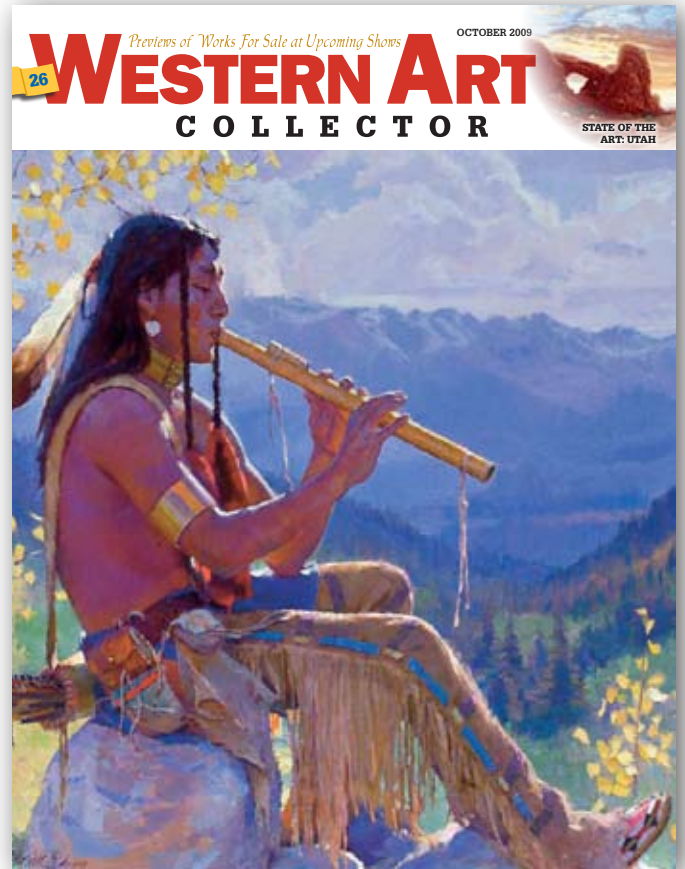


As seen in the
October 2009 issue of

WESTERN ART
COLLECTOR



UPCOMING SHOW

Up to 25 works on show
 October 15-28, 2009

Rive Gauche Art Gallery
 7173 E. Main Street
 Scottsdale, AZ 85251
 (480) 947-6372

SHOW LOCATION SCOTTSDALE, AZ

ELENA DE COMPOSTELA

Pottery on parade

Arizona artist Elena de Compostela is well known for her still life paintings featuring Native American artifacts from Southwestern tribes. Her well-crafted depictions of Indian pottery are done with the same chiaroscuro techniques used by Caravaggio, Gentileschi, Rembrandt, and some of the Renaissance Dutch masters.

"Instead of figures, I have chosen to depict inanimate objects but with the same dramatic composition and lighting," says Compostela. "In most of my compositions light comes from above and enhances the sense of drama. On a symbolic level,

light represents the Divinity and gives the 'inanimate' object not just drama but a soul ('in-animate' in Latin means 'without a soul'). I want the viewer to feel the spirit of the Indian nation from which the pottery sprung."

Compostela will unveil some large new paintings in a solo show titled *Pueblo Indian Traditions* at Rive Gauche Art Gallery in Scottsdale. Also on display will be a series of 20 16-by-16-inch paintings featuring one single pot.

"By isolating each pot on its own canvas, I have attempted to make the portrait, reveal the personality, and find

the soul of each pottery. Each one has its own characteristics, its own symbols, its own story," the artist says.

Compostela's goal in this show is to give viewers a taste of the incredible diversity of what is commonly described as "Pueblo Indian pottery." She foresees a pottery pow-wow in which Santo Domingo, Acoma, Cochiti, Hopi, Zia, Zuni, Tesuque, and San Ildefonso are all gathered together, where each subject is painted in the same style, size, and lighting, and where each one will reveal its own traits while fitting in the Pueblo Indian puzzle.

The Collectors Say . . .

"Upon entering Rive Gauche Art Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona, we were immediately drawn to Elena de Compostela's paintings of Acoma and Laguna pottery. Her use of color and light are mesmerizing. My wife and I knew we had to have at least one. Not so easy was choosing between them both, so we purchased the two."

*—Dom and Arlene CoPiccolo,
 Racine, WI*



Santo Domingo Jar c.1925, oil on linen, 16 x 16"

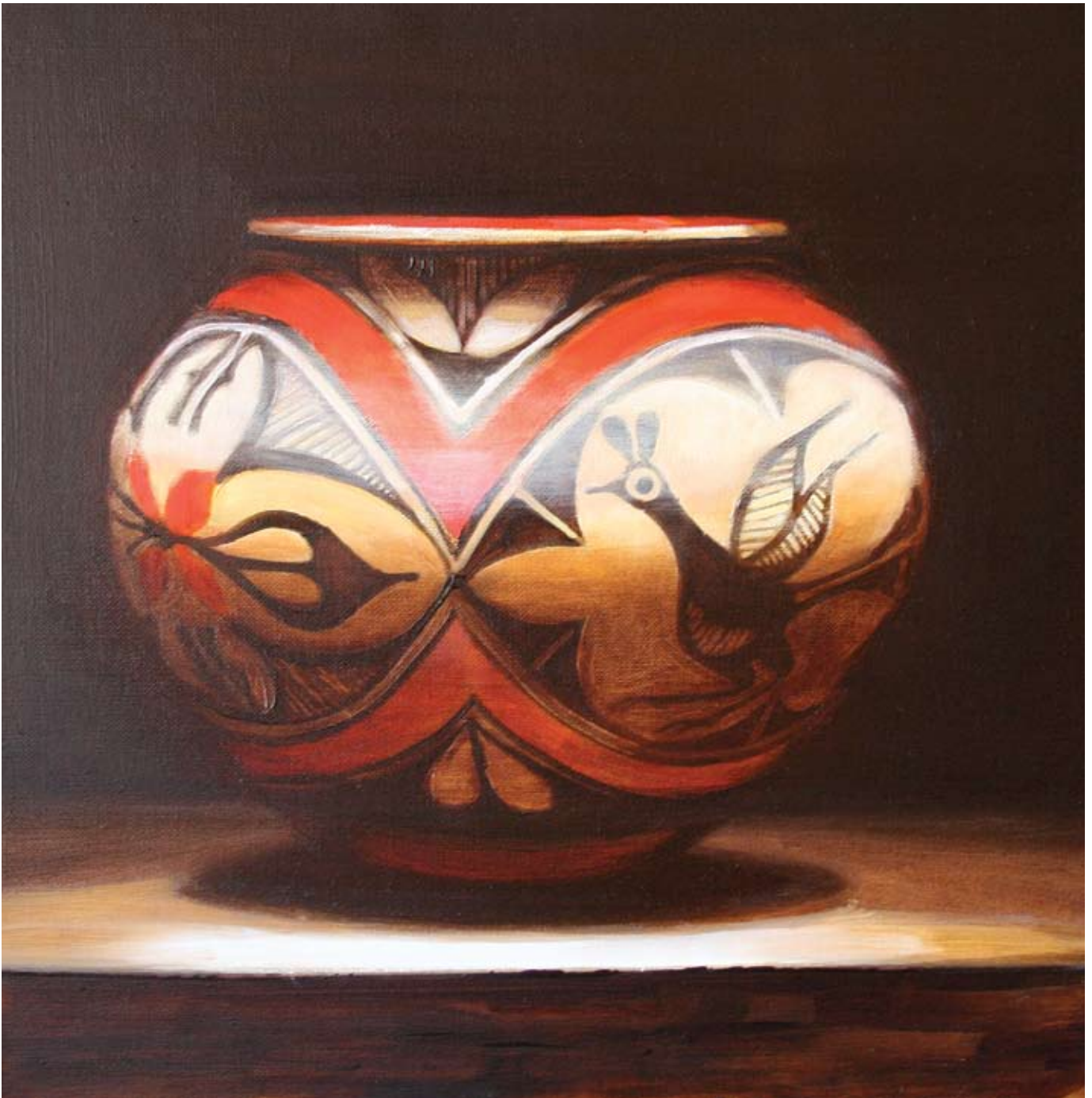


Kokopelli Composition, oil on canvas, 40 x 30"

The Gallery Says . . .

"Elena's breathtaking depiction of Native American pottery is done with the same chiaroscuro techniques used by Flemish masters, and appeals to a wide range of collectors."

—Frederic de Claremont, director, Rive Gauche Art Gallery



Zia Pottery, oil on linen, 16 x 16"



Acoma Tularosa Jar, oil on linen, 16 x 16"

Within this new grouping is *Santo Domingo Jar* c.1925 whose geometric pattern resembles a Star of David. This is one of Compostela's favorite new paintings because, she says, "its curves are elegant and beautiful in their simplicity and capture light perfectly."

The artist also enjoys creating floral compositions, preferring to use the calla lily because its color contrasts well with the surrounding obscurity, and because its shape repeats the pottery motif.

"I love all flowers. In the Western European tradition, flowers symbolize women: beautiful, fragile, colorful, open hearted. Certain flowers, such as the lily, have further symbolic associations with purity and the sacred," explains

Compostela. "By putting flowers in my compositions I try to join the Native American and Western European traditions and re-emphasize the feminine allegory in my paintings."

Two of Compostela's latest pieces, *Lizard Composition* and *Kokopelli Composition*, include calla lilies and both illustrate her strong design and chiaroscuro techniques. The focus of each painting is illuminated, as if in a spotlight, while the surrounding field is dark to instill dramatic contrasts. This use of darkness creates a more intimate setting for the viewer to fall in love.

"Night, after all, is the time *par excellence* for intimacy," says Compostela. "Darkness allows me to direct the viewer's attention toward the beauty of the subject

matter, while hiding its mystery and preserving its magic. I want the viewer to literally fall in love." 🖱️

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
1999	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000
2004	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$4,000
2009	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$8,000