



March 22, 2017
San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

First Peoples: A Celebration of Native artists in Southern California

At the San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center

APRIL 4 – 22, 2017
Gala Opening Reception, Saturday, April 8, 7:00 – 10:00 pm

FIRST PEOPLES is a unique cultural exhibition showcasing the diverse artwork of 31 Southern California artists with indigenous roots North or South of the Border. Described as “interesting and important” by the UCLA American Indian Studies Center, an exhibition co-sponsor, FIRST PEOPLES presents myriad answers to the question: What does it mean to be a Native artist?

Photographs of Native Americans provocatively dressed as Hollywood icons.
Contemporary baskets and pottery made traditionally. A poignant video interview with a Native grandmother.
Paintings, watercolors, prints and mixed media art that interpret Native life, spirituality and identity.
An elaborate buckskin dress made for a TV soap star by the family of fabled Comanche chief Quanah Parker.
A “domestic installation” that comments on parallels between gang attire and native regalia.

This is but a small sampling of the 109 varied artworks on display (many of which are available for purchase). The generational range of participating artists—from university students to tribal elders—is as diverse as their art practices. Personal Artist Statements and detailed descriptive labels contextualize the art and communicate a unified theme: Far from having “vanished,” indigenous peoples flourish today and continue to be nourished by their Native cultures.

The gala opening reception on Saturday, April 8, from 7 to 10 pm, will feature a blessing by Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians Tribal President Rudy J. Ortega, Jr., performances by Native youth, and light refreshments. The public is invited.

Organized by Walter L. Meyer, a Los Angeles based independent curator with a special interest in cross-cultural projects, FIRST PEOPLES is being presented by the San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center (SFVACC), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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Artists (Left to Right): Rowan D. Harrison, Dawn Jackson, Pamela J. Peters, Eric Tippeconnic

Since opening in October 2014, the SFVACC has hosted an impressive roster of art exhibitions. A community as well as a cultural space, the SFVACC sponsors workshops, live performances, meetings, lectures and special events. It is also home to three artist studios. Housed in a 4,595 square-foot, the SFVACC boasts a 3,000-square-foot gallery space with expansive walls, sophisticated hanging and lighting systems, T-shaped display walls, a performance stage, and professional sound system. For more information, please visit www.sfvacc.org.

To arrange for an interview or to receive more information for FIRST PEOPLES, please contact Walter L. Meyer walter.l.meyer@gmail.com

First Peoples Artists

Ron Winterhawk Archer <i>Abnaki</i>	River Tikwi Garza <i>Tongva</i>	Timothy Ryan Ornelas <i>Fernandeño Tataviam</i>
Samuel S. Bañagas <i>Kumeyaay, Luiseño</i>	Bernie Granados Jr. <i>Apache, Zacatec</i>	Ricardo Ortega <i>Chicano, Mexica</i>
Brian "Tezi Tunka" Bettelyoun <i>Lakota</i>	Rowan D. Harrison <i>Pueblo of Isleta, Navajo</i>	Pamela J. Peters <i>Diné (Navajo)</i>
Gabriel Brenner <i>Pima, Cherokee</i>	Votan Ik <i>Maya, Nahua</i>	Nadia Reed <i>Chinook, Chehalis</i>
Claudia Brentwood <i>White Earth Ojibwe</i>	Dawn Jackson <i>Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan</i>	Corina Roberts <i>Osage, Cherokee</i>
Maree Cheatham <i>Creek, Choctaw</i>	Tima Lotah Link <i>Shmuwich Chumash</i>	Abe Sanchez <i>Mexica</i>
Gerald Clarke Jr. <i>Cahuilla Band of Indians</i>	Evelyn Lozano <i>Kitanemuk-Tejon Indian Tribe, Yaqui</i>	Eric Tippeconnic <i>Comanche</i>
Valena Broussard Dismukes <i>Choctaw</i>	Leah Mata <i>yak tityu tityu Northern Chumash</i>	Craig Torres <i>Tongva (Traditional Council of Pimuu)</i>
Peggy Fontenot <i>Patawomeck, Potawatomi</i>	Matthew WhiteBear McMasters <i>Cherokee, Creek</i>	Gail Werner <i>Cupeño, Luiseño, Kumeyaay</i>
Erica Friend <i>Chicana</i>	Ernesto Yerena Montejano <i>Xicanx, Yaqui</i>	Marvin Yazzie <i>Navajo (Diné)</i>
Joel "rage.one" Garcia <i>Xicano, Huichol, Northern Plains</i>		

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San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard St., Tarzana, CA 91356 818/697-5525 www.sfvacc.org info@sfvacc.org
Open Tuesday – Saturday 11:00 am – 5:00 pm