

Titovets art exhibit to aid XII Travelers

For many, the words “art” and “beauty” are synonymous. While the aesthetic beauty in a painting or sculpture is often the first thing that comes to mind, on another level beauty also exists in the support given to one another by members of the local arts community.

An upcoming exhibition showcasing the paintings of local favorites Lyuba and Sasha Titovets is a shining example of this concept. The Nov. 8 event at the former Charlotte’s location in Peppertree Square is both an opportunity to view a captivating selection their new works, and also a fundraiser in support of “Benito Juarez-Child to Man,” the fourth monument in the XII Travelers series of bronze sculptures.

Sasha and Lyuba have generously agreed to donate a percentage of the sales of their work at this exhibition to this endeavor, and also to honor their late friend, John Houser, who died in January. Houser founded the XII Travelers project, which includes the Fray Garcia statue in Downtown El Paso, The Equestrian monument at El Paso International Airport, and the Susan Shelby Magoffin sculpture at Keystone Heritage Park. John’s son, Ethan Houser, worked alongside his father and is continuing the work.

“We truly respected John, both as a person and an artist,” Lyuba shared. “We miss him and feel it is extremely important that this project continues to go forward. Completing the sculpture of Benito Juarez is another step in preserving John’s vision and standards. We want to emphasize that the XII Travelers is a unique concept that will remind border residents of their history for centuries to come. It is our hope that this exhibition will not only be a fund raiser, but that it will also bring attention to the project and make everyone more aware of the entire scope of the XII Travelers Project. We also want to support and encourage John’s son, Ethan, who is a truly talented artist in his own right.”

Exhibition chairwoman Jan Engles emphasized, “This exhibition is a wonderful opportunity for our organization because we are truly dedicated to the XII Travelers’ mission to celebrate the rich history of this area with monumental bronze statues commemorating the diverse men and women who traveled through the Pass of the North over the past five centuries. We especially want to thank Melissa O’Rourke who was very gracious in making this beautiful space available without charge. We are also very pleased that the completed sculpture will be sited in the Chamizal National Memorial Park. Being there will make it accessible to people from both sides of the border.”

As the artist bringing this image to fruition, Ethan Houser will continue to develop his father’s initial dream.

“Because this piece is now largely mine,” he said, “I have refined some of the details of John’s original maquette (model). I have changed the position of the child a bit, and I have increased the overall size since I want to make the completed bronze as large as possible using the monies which have been committed to it. Although this is



my interpretation, the imagery is very closely based on John’s original. Additionally, I wanted to include more detail so that the information will already be there.

“I hope to have the final maquette ready for production in two months or less. We don’t know yet where it will be cast but most likely it will be a foundry in Mexico. As to timing, the schedule for casting and installation will be contingent upon raising the necessary funds.”

Kenna Ramirez, president of the XII Travelers Project, said the completed sculpture is projected to cost \$295,000. So far their organization has raised \$109,000 in donations and pledges, which includes a \$20,000 grant recently received from the Hunt Corporation. “Our plan is to proceed with production in a series of three phases, and the funds we have now are sufficient to allow Ethan to complete the maquette that will be the basis for the finished sculpture,” Ramirez said.

With so many capable people dedicated to supporting the XII Travelers Project, there is little doubt that the Benito Juarez sculpture simply represents another step in making John Houser’s vision an eventual reality. In the meantime, stop by the exhibition from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 8, at 5411 N. Mesa for a chance to view the finished maquette and to meet Ethan Houser in person. For more information, call Kenna Ramirez at (915) 282-5102.

Adobe Horseshoe Theatre

Now considered a landmark in San Elizario, the Adobe Horseshoe Theater is situated in a picturesque setting directly across from the town plaza. The rich history of the area dates back to 1581 when Fray Augustin Rodriguez and his two companions reached the present site of the city, where they conducted the first Catholic Mass ever celebrated in the region. Nearly two decades later, Don Juan Oñate took possession of these lands in the name of Phillip II of Spain. The priests then conducted a solemn High Mass and watched the first play ever performed in the limits of what is now the United States.

Nearly four centuries later, in 1971, Janet Esta Protzman dedicated herself to carrying on the tradition by constructing this Territorial Style building on the site of the original county courthouse complex of 1850. The massive wooden doors are the original gates of the walled Mexican vil-

lage of Lagunilla, Michoacan, and once measured 18 feet tall.

Turning Protzman’s initial dream to showcase live theater productions into reality, the Adobe Horseshoe presented a series of plays featuring actors from as far away as California. Unfortunately, it has been 43 years since the last live performance. Now, granting a much longed-for wish, San Elizario’s Adobe Horseshoe Theatre will once again be home to a series of live theater productions. The reopening of the historic theatre was celebrated with festivities Oct. 11, which included an appearance by actress Ana Alicia, best known for her role as Melissa on CBS’s mini-series “Falcon Crest”.

“Las Brujas de Macbeth” (The Witches of Macbeth), a minimalist montage featuring two actresses from a Mexico City theatre company, has two Spanish language performances Oct. 27-28.

On Nov. 17-18, the Adobe Horseshoe will present “Farandula,” a production by Jazz Villa Projects from Havana, Cuba. This delightful but dangerous comedy uses the opening of a gallery as a pretext for the confluence of with interestingly conflicted lives. One performance will be in English the other in Spanish. In December, “The Nutcracker” ballet will be presented by the Compania Clasica de Ballet from the Universidad Autonoma de Cuidad Juarez. Both shows are dinner productions.

Although the building has served other uses over the years, the theater itself has stood idle. After leasing the building last August, artist and entrepreneur Al Borrego, has renovated both the theater and the adjoining patio area. Describing it as hav-

ing a flavor of “Western elegance”, the crescent-shaped theater area now accommodates 359 dinner guests.

“My primary intention was to create an elegant setting for showcasing the finest in live entertainment, but we are also accepting reservations for a variety of private events such as weddings and graduations,” Borrego said.

Confirmation on show times, prices and ticket availability can be obtained by calling (915) 974-7077 or go to [www:AdobeHorseshoe.com](http://www.AdobeHorseshoe.com).

Masterpieces from the Prado

In case you were not able to make the journey to Santa Fe last year to view this impressive collection of 92 reproductions of works selected and curated by the Museo Nacional del Prado in Spain, you will have a second opportunity to do so by checking out “The Prado in Las Cruces.” Originating from the Spanish royal family’s collection, this sumptuous outdoor exhibition is on display at Plaza Place next to the Plaza de Las Cruces in Downtown Las Cruces.

As a bonus, the Las Cruces Museum System is providing free weekly tours at 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Tour themes may differ but include information on religion, works of the Spanish Masters, portraiture, landscapes, mythology and royalty.

The exhibition, which is free and open during daylight hours, will run through Nov. 28.

Myrna Zanetell is a freelance writer specializing in the visual arts.

Dedicated to the health of all El Paso

CBD

WHOLE HEALTH
& VAPE SHOP

4026 N. MESA B-1
915.356.4572

Come see us for help with ...

Sleep	Happiness
Anxiety	Wellness
Depression	Pain
Focus	& More

Who is that guy in the

Blue Tie

BLUE TIE GUYS

RIO GRANDE
CANCER FOUNDATION
616 N. Virginia Street • Suite D • 915-562-7660

Nayda's Gems & Stones

Hundreds
of
Necklaces

Bali Silver
Semi-Precious Stones
Silver Findings

Custom
Orders
While
You
Wait

Placita Santa Fe
5024 Doniphan Ste

Nayda I. Graziani
Custom Jewelry Design

Classes Available
(915) 204-9652