

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE IN NEW MEXICO

ARCHITECTURE, KATSINAM, AND THE LAND

FEBRUARY 10–APRIL 28, 2013

DENVER ART MUSEUM

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Georgia O'Keeffe in New Mexico: Architecture, Katsinam, and the Land

Exhibition reveals artist's love of the culture, land and people

(Denver, CO) – September 24 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) announced today that it will host the traveling exhibition *Georgia O'Keeffe in New Mexico: Architecture, Katsinam and the Land*, February 10–April 28, 2013. The exhibition, organized by the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, brings to light a relatively unknown aspect of O'Keeffe's art and thinking—her deep respect for the diverse and distinctive cultures of northern New Mexico. The exhibition features 53 O'Keeffe works including 15 rarely seen pictures of different Hopi katsina tihu, along with examples of these types of figures. Chronicling her artwork created in New Mexico, the exhibition explores O'Keeffe's paintings of New Mexico's Hispanic and Native American architecture, cultural objects and her New Mexico landscapes.

"This exhibition provides a new way to look at a very popular American artist," said Thomas Smith, director of the Petrie Institute of Western American Art at the DAM. "O'Keeffe was captivated by the cultures and colorful landscapes of New Mexico. Visitors will have the chance to experience this part of the country—its culture, people and landscape—through the eyes of the artist."

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986) began spending part of the year living and working in New Mexico in 1929, a pattern she rarely altered until 1949. She then made northern New Mexico her permanent home three years after the death of her husband, Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946), the celebrated photographer and one of America's first advocates of modern art. In addition to the astonishingly beautiful New Mexico landscapes O'Keeffe



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Ram's Head, Blue Morning Glory*, 1938. Oil on canvas; 20 x 30 in. Georgia O'Keeffe Museum; Gift of The Burnett Foundation. © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum.

Painted, she was also inspired to paint some of the area's churches, crosses and folk art as well as objects from the Native American cultures, as katsina tihu, commonly referred to as kachina or katsina dolls.

Katsinam, plural for katsina, primarily refers to the supernatural beings that are believed to visit Hopi villagers during half of the year. Katsinam have the power to bring rain, exercise control over the weather, help in many of the everyday activities of the villagers, punish offenders of ceremonial or social laws and, in general, to function as messengers between the spiritual domain and mortals. The figures are used to teach children about the different Hopi katsinam. O'Keeffe was privy to viewing many cultural ceremonies and was inspired by the beautifully detailed figurines.



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Rust Red Hills*, 1930. Brauer Museum of Art, Valparaiso University, Indiana; Sloan Fund Purchase, 62.02. © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum.

The DAM exhibition will showcase American Indian artworks, such as katsina tithu figurines, to provide viewers with an up-close look at the various cultural artifacts that O'Keeffe was exposed to during her time in New Mexico.

While the New Mexico landscape remained a prominent part of O'Keeffe's life and art, very little has been known or written about her involvement with Native American and Hispanic art and culture. However, almost immediately upon her arrival in New Mexico, she responded to the area's cultural richness. Between 1931 and 1945, for example, O'Keeffe created numerous drawings, watercolors and paintings of katsina tithu. Because she

retained and seldom exhibited most of these paintings, they remain generally unknown to the public.

Co-curators for the exhibition are Barbara Buhler Lynes, former curator at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and The Emily Fisher Landau Director at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Research Center and Carolyn Kastner, associate curator. At the DAM, the installation will be overseen by Thomas Brent Smith, director of the Petrie Institute of Western American Art and John P. Lukavic, associate curator of Native Arts. It is included in general museum admission.

Exhibition Catalogue

An exhibition catalogue published by the Museum of New Mexico Press will be available in the Museum Shop. It includes an introduction by Lynes that discusses O'Keeffe's interest in aspects of Native and Hispanic culture and an essay by Kastner that analyzes the current questions about making and displaying katsinam. A catalogue essay by Hopi artist Ramona Sakiestewa and Kastner's interview with Hopi artist Dan Namingha offer additional insight into the issue of depicting and displaying these figurines. An essay by Hopi Tribal and Council Member Alph H. Secakuku explains the meaning, function and significance of katsinam within Hopi culture, its dances, ceremonies and rituals.

Exhibition Tour Schedule

Montclair Art Museum, September 28, 2012–January 20, 2013

Denver Art Museum, February 10–April 28, 2013

Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, May 17–September 8, 2013

Heard Museum, September 27, 2013–January 12, 2014

Media Resources

Online Newsroom: www.denverartmuseum.org/press

Exhibition Overview: <http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/georgia-okeeffe-new-mexico>

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Exhibition Credit Line

The exhibition was organized by the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum. This exhibition was made possible in part by The Burnett Foundation and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum National Council. Local support is provided by the generous donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).

The Denver Art Museum is located on 13th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock Streets in downtown Denver. Open Tuesday–Thursday, Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.–8 p.m., except the final Friday of the month January–October when the museum stays open until 10 p.m. for the *Untitled* event; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Admission for Colorado residents: \$10 adults, \$8 seniors and students. Admission for non-Colorado residents: \$13 for adults, \$10 for seniors and students, \$5 for visitors aged six to eighteen, free for children under 6. General museum admission is free the first Saturday of each month, thanks to Target and the citizens who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). The Cultural Complex Garage is open; enter from 12th Avenue between Broadway and Bannock or check the DAM website for up-to-date parking information. For information in Spanish, call 720-913-0169. For more information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.