

UPCOMING SHOW

Up to 12 works on show
May 2-June 2, 2008

Blue Rain Gallery
130 Lincoln Ave, Suite D
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 954-9902

SHOW LOCATION SANTA FE, NM



MATEO ROMERO

Portraits of emotional landscapes

Blue Rain Gallery will present a show of new paintings by noted artist Mateo Romero from May 2 through June 2. An artists' reception will be held Friday, May 2, at 5 p.m. at the gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Romero is well known for his passion in depicting Native American daily life. In this show, he returns to a familiar medium: oil.

"I'm revisiting some types of works I've done previously," Romero explains. "I've done social landscape paintings for years and I've taken a hiatus from this."

His new works focus on two series with different themes running concurrently. The first, the Bonnie and Clyde Series, explores the dark, emotional landscape of women engaged in acts of self-violence like smoking and drinking.

"The pieces are about this idea of disenfranchising them for self-violence and self-addiction," Romero says.

When he first embarked on this project he incorporated male figures. Now, there are only women.

The second series, Voices at Wounded Knee, involves a high contrast of black and white with figures painted with tar, which creates deep, striking silhouettes.



Voices at Wounded Knee Series #3, oil and tar on wood panel, 36 x 48"



Voices at Wounded Knee Series #1, oil and tar on wood panel, 36 x 48"



Voices at Wounded Knee Series #2, oil and tar on wood panel, 40 x 60"

The Gallery Says . . .

"The new paintings by Mateo are quite exciting. It's a return to an old style that he's done. There's a wonderful, soft social commentary flavor to them with an exciting color palette and composition. They evoke a wonderful feeling of a time and a place for a lot of people."

—Peter Stoessel, executive director of Blue Rain Gallery



Trinary Series, mixed media on panel, 40 x 60"



Buffalo Dancers - Binary Composition, mixed media on board, 40 x 60"

"I'm using tar in more pieces and using it more subtly," Romero explains. "I was influenced by looking at Donald Sultan's work. Over time I wanted to play with that because the material is interesting to me."

Romero got the opportunity when Blue Rain Gallery challenged him to explore different mediums.

"This opportunity at Blue Rain is a breath of fresh air. They encouraged me to look at new directions and challenge myself," says Romero. "It's been wonderful to pause from what I was doing and take inventory of different things."

Peter Stoessel, executive director of Blue Rain Gallery, says he's pleased with the outcome.

"We're very excited about this new body of work," Stoessel says. "It's nice to see Mateo's oil paintings once again and see the artist doing what he wants to do. It's a return to an old style that he's done. There's a wonderful, soft social commentary flavor to them with an exciting color palette and composition.

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Though tar as an art medium is difficult to control and can be technically challenging, Romero describes it as a "glowing chocolate color. It's gorgeous—it's black black, like black Plexiglas."

"You have to be very aware of where the edges are," he cautions. "It's more about experimenting with materials and ideas. I paint the figures in and then paint the space around them."

This show represents a big departure from Romero's earlier exhibitions in that he's using different methodologies to construct paintings and he's not relying on his signature style of mixed media dancer photo transfer paintings.

"The two main shifts are the kinds of stories . . . hyper tense stories of domestic violence and stories of tension and violence between the FBI and Indians," says Romero, a former printmaker. "It's about search for place and search for home."

To help facilitate this project, Romero



Girl Smoking #1 (Bonnie and Clyde Series), oil on wood panel, 48 x 36"



Two Girls #2 (Bonnie and Clyde Series), oil on wood panel, 40 x 60"

referred to several books on the conflict of Wounded Knee to guide his compositions. The result translates into dark silhouettes of people with guns and people shooting rooftops.

"These images aren't related to people I know. They're timeless images," notes Romero.

Both series relay social and political critiques on problems facing native and non-native Americans.

Romero describes these new paintings as a balance between ideas and handsome positive and negative space.

"They're tenser and grittier works in what they're about and how they're painted," says Romero. "There's more anxiety and social discourse yet at the same time they're beautifully done."

Romero is aware that these new pieces may be a bit challenging for his collectors, but he feels they will respond to their emotion and movement of the work.

"By doing different mediums, I'm trying to reinvigorate my own love with painting and the act of painting. That's important to me as a painter," says Romero. "It's interesting to me to investigate work that is not in my signature style. I'm trying to shake things up a bit and create something that is new and old at the same time." 🖌️

For a direct link to the exhibiting gallery go to  www.westernartcollector.com

Price Range Indicator

Our at-a-glance Price Range Indicator shows what you can expect to pay for this artist's work.

	Small	Medium	Large
1996	\$850	\$2,500	\$3,500
2001	\$1,000	\$3,500	\$5,000
2008	\$1,200	\$4,700	\$6,600

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