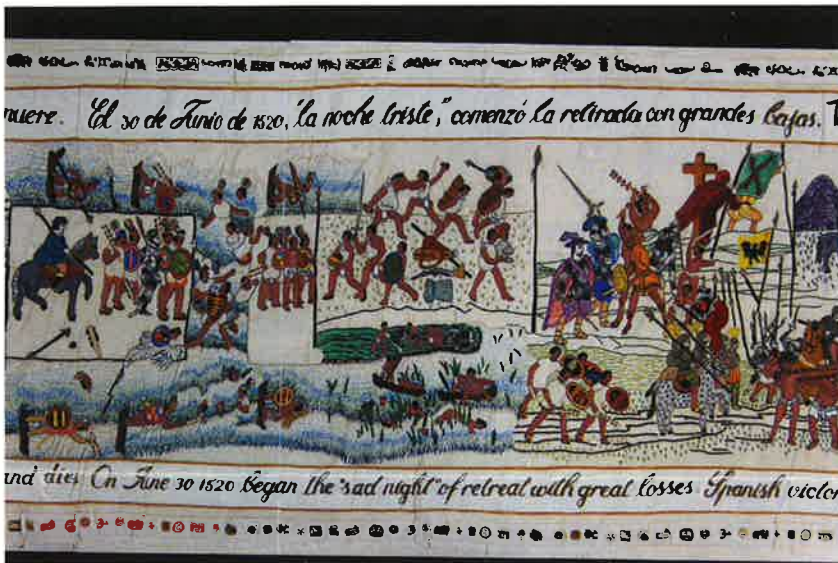


Alianza de las Artes Americanas
NOVEDADES
del Nuevo Mundo

Spring 2018

Unique Mexican Tapestry Focus of Fundraising Effort



Leslie Tillett (1915-1992), *TilletTapiz*. Cotton cloth embroidered with silk and metallic threads, 1965-1977. 1200 x 29 inches.

Every so often a unique piece of art which would enrich a standing collection presents itself for purchase. Most recently the New World Department was offered the opportunity to acquire an extraordinary work which embodies the continued importance of the Spanish Conquest of Mexico.

The Tillet Tapestry, a single, hand-woven manta cloth, is an unusual work of textile art. Conceived by master textile designer Leslie Tillett, it was embroidered by many Mexican and Haitian women over a period of twelve years. Chronicling the Spanish Conquest of the Aztecs by Hernan Cortez and his Mexican allies in the spring of 1519, the tapestry is 100 feet

long and 28 inches high, includes 230 scenes, 1,490 human figures and fifty-five million stitches. Two bands of text, the upper in English and the lower in Spanish, frame the central pictorial register. According to the Museum of Popular Art in Mexico City, "The result is a visual feast, celebrated not only for its immensity, intricacy and profound emotive power, but for the way in which it illustrates the clash of two great civilizations through their respective visual languages."

Leslie Tillett was one of two English brothers who, in 1940, established a very successful textile printing business in Cuernavaca, achieving world-renown with vibrant fabrics.

Later, he and his wife moved to New York from Mexico and continued the

business, eventually designing fabrics for Jackie Kennedy and Babe Paley. While in Mexico, Tillett was captivated by Diego Rivera's historical murals and the subject of the Spanish invasion of Mexico. Rivera suggested that Tillett consult the Florentine Codex to see the Mexican perspective on the conquest.

In 1962, after decades of research, including the eye-witness account of Bernal Diaz and Aztec pictographic records, he visited the Bayeux Tapestry, which told the story of the invasion of England by the Normans. Inspired, he was finally ready to narrate the Conquest of Mexico in an immense embroidery. The work was completed in 1976 and was widely exhibited during



(Cont'd on page three)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We enter 2018 looking forward to another year filled with activities and friends. I hope each of you had a happy holiday season! Change is inevitable, and we will have some challenges ahead. However, with our dedicated, enthusiastic membership, I am confident that *Alianza* will continue to be a popular and successful organization that achieves its goals.

Last October, we enjoyed a delightful bash as part of the farewell celebrations for the old fourth-floor galleries which will be closed for several years for a major renovation of the Ponti Building. This renovation is an opportunity for the Museum to display our world-class pre-Columbian and Spanish Colonial collections in a new state-of-the-art setting, perhaps one that will include references to their influence on present-day culture. During the renovations, *Alianza* plans to utilize our good relations with other cultural organizations, galleries and the like to maintain a varied palette of activities that will educate and entertain. Our central offering, the lecture program will continue, with at least five lectures planned for 2018-19.

In early 2018, *Alianza* learned that the Museum was reviewing support group travel programs and that the Development Department would become more involved in scheduling and approving travel. Our curators have expressed support for our travel program, and we work closely together to plan and organize Department-related travel. In our discussions with the staff, we have emphasized the importance of the travel program to *Alianza's* success as well as our willingness to work with the staff to handle any changes that are made. As of this writing, details of the new procedures are still a work in progress. We look forward to working with the staff to ensure the continued success of *Alianza's* travel offerings.

This spring, we expect to kick off a fundraising campaign to support a major acquisition by the Department. I hope you will all carefully review the materials we send and respond generously.

We recently received a prohibitive price increase by Mad Greens for the popular coffee and cookies socials that we hold in connection with lectures. *Alianza* can no longer reserve space there as a result. A workaround is planned that will provide some refreshments in the Sharp Auditorium lobby, either before the evening lectures or after the afternoon lectures. I appreciate the members' patience and understanding while we navigate through yet another change.

In addition, I would like to extend a special thanks to Joyce Solomon, who with her late husband, Joe, hosted our traditional summer picnic this year, as they have done for many years. We will miss Joe's cheerful enthusiasm! Likewise, our holiday gathering, hosted once again by the Tomlingsons, was well-attended and a good time was had by all, and I want to thank them for their continued support.

So, thank you again to all of our members who have provided financial and social support and who have worked so energetically to make *Alianza* the extraordinary group that it is. Thanks also to Jorge Rivas, our Spanish Colonial Curator and Victoria Lyall, our curator of pre-Columbian art and the Department staff who have been such a source of energy and inspiration for our mission. Thanks also to Jana Gottshalk, whom many of you know, for preparing the excellent research article for this issue. Finally, a special thanks to the 2017-18 board members whose energy and dedication make our programs, events and growth possible.

David E. Butler, President

OF INTEREST

Mexican Tapestry

(cont'd from page 1)



his lifetime, including at the Palacio Cortez, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, the Museum of Natural History and Museum of Modern Art in New York as well as the Museum of the City of New York.

As the New World Department looks forward to the re-installation and broadening of its collection, it is asking *Alianza* to support its efforts to acquire the tapestry. It has received partial funding and is now reaching out to the community for additional funds. *Alianza* board members have committed to assisting in this effort. Board member Dianna Vigil is spear-heading the campaign committee's effort. Since the Department does not have a collection's endowment, *Alianza's* contribution would be especially significant and the textile, a compelling addition to the new installation.

Note: A representation of the tapestry and information on how to get involved will be available at the Patron event on March 11 and at the *Alianza*-sponsored lecture on March 15, 2018.

Alianza Afternoon at the Theater

Alianza members are invited to join other patrons for an afternoon outing to see favorite Denver actor Wes Munsil in *Gross Indecency: The Three trials of Oscar Wilde* playing from February 17-March 17 at the Firehouse Theater in Lowry. *Alianza* members will be attending the 2 p.m. performance on Sunday, February 25. Tickets are \$23 adults and \$20 seniors/students and can be purchased by calling 303-562-3232.

Those interested in having lunch before the play can meet at 12:15 at The Tavern/Lowry on 7401 E. First Avenue. If you want to join the group for lunch, please e-mail Barb (kelly3700@comcast.net) so we can reserve an appropriate table. Wes is a former *Alianza* president and well known around town for his stellar performances. You are guaranteed to enjoy the afternoon.

Alianza Returns to Cherry Hills for Annual Meeting and Brunch on April 22

Alianza members will again convene at the Cherry Hills Country Club on Sunday, April 22, 2018 for the annual brunch and business get-together where we will elect a new slate of officers, hear a curatorial update on the department and enjoy a delicious brunch and scenic golf course atmosphere with friends. The event will start at 11:30 with a cash bar, followed by a noon brunch and short business meeting. The brunch will consist of eggs (huevos and scrambled), bacon, sausage, lox and bagels, French toast, fruit, pastries, juice and coffee. Miguel Ortega will provide classical guitar accompaniment.

Many thanks to Bert and Max Buckman, club members, for hosting the event. Cherry Hills is under new management since we have last been there and regulations now prohibit the use of cell phones on the premises as well as the wearing of denim. Please save the date. Invitations will be mailed in late March. Your check for \$37 per person mailed by April 17 to treasurer Oz Zager, 700 Washington Street, Denver 80203 is your reservation.



Time Travelers: And the Saints Go Marching On – A look at Catholic saints and their role in New Mexico throughout the years

by Jana Gottshalk, Curator
Museum of Spanish Colonial Art, Santa Fe New Mexico



Fig.1 Santo Nino de Atocha, mid-1800s. Unknown artist, New Mexico. Wood, gesso, water-based paints, fabric. Bequest of Rebecca Salisbury James. 1968.032a-f.



Fig.2 El Nino Rey 2004. Marion C. Martinez, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Plastic, wire, computer parts, wood. Partial gift of Diane and Sandy Besser. 2008.070.

Catholic saints are time travelers. They have existed in the Americas since contact was made by the Spanish. Their role in the conquest was significant and their role in modern religion and art is very much alive today. The purpose of the *Time Travelers* exhibit is to examine the evolving roles of saints and santero art, considered to be a traditional art unique to New Mexico. Bultos (3-dimensional carvings) and retablos (painted wood panels) almost always used the saints as their main focus. Each saint is identifiable to observers by its specific attributes; St. Joseph carrying a flowering staff, St. James on a white horse, or San Pasqual in the kitchen. Catholic New Mexicans grow up with this type of art in their homes and churches, and become very familiar with the different saints.

The origin of Catholic imagery in New Mexico came in the form of small portable examples used by the Spanish to convert the indigenous people. Saints took on an interesting role for Native Americans, who themselves were polytheistic (worshipping many gods), in convincing the indigenous people to convert to an unfamiliar monotheistic religion and transfer their devotions to one god. It is likely saints were used to act in the roles that were originally held by their many native gods. Since the Hopi had Kachinas for everything, from certain foods to stars, the individuals that choose to convert now had saints like Barbara, the patron saint of lightning and weather, and Anthony, patron saint of lost items, in their place.

This exhibit, which continues through April 20, 2018, gives an opportunity to look closely at the roles of the saints, their imagery, their stories, and how they have or haven't changed over time. There is even opportunity to compare saints as they existed in Spain or Mexico and to see how they are re-interpreted in New Mexico. For a subject matter that has remained so consistent, the magic of this show is that we can see clear changes.

One of the most interesting examples in the show displays a change in the materials used to make traditional art. Santo Nino de Atocha is the Christ child, identified by his large hat with a feather, a water gourd and a basket of bread. Santo Nino is always sitting, because the original image was a small Christ child that sat on the knee of Virgin Mary figure. At some point he was taken off her knee and existed independently, developing a story all his own. Because of his original seated pose, Santo Nino is almost always shown seated in a chair. In an older example of Santo Nino in the exhibit (fig 1.), the child figure comes from Mexico, made in the 18th century, while the chair was made a bit later in Taos, New Mexico. It is a very classic and recognizable image. Next to this piece we have another Santo Nino made in 1994 (fig 2.) And while both are clearly the same saint, the two pieces could not look more different. The 1994 piece still shows the seated figure with the large plumed hat, gourd and bread – there is no mistaking his identity. The remarkable difference is in the material. The contemporary piece is shiny and brightly colored. The artist Marion Martinez has cleverly used computer parts to make a piece that references the past and present so clearly. The comparison of these two pieces demonstrates perfectly how materials change.

While the Santo Nino comparison shows the change in materials, some saints evolve visually. A great example of this is San Pasqual, a very recognizable saint in New Mexico. He is usually shown in a domestic setting, cooking or preparing food. He is surrounded with familiar cookware and sometimes chiles and cats. Overall the imagery is jovial. It is not unusual to find a San Pasqual image in a New Mexican kitchen. However, the original understanding of San Pasqual is not the joyful image that we have come to know in New Mexico. San Pasqual, a Spanish saint, was originally a serious and pious man who may have worked in a kitchen at a convent but was primarily known for his sacred visions. In this exhibit there is a stunning example of the somber San Pasqual, (fig 3.) a striking painting from Mexico done on copper showing a kneeling man in brown robes with his eyes cast upward. Juxtaposed to this piece is the contemporary image done by Bill Lovato Hyde in 2017 (fig 4). Lovato's work is a gesso relief and shows San Pasqual in a kitchen scene with New Mexican-style carved cabinets, red and green chiles, and blue corn. It is a scene that is clearly New Mexican to anyone familiar with the state. It is a piece that could be made nowhere but there. The character of San Pasqual has been tailored to suit the surroundings, which is not unusual for the imagery used in bultos and retablos. It is certainly not unusual to adapt art to one's audience.

What the *Time Travelers* exhibit hopes to achieve is to recognize the changes the art has made and to start the conversation about the future of the traditional arts in New Mexico. It is a celebration of how far it has come, while still paying tribute to the traditions. The exhibit is entirely taken from the museum's collection; it is an opportunity to see some old friends and make new ones. It showcases the beautiful collection that is at the Museum of Spanish Colonial art, but it also hopes to shed some light on the past and present, and to start conversations about the future.

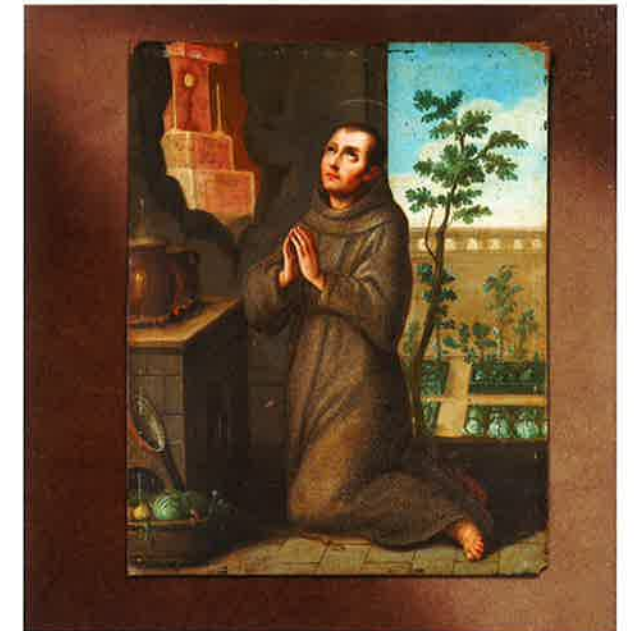


Fig.3 San Pascual, 18th Century. Unknown artist, Mexico. Copper, oil paint. Purchase of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society. 2015.001.



Fig. 4 San Pascual de Old Mesilla 2017. Bill Lovato Hyde, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Wood, gesso, paint, varnish. Purchase of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, 2017.010.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Alianza's Fall Study Trip to San Antonio: Missions, Museums, Parties and Foodie Heaven!



Alianza's fall study trip to San Antonio, Texas was a great success. Our group arrived early afternoon of November 8. On the way to our hotel, our bus driver, Doug, treated us to a short tour of some of San Antonio's famous murals, including one honoring jazz musicians. After checking in to our hotel on the famous Riverwalk, some of the group walked to the Centro des Artes for two surprisingly good Latin-themed exhibits, one featuring images of the borderlands and one of Puerto Rican posters from the 1960's-1990's. Dinner that night was at Biga on the Banks, overlooking the Riverwalk.



The next morning, we visited the San Antonio Museum of Art and were treated to a two-hour discussion of the galleries led by Marion Oettinger, Curator of Latin American Art. Our visit focused on the Museum's outstanding Pre-Columbian, Colonial and Folk art collections. After a seafood lunch at Cappy's uptown, we met our guide, Gary, for a walking tour of San Antonio's outstanding Art Deco period architecture. Dinner was at the Fig Tree restaurant in La Villita, an historic community of shops, restaurants and galleries on the Riverwalk.



On Friday, November 10, our group visited the McNay Museum, the 21-acre former estate of Marion Koogler McNay. The McNay's strength is 20th-century masters and contemporary art. We were treated to a private presentation by Dr. Rich Aste, the Museum's Director, and a special viewing of the not-yet-reopened galleries featuring the Museum's masterpieces by Modigliani, Renoir and others. We then toured the museum's extensive modern collection. Our lunch was at the Guenther House, an 1850's residence for the owner of a flour mill next door, still in operation. After returning to our hotel for a short break, we proceeded to a reception at a private home near the McNay. In addition to our group, guests included Donna Pierce, former Department Head of the New World Department, and Juliet Wiersema, Professor of Anthropology at UTSA, who spoke to the group about her experiences with a Colombian opera production. Dinner was at Paloma Blanca, an upscale Mexican venue nearby.



On Saturday, our group left early for a tour of all four of San Antonio's beautifully-preserved Spanish Missions: Espada, San José, San Juan and Concepción, again led by Gary Pepe. The evocative 18th- century fresco decorations of Concepción were a particular surprise. We later enjoyed a charcuterie-inspired feast at Cured Restaurant in the Pearl Brewing complex for an extended lunch; many walked back to the hotel along the Riverwalk. Saturday night was free; several of the group walked to nearby San Fernando Cathedral for an evening light show projected on its façade.

Our trip concluded with a wonderful Sunday Brunch at Las Canarias Restaurant on the Riverwalk, followed by an uneventful flight back to Denver. Trip participants each donated \$200 per person to the Department, and \$4400 was thus raised for acquisitions. We look forward to future travel programs.

Top to Bottom: Spectacular light show at San Fernando Cathedral; DAM Curator of pre-Columbian Art Victoria Lyall and Marion Oettinger, Curator Latin American Art, San Antonio Art Museum; Espada San José Mission; The happy group dining at Cured Restaurant in San Antonio.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS SPRING 2018

Please note carefully dates and times of lectures this year since they will vary. For information or to bring large groups, please contact Barbara Hinton at 303-755-2571.

Free to *Alianza* members and students with current ID; \$5- DAM members; \$10 all others.

Thursday, February 15, 2018, 1:30 P.M. Sharp Auditorium

Lecture: ***Jose Francisco Xavier de Salazar y Mendoza, Spanish Colonial Painter in Louisiana, 1782-1802.***
by Judith H. Bonner, Senior Curator and Curator of Art, The Historic New Orleans Collection.

Tuesday, February 27, 2018, 1:30 P.M. Emmanuel Gallery

Private Gallery Tour: ***Belleza Mexicana: the Power of the Feminine in Mexican Art.*** Exhibit tour is led by its curator, Adrianna Abarca. Emmanuel Gallery, UCD, Auraria, 1205 10th St. Denver 80204. RSVP- davidb2806@aol.com

Sunday, March 11, 2018, 4:00 P.M.- 6:00 P.M. Cherry Hills III

Patron Party: Cherry Hills III, Club House. 2800 South University Blvd., Denver, 80210. Invitations to be sent in February.

Thursday, March 15, 2018, 6:30 P.M. Sharp Auditorium

Lecture: ***Interpreting Mesoamerica and New Spain through the Non-destructive Study of Ancient Pigments; From Olmec Paintings in the Caves of Guerrero to the Genealogy of the Kings of Azcapotzalco in the Codex Garcia Granados***

by Dr. Gerardo Gutierrez, Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder and Dr. Mary Pye, Brigham Young University.

Thursday, April 19, 2018, 6:30 P.M. Sharp Auditorium

Lecture: ***Art and Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century New Spain: The Curious Equestrian Portrait of Viceroy Bernardo de Galves***

by Dr. Ray Hernandez-Duran, Associate Professor, Department of Art and Art History, University of New Mexico.

Sunday, April 22, 2018, 11:30 A.M. Cherry Hills Country Club

Annual Meeting and Brunch. 11:30 cocktail hour- cash bar followed by noon brunch and short business meeting including election of officers. Invitations to be sent late March. Your check for \$37, mailed by April 17, to treasurer Oz Zager is your reservation.

Thursday, May 17, 2018, 6:30 P.M. Sharp Auditorium

Lecture: ***The Art of Paul Pletka: Converging Rituals of Faith in the New World*** by Paul Pletka and Amy Scott, Curator Autry Museum, Los Angeles. Artist will sign copies of his latest publication after the lecture.

Second Patron Party Scheduled for March 11

Patrons and upper category members are invited to join *Alianza* for a catered affair to be held in the Club House at Cherry Hills 111 from 4:00 - 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, March 11, 2018. Invitations will be sent in February. Please RSVP to board member Marcia Johnson, jofitr@aol.com by March 5.

Fall Patron Party at the Mexican Cultural Center Great Success

On November 16, 2017, *Alianza's* fall Patron party was held at the Mexican Cultural Center on Leetsdale Avenue in Denver. The party was part of the opening festivities for the photographic exhibit *Faces of Latin America*, which was on display at the Cultural Center from November 15, 2017 through January 31, 2018. Approximately fifty members attended, as well as guests of honor Marcela de la Mar, the Executive Director of the Cultural Center, and Ambassador Berenice Rendón-Talavera, the Consul General for Mexico in Denver, to whom *Alianza* President David Butler presented a signed copy of his book of exhibition photos. (on right)



Attendees were treated to delicious catered hors d'ouerves from Smiles with Salt Catering, wine and soft drinks. The Cultural Center's exhibit features over 40 photographic portraits of individuals and groups from five Latin American countries: Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Brazil and Bolivia. The portraits, taken by Mr. Butler during a number of trips to the region, form a cross-section of Latin American people and cultures.

These portraits include one of Gorky Gonzáles Quiñones (1939-2017), the internationally-known ceramicist from Guanajuato, Mexico, taken in 2014. According to the photographer, some of his favorite portraits are those of the colorful street vendors that are so pervasive in Latin cities. "These portraits of indigenous business women and men show how a combination of micro-capitalism, good judgment (in selecting inventory) and commitment to an endeavor can bring people into the mainstream of a culture, and provide hope for economic advancement to many who might otherwise not have such opportunities," said Mr. Butler. *Alianza* wishes to express its appreciation to Dianna Vigil, Event Chair, who planned and executed this extraordinarily successful event.

Above: President and exhibit photographer David Butler presents Ambassador Berenice Rendón Talavera, Consul general of Mexico in Denver with a signed copy of the book of photos from the exhibit.



DENVER
ART MUSEUM

100 W. 14th Avenue Parkway Denver, Colorado 80204

