.

We have made significant strides in strengthening our operational foundation, refining bylaws, policies, and procedures. Enhancing our **governance and organizational stability** is crucial to help us operate more efficiently and deliver exceptional services to our community.

In addition to our dedicated staff, our board members and volunteers have demonstrated extraordinary commitment through their involvement on committees, as docents, and in many other tasks. Their **volunteerism and expertise** have been invaluable, and I am deeply appreciative of their efforts.

In the near future, we look forward to implementing **evaluation**

techniques to allow us to effectively measure our programmatic impact. More precise tools will help us assess programs so we continue to meet the high standards we set for ourselves and deliver meaningful experiences to our audiences.

We are thrilled to announce **significant legacy gifts** over the past year from the Beverly Pearson Estate and the Greg Nelson Trust, the latter representing our largest donation to date. These generous contributions strengthen our art and archival collections and lay the groundwork for an enhanced legacy giving program, helping ensure the long-term sustainability of our organization so we can enrich the cultural landscape for years to come.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without your support. We remain inspired and motivated by the impact of our collective efforts. Thank you for being a vital part of our community and helping us bring the arts to life.

Wishing you a joyful and fulfilling year,
Elizabeth Crittenden Palacios
Chair of the Board of Directors

ADVISORY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES GROW, STRENGTHEN OUR LEADERSHIP

As liaisons between Couse-Sharp Historic Site and the community, the organization's advisory councils and committee members endeavor to inspire engagement, learning, and an appreciation of the shared human experiences through the power of art, history, and culture. These groups include the board committees for **Finance and Development** (8 non-board members), the **Hispano Advisory Council** (8 members), and the **Indigenous Advisory Council** (10 members). Participants provide specific guidance, expertise, and support that is highly valued by CSHS leadership.

The **National Advisory Council** is dedicated to offering crucial support and guidance to CSHS board and staff to promote the organization's mission and ensure its continued relevance and impact within our community and beyond. NAC members play a vital role in fostering collaboration and leveraging their expertise and networks to enhance our visibility and reputation. The NAC currently has 13 members and is in an active growth phase; additional qualified individuals are being recruited.

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THE GROWTH OF OUR INVESTMENTS

Dear friends,

As the Virginia creeper vines begin to blush on the Couse House portal, it is time to reflect on the events of the year, while looking toward the horizon.

La Luz de Taos 2024 in June was our most successful gala to date, raising \$285,000 in unrestricted funds to

support programming. Even more important, thanks to the support of our artist, gallery, and publication friends, the exhibition generated national media attention, broadening our reach and moving us closer to financial sustainability.

The success of The Lunder Research Center continues to shape our mission, exhibitions, collecting, and archival focus as well as our educational outreach. Through research and community collaboration, we provide context for the paintings of the Taos Society of Artists and other early artists of Taos and give voice to these stories. The result is new scholarship, exhibitions, and educational programming. Together, we **tell a more complex and nuanced story** of our shared national identity and history.

Our exhibition **Vecinos y Amigos: Bert Geer Phillips and His Neighbors**, guest-curated by Jim Moore as an exploration of the artist's paintings featuring Hispano people, is a prime example of the shifting lens in scholarship, where we are focusing more on the subject matter rather

than the artist. This is the first exhibition to focus on Phillips's Hispano subjects and to reach out to descendants of the identified models, delving into the relationships and social dynamics at work—and in the process foreground the people and their unique experiences as Nuevomexicanos.

Other examples of our dynamic exhibition and programming include the Plein Air Painters of America annual exhibition titled **Out West**, which closed out 2023. We started 2024 with an exhibition of student photography in cooperation with Taos Pueblo Day School called **Through the Lens**, working with 5th and 6th graders. After La Luz de Taos, we opened **Julius Rolshoven: A Cosmopolitan in Taos**, then collaborated with the Taos Abstract Artist Collective exploring the role of place with the exhibition **On Which It Rests**.

Thanks to our **continually growing network** of generous friends, archival material, art, ephemera, and books continue to be donated to the Site to expand our knowledge and understanding and augment the visitor experience. I thank everyone who has invested in us over these many years. With the launch of the Taos Society of Patrons and the Taos Legacy Society, I ask you to consider increasing your long-term investment with us so that we may achieve true financial sustainability and institutional longevity.

Thank you,

Davison Packard Koenig
Executive Director and Curator

SKETCHBOOK: News in brief



On August 20, CSHS held a "Lunch and Learn" event for our volunteer corps. Collections and Archives Specialist **Lucas McDaniel** presented a lecture on the life of **Ben Lujan**, one of E. I. Couse's primary models and friends, to about 40 volunteers and guests in the 1915 Sharp Studio. The presentation was followed by a catered luncheon in the Couse Garden, underwritten by a gift from **Jennifer and Charles Sands**, and a door prize giveaway. "Without our **amazing volunteers** to give tours, staff open houses, work at events like the gala, catalog books, and do a dozen other tasks, CSHS could not present the level of educational activities and services we do," said Executive Director Davison Koenig. "We are eternally grateful for their cheerful support."

CSHS thanks outgoing board member **Kristin Bender** of Denver and Taos for her nine years of service. Kristin ended her final term in June and remains a member of the Development Committee and a key supporter. In February, the board welcomed new members **Keith Ohnmeis**, a financial adviser with Pingora Partners, from Wilson, WY; and **Terry Winchell** of Jackson, WY, owner of Fighting Bear Enterprises, who is a published author, past chairman of the Center for the Arts of Jackson, and an experienced fundraiser. In August, the board appointed **Tim Hlavin** of Denver, a finance and strategic planning professional who is director of Integrated Logistics Solutions at Tallgrass Energy, as treasurer and board member.



Mary Bevilacqua

with **La Luz de Taos** gala, written artist bios, worked on a virtual exhibition and a virtual interactive site tour, managed social media outreach, processed and protected

archival materials and library books, pitched in on exhibition installations, and maintained an exhibition website, among many other projects. She has been a great asset to the team and we look forward to her future contributions.

In August, we bid a fond farewell to **Abby Mikalauskas**, the 2024 Couse-Sharp Historic Site–University of Oklahoma Russell Center Fellow. Her report about her tenure: "Thank you to all that welcomed me to the Couse-Sharp Historic Site



Abby Mikalauskas

with open arms! I truly had a fantastic time getting to know everyone, seeing a more in-depth look into the TSA, and becoming a part of the great community that everyone has built in Taos. This summer, aside from helping with gala preparations, I had the opportunity to work with various 'mystery' beadwork collections, including some that belonged to E. I. Couse and O. E. Berninghaus. The experience I gained from working hands-on with the beadwork and the archives has been next to none so far in my academic and professional career, and I cannot be more grateful."



LA LUZ DE TAOS 2024:

Celebrating under the rainbow

Art lovers who attended the La Luz de Taos art preview and reception at Couse-Sharp Historic Site on June 14 were treated to a spectacular full rainbow, a fitting kickoff to a colorful weekend of art and fun. The two-day series of events came at the end of a two-month exhibition of 60 works by 50 artists in media including painting, sculpture, ceramics, glass, printmaking, jewelry and textiles.

As well as the preview and party, attendees had the opportunity to tour the historic site and the *Julius Rolshoven: A Cosmopolitan in Taos* exhibition, learn from a lecture at the Harwood Museum of Art by Dr. Marie Watkins on Rolshoven, and participate in the draw sale and secret-bid auction during the gala at El Monte Sagrado Resort.

For those interested in buying retail, a “trunk sale” at the gala featured a curated collection of wearable art: vintage leatherwork and silver by Foothills California, fashion by Patricia Michaels, and jewelry by Bernadette Marquez, Maria Samora, and Lyle Wright.

About 300 people attended the gala, including representatives of 45 sponsors. For the first time in the organization’s history, the exhibition/gala committee was helmed by honorary chairs: Peter and Paula Lunder, renowned collectors and philanthropists, who through The Lunder Foundation of Portland, Maine, provide key support for CSHS’s Lunder Research Center and Colby College Museum Fellows program.

“We firmly believe that the Couse-Sharp Historic Site is a vital resource for preserving the legacy of the Taos of Society of Artists, and hope that you will join us in supporting its programs by attending *La Luz de Taos* events and participating in the gala art sale,” the Lunders stated.

The exhibition was dedicated to the memory of artist Ed Mell, a good friend of the site who passed away earlier this year, and two of Mell’s works were exhibited in a place of honor on both days.

“We are beyond grateful to our artists, sponsors, donors, attendees, and purchasers for their generosity and committed support of our mission and vision,” said Davison Koenig, executive director and curator.

Mark your calendars for the next edition of La Luz de Taos in June 2026!

Visitors were wowed by a spectacular full double rainbow during the June 14 evening reception



Rosemarie Stremmel kindly loaned two paintings by her late husband, Ed Mell, for visitors to CSHS to enjoy; *La Luz de Taos* 2024 was dedicated to his memory



About 300 guests enjoy refreshments and socializing in a tent on the lawn at El Monte Sagrado Resort during the June 15 gala celebration



ABOVE: From left, Gary Mead, Debbie Prinz, Tina Oyster, Duffy Oyster, Blossom Horton and Brad Horton

LEFT: Leslie Baker and Michael Grauer cut a rug to the sounds of the Chris Morel Band at the Friday reception. Grauer is McCasland Chair of Cowboy Culture/Curator of Cowboy Collections & Western Art at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, as well as a member of the CSHS National Advisory Council



LEFT: From left, David Jonason, Danielle Burgess, and Nocona Burgess, one of the La Luz de Taos participating artists and member of the CSHS Indigenous Advisory Council

RIGHT: Robyn Chavez and CSHS Board of Directors member Ilona Spruce



ABOVE: From the Gilcrease Museum, Jenny Keller, left, Associate Curator of Contemporary Culture and Community, and Chelsea Herr, Curator of Indigenous Art & Culture and a member of the CSHS Indigenous Advisory Council

RIGHT: Presenting Sponsor Don Hindman of J-Art Fine Art Services, and Maron Hindman, chair of the National Advisory Council



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Tony Abeyta	Arthur Lopez
Bill Acheff	Leon Loughridge
Angela Babby	Ira Lujan
Mitch Baird	Drew Macias
Shonto Begay	Mark Maggiori
Eric Bowman	Bernadette Marquez
Autumn Borts-Medlock	Patricia Michaels
Nocona Burgess	Paul Moore
Chloé Marie Burk	Patrick McGrath Muñiz
Arturo Chavez	Andrew Ortega
S. M. Chavez	Paige Pierson
John Coleman	Ben Pease
Nicholas Coleman	Howard Post
Glenn Dean	Kevin Red Star
Josh Elliott	Ron Rencher
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Brett Allen Johnson	Yellowbird Samora
Jerry Jordan	Ed Sandoval
Joseph Kayne	Billy Schenck
Jivan Lee	Jim Vogel
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Gregory Lomayesva	Scott Yeager

CSHS THANKS OUR BIGGEST-EVER LIST OF LA LUZ DE TAOS SPONSORS

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Virginia Couse Leavitt with the donated *Brittany Interior*, an early work by her grandfather

RECENT GENEROUS GIFTS TO OUR COLLECTIONS

Joy & Frank Purcell: 33 master prints by Gene Kloss, related archival materials

Edward G. Shapiro & Merle D. Hyman in memory of Dr. Frank M. & Charlotte W. Shapiro: E. I. Couse, *Brittany Interior*, oil on canvas

Stephanie Smith: J. H. Sharp, *Wood Roses*, oil on canvas

Carolyn Reynolds Riebeth Sharp Collection: Beaded child's leggings, Northern Plains beaded bag, Santa Clara pot formerly belonging to Sharp

Greg Nelson Trust & Warren Nelson Family: Gene Kloss, *Taos Landscape*, watercolor on paper; Rowena Meyers, *Taos Mother and Children*, watercolor and graphite on paper; E. I. Couse, *[Field Study]*, oil on board; Dorothy Brett realia (hat, typewriter, knife)

Rowe Collection: Julius Rolshoven, *Red Hat #3*, pastel on paper

Tia Collection, Santa Fe, NM: Walter Ufer, three academic drawings, charcoal on paper

Ken DeWaard: Ken DeWaard, *The Couse Rockers*, oil on linen

Erik Shea Olbin Memorial Foundation – Michael & Patricia Olbin: E. I. Couse prints and original drawing

Lorraine B. Mooney: Trudie Whitts, *Rose of Rancho*s and *Harwood Lane—Taos, N.M.*, lithographs

We are always seeking donations of original artwork by the Taos Society of Artists and other early artists of Taos. In addition, The Lunder Research Center welcomes archival material relating to the 12 members of the TSA and their close associates such as models and family members. Examples include photographs, letters, sketches, or notes by scholars who studied these artists in the past.

TAOS SOCIETY OF PATRONS LAUNCHES

At *La Luz de Taos* gala 2024, CSHS kicked off our Taos Society of Patrons program with a pledge drive and giveaway of donated sketches by a dozen exhibited artists. The Society's aim is to recognize and encourage committed, unrestricted giving to the Site. Patron support is at the heart of our ability to sustain our purpose and expand its impact. Join today to experience the power of your philanthropic leadership at work!

With recognition in the Taos Society of Patrons, you are among a distinguished group providing critical support to Couse-Sharp Historic Site. Patrons join Giving Circles at various levels that offer benefits such as invitations to special trips, event tickets, and exclusive updates and access.

Benefactor's Circle

\$20,000+/year

Vision Circle

\$15,000–\$19,999/year

Preservation Circle

\$10,000–\$14,999/year

Conservation Circle

\$5,000–\$9,999/year

Discovery Circle

\$1,000–\$4,999/year

Taos Society of Patrons members make our exceptional educational programming and sustainability possible. Our organization expresses deep gratitude to our distinguished donors for their large, reliable contributions over time that support exhibitions, curatorial projects, historic preservation and conservation, public programs, research fellows, and making our extraordinary archives accessible. The Taos Society of Artists required its members to spend consecutive summers in Taos; similarly, we ask patrons to consider a multi-year commitment.

For more information, please email info@couse-sharp.org, visit couse-sharp.org/ways-to-give or call 575-751-0369.

Stay Tuned for our Planned Exhibitions

Mid-March to late May 2025, LRC and Harwood Museum of Art

GENE KLOSS: The Purcell Collection of Master Prints

Early June to early September, LRC

SUN BROTHERS: New Works by Glenn Dean, Josh Elliott, and Logan Maxwell Hagege

Mid-June to late August, Luna Chapel

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES: Diverse Art and Artists from Northern New Mexico

Every Penny Counts

HELP PRESERVE OUR NATIONAL TREASURE

Financial support of Couse-Sharp Historic Site is not only a gift to the present but also an investment in the future. Every donation to The Couse Foundation is greatly appreciated.

Gold
Transparency
2024

Candid.

WE ARE A GOLD SEAL ORGANIZATION!

The Couse Foundation has achieved the designation of Gold Seal from Guide Star, the world's largest source of information on nonprofits. See our profile at Guidestar.org

ESTATE ART PROGRAM

If you collect art and have been contemplating your estate planning, consider our program to coordinate the donation (full or partial) and sale of your artwork, thus enabling you to "do well and do good." Contact us at 575.751.0369 to inquire.

DONATE TODAY!

The Couse Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization; contributions are tax deductible. Donate by credit card via PayPal at couse-sharp.org/donate. You can also donate by check or credit card with the enclosed remittance envelope to PO Box 1436, Taos NM 87571. For more information about securities, special-purpose, and planned giving, see couse-sharp.org/ways-to-give

couse-sharp.org

COUSE-SHARP HISTORIC SITE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Through its archives, collections, and programming, the Couse-Sharp Historic Site preserves and interprets Taos' crossroads of cultures, promoting research, education, and new perspectives on the Taos Society of Artists, early artists of Taos, and interpretation of Native communities in relation to the greater story of the multicultural American West.



Site Coordinator Jake Cisneros, left, and Lunder Research Center Director Marissa Hendriks work on installing the 2024 summer/fall exhibition *Julius Rolshoven: A Cosmopolitan in Taos* in the Luna Chapel.

DONORS TO COUSE-SHARP HISTORIC SITE SEPTEMBER 2023–AUGUST 2024

Donations that include an in-kind or artwork component are marked with *. Taos Society of Patrons members are marked with ‡. The many donors of amounts up to \$999 are listed at couse-sharp.org/news. Every penny counts!

\$1M OR MORE

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THE COUSE FOUNDATION
146 Kit Carson Road
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couse-sharp.org

admin@couse-sharp.org

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HISTORIC ARTISTS'
HOMES & STUDIOS

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TELLING THE TALE OF TAOS



“As our understanding of the breadth and reach of the stories contained within the Couse-Sharp Historic Site grows, so does the richness of our interpretive plan reflected in the content of our two-hour docent-led tours—a truly singular experience,” said executive director and curator Davison Koenig.

He noted that our visitation continues to increase, with 2024 being the busiest year yet for guests seeking appointments for the interpretive tour. And now, after a long period without one, CSHS has a spiffy new brochure, funded by a generous grant from Taos County. We hope the up-to-date promotional item will draw even more interested guests to our national treasure, helping us bring the legacy to life.

REQUEST A FREE COPY OF THE BROCHURE

Plus some to give to friends! Use the QR code, visit tinyurl.com/29u3btke or email info@couse-sharp.org



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THE LEGACY