

# New Mexico Archaeology

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO FOUNDATION

WWW.NMARCHAEOLOGY.ORG

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## AN EXTRAORDINARY COLLABORATION

NATALIE CURTIS,  
FERRUCCIO BUSONI  
AND INDIGENOUS  
AMERICANS

BY DR. DONNA COLEMAN

Archaeology. Music. These two disciplines might seem to have nothing in common. So how is it that a concert pianist is passionately interested in archaeological research about Native American culture? It's about layers, geographical, geological, and chronological. Finding the pathway from the surface to the heart; finding the meaning in the matter. Preparation of a musical composition for performance is an excavation of time, place, and people, an extraordinary collaboration of elements.

A project that I embarked upon in 2019 for the Italian Institute of Culture in Melbourne, Australia, drew together a number of threads that, among many others, wove their way from the Native American pueblos of Arizona and New Mexico to Berlin, Germany, and ultimately to a bed and breakfast in downtown Santa Fe. All because of a young woman named Natalie Curtis. But let's travel back in time nearly 500 years to establish the context for her brilliant accomplishments.

In 1540, Spanish *conquistador* Francisco Vázquez de Coronado and his army, looking for gold in the fabled "Seven Cities of Cibola," marched into the area now designated as Arizona and New Mexico, and the lives of the Indigenous peoples, whose relationship with the land in that region had evolved over millennia, were transformed for all time.

By 1890, the government of the United States of America, paving the way for the relentless expansion of its population westward, had annihilated the Native Americans' primary source of food, shelter, and garments,



Natalie Curtis in Native American dress.

the bison, and had driven the tribes from the land they had lived on for thousands of years, onto "reservations" that exist to this day. A "Code of Indian Offenses," intended to "assimilate" the Native Americans by prohibiting their traditional songs, dances, and ceremonial and religious rituals, was implemented by the US government in 1883.

In 1891, the Italian composer-pianist Ferruccio Busoni came to the United States for the first of four sojourns in this country. The New England Conservatory of Music engaged him to teach piano for the academic year 1891–1892, and he subsequently moved to New York City where he gave concerts and taught privately. In 1894, he returned to Europe, settling in Berlin.

In 1893, an extraordinary young woman named Natalie Curtis came to the New York studio of Russian pianist Arthur

See **Natalie**, on Page 7.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR ROOM 6 AT THE PALACE OF THE GOVERNORS

ERIC BLINMAN, PH.D.  
OAS DIRECTOR

We perceive historic structures as static, but they were once dynamic parts of their communities. This is the third (and last for a while) progress report on our work in Room 6 of the Palace. Our interpretations are tentative until artifacts and samples have been analyzed and until we have tried to prove ourselves wrong, but this is our current model. It takes advantage of historic records augmented by archaeology.

Prior to circa 1866, the area of Room 6 was a portion of a small corral. Room 5 was to the south but other corral boundaries are unknown. Under the corral surface were cobble foundations of earlier demolished buildings, animal waste, ash dumps, and light scatters of historic trash.

In 1866, the west end of the Palace was demolished to make way for Lincoln Avenue. An adobe wall was built to separate the animals from Lincoln Avenue. The new wall extended north from the Room 5 west wall (the new west end of the Palace).

After 1868 but before 1877, Room 6 was created over the southwest corner of the corral, using the Lincoln Avenue wall as the west wall of the room and using the north wall of Room 5 as the new room's south wall. The

See **Director**, on Page 8.

# ITEMS NEEDED FOR PROJECT ARCHAEOLOGY

Every year, the OAS education programs reach thousands of New Mexicans, spread over every county. Support for the various components of this program comes from state and federal grants as well as private donations. But the OAS educators need more than just financial donations to keep the education programs alive, so we have developed a scavenger hunt! Grab your plastic bags and don your adventuring (or housecleaning) hat to join us in sourcing some much desired educational supplies:

- Rabbits (full skeletons and pelts)
- Rodent skulls: squirrels, gophers, prairie dogs, etc.
- Road kill, larger animals: coyotes, badgers, porcupines, bird of prey, etc.
- Leg bones of elk or deer—for making tools
- Turkey pelts
- Geologic minerals (please not gem quality or polished): calcite, hematite, quartz, malachite/azurite, yellow ochre
- Local piñon seeds
- Yucca: narrow- and wide-leaf (fully rooted plants ready to transplant or just the leaves)

Many of these items will be cleaned and added to our traveling kits for our Project Archaeology *Quemado Pithouse Modules*, which are loaned out across the region to teachers and facilitators. Some will be used to develop new educational programs. All will be excitedly received! ❖

## LOOKING FOR US?

If you're planning a trip to OAS, we're at 7 Old Cochiti Road, off Caja del Rio Road. We're the first building on the left, just before the animal shelter.

## ONLINE CLASS PLANNED

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN SOUTHWEST

For the past several years, OAS director, Dr. Eric Blinman, has offered a class covering New Mexico history from >22,000 years ago to the Pueblo Revolt. Classes consist of at least eight illustrated Zoom lectures, each lasting 1 to 1½ hours, on Wednesday evenings, starting at 5:45 p.m. The first class will start on Jan. 4, 2023. Classes will be held weekly thereafter until Eric runs out of topics.

The classes will be recorded and available to participants for several months after the end of the course, but they won't be publicly accessible. This is partly due to Eric's use of illustrations from current research literature that runs counter to journal and book publishers' senses of copyright—their use is okay for a lecture, but it's not okay for a permanent posting on the Internet. Eric will also distribute PDFs of the lecture slide sets to all interested participants.

The course content will use archaeology to build an understanding of the cultural variety of Native American peoples at the time of European colonization (hundreds of communities speaking more than a dozen mutually unintelligible languages). The sequence of topics (often requiring more than one lecture) will be:

- **Conceptual and Practical Tools for Understanding SW Archaeology** will cover evolutionary models, subsistence economies, how languages change, principles of demography, tools for climate and environmental reconstruction, and measures of time.
- **The Destination: Modern Peoples and Cultures of the Northern Southwest** will cover the diversity of environments and cultures at European contact, language diversity and history, means of maintaining community identities, and how impacts of colonization have shaped perceptions (and misperceptions) of Native peoples.
- **The Early Years: Peopling of the Americas through the Southwestern Archaic**

## DETAILS

Lectures will be offered over consecutive Wednesday evenings starting Jan. 4, 2023. The series will be \$180 per household for FOA members and \$200 for non-members. Register online at <https://friendsofarchaeology.eventbrite.com>.

will cover the remarkably early traces of humans in the Americas, Paleoindian and Archaic lifeways, and differentiation of distinct peoples within the Southwest.

- **Agriculture, Pottery, and the Emergence of Formative Culture** will cover the diversity of historic relationships as population, domesticated crops, and pottery transform Southwestern communities and establish the foundations of multiculturalism.
- **Villages, Economy, Ethnic Diversity, and the Foundations of Chaco** will explore the rhythms of climate change, social complexity, and interaction that structure the middle centuries of Southwestern culture history.
- **Post-Chaco Communities and Migration** will build on the decentralization of Chaco and the progressive failures of many farming communities across the region, initiating periods of migration and setting the stage for the modern distributions of people.
- **Pueblo Communities at the Threshold of Colonization** will explore the impacts of both climate change and colonization that lead to the elegant complexity of modern Native communities.

Access to the lectures (and recordings) is \$180 per household for FOA members and \$200 for non-members. Register at <https://friendsofarchaeology.eventbrite.com>. ❖

**Office of Archaeological Studies**

The Office of Archaeological Studies was the first museum program of its kind in the nation. OAS staff conducts international field and laboratory research, offers educational opportunities for school groups and civic organizations, and works to preserve, protect, and interpret prehistoric and historic sites throughout New Mexico.

**Friends of Archaeology**

The Friends of Archaeology is an interest group within the Museum of New Mexico Foundation that supports the OAS. To join the FOA, you need only become a member of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation and sign up. Visit [www.nmarchaeology.org](http://www.nmarchaeology.org) for information. We're also on Facebook, at "[www.facebook.com/FriendsOfArchaeologyNM](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfArchaeologyNM)".

**Mission Statement**

The mission of Friends of Archaeology is to support the Office of Archaeological Studies in the achievement of its archaeological services mandate from the State of New Mexico through participation in and funding of research and education projects.

**FOA Board**

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**ONE PIECE AT A TIME**

Volunteer Tim Jones spent several days with this shattered Cliff Polychrome pot. The pot, which was part of a larger collection of pottery recently donated to OAS, arrived in a badly reconstructed state. Tim de-constructed the pot, removing all traces of old glue using a toothbrush, tweezers, and a microscope. He put the pot back together with temporary blue masking tape. The pot will be photographed and considered for curation at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, but it will NOT be glued back together. Photos by Melissa Martinez



# A GRAND DAY IN GALISTEO

**FOA HIKERS EXPLORE THE REMNANTS OF PUEBLO GALISTEO, LAS MADRES**





Gracious landowners recently offered FOA access to a lovely bit of land near Galisteo Creek. Hikers spent the day exploring the ruins of Pueblo Galisteo and Las Madres, where chipped stone flakes and pottery sherds littered the landscape. Explorers also made a few unexpected discoveries—two stone axe heads and a shell pendant.



Photos by Melissa Martinez



## USING YUCCA ROOT TO MAKE SOAP

Intern Neena Vigil got a quick lesson in making of yucca root soap at the Office of Archaeological Studies last month. Neena removed the spiky leaves from a narrow-leaf yucca plant, and then shaved thin flakes off the remaining root with a vegetable peeler. The flakes were dried and crushed into a soft powder. The powder can be added to a small bottle of water, which should be shaken thoroughly to create suds. In-house yucca expert Mary Weahkee recommends that soap from the narrow-leaf yucca plant NOT be used as shampoo and works better as a fabric detergent. Remember, OAS is always on the lookout for yucca plants and would greatly appreciate any donations of living or recently dug up narrow- or wide-leaf yucca for use in upcoming education outreach programs.

## NATALIE

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Friedheim, a pupil of Franz Liszt. Hoping to further her dream of a career as a concert pianist, she commenced a series of music lessons with Busoni.

Thus began the extraordinary collaboration that played out across the ensuing three decades and resulted in the set of four compositions created in 1915 by Busoni entitled *Indianisches Tagebuch I* (Indian Diary I).

Around 1900, by which time she had abandoned her dream of a concert career, Natalie joined her brother George in Arizona, where he had gone seeking respite from asthma. Sometime between then and 1903, they traveled to Los Angeles where they met Charles Fletcher Lummis, a classmate of Curtis family friend Theodore Roosevelt at Harvard and founder of the Sequoyah League dedicated to preserving the rights and culture of Native Americans. A performance by Navajo singers there may have been the final uncorking of Natalie's quest to transcribe and record the music of Native Americans, for by 1903, she and George were in Yuma, Arizona, with an Edison recorder in their baggage.

Natalie and George gained the trust of Native people living on reservations and in pueblos across the land. It is mind boggling to contemplate the fact that they traveled, often on horseback, from the Desert Southwest to the Pacific Northwest and across the continent to northeastern Maine in their quest to record this music.

But the Native Americans were frequently reluctant to share their music and stories because of the "Code of Indian Offenses" that prohibited such exercise of their culture. Natalie approached President Roosevelt directly with her request to preserve this music, and while he gave her the permission to do so, sadly, the "Code of Indian Offenses" remained in effect until 1933. The result of her passionate quest was more than 150 songs gathered from 18 different locations, published by Harper & Brothers in 1907 as *The Indians' Book*.

On May 10, 1910, Natalie was in New York for the US premiere of Busoni's *Turandot Suite*, opus 41, conducted by Gustav Mahler and attended by the composer, who had returned to the US on a concert tour. Natalie was in New York and joined

him for the performance. She most likely gave him a copy of her book at this time. Busoni wrote to her the following year, in 1911, asking her to send him themes she thought would be suitable source material for a composition. Busoni was captivated by these melodies, and "between 1911 and 1916 he composed several works based on folksongs of the Amerindians, the suppression of whose culture he viewed as a crime against humanity."

When Busoni sailed back to Europe on April 11, 1911, on the ship *Prater*, he created a sketch based upon the *Ha-Hea Katzina* song material that became the heart of the third movement of *Indianisches Tagebuch I*, entitled *Indianisches Erntelied: Erster Versuch einer Verwerthung für das Clavier* (Indian Harvest Song: First Attempt at a Setting for Piano) and dedicated it to fellow passenger, the playwright Stefan Zweig. Also on board this ship was Gustav Mahler, suffering the fatal illness that would end his life barely five weeks later, and his beloved wife Alma.

Settled back in Berlin, Busoni composed first, a concerto for piano and orchestra based upon several melodies from *The Indians' Book*, the *Indianisches Fantasie*, and from this large-scale work, he extracted passages for the solo *Indianisches Tagebuch I* set. *Indianisches Tagebuch II* again uses this material in the context of a small orchestra.

The four movements of *Indianisches Tagebuch, Book I* employ as source material the following tunes collected by Natalie: **I:** He-Hea Katzina Song (Hopi); **II:** Song of Victory II (Cheyenne); **III:** Blue-Bird Song (Pima); Corn-Grinding Song (Laguna); Passamaquoddy Dance Song II (Wabanakis); and **IV:** Passamaquoddy Dance Song II (Wabanakis); He-Hea Katzina Song (Hopi).

The story of Natalie Curtis has a tragic ending with particular resonance for me living on the outskirts of Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1916, she met and fell in love with painter Paul Burlin. After their marriage in 1917 they decided to settle in Santa Fe where Paul had previously lived, and they purchased a small adobe house on the corner of Old Santa Fe Trail and East Buena Vista Street. In May 1921, before sailing for Europe, they rented this house to the poet Witter Bynner. On Oct.

23, 1921, Natalie was killed by an automobile as she disembarked from a tram while in Paris, and when Burlin returned to Santa Fe, he could not endure being in their home without her. He sold it to Bynner who, over time, substantially enlarged it into the property now known as The Inn of the Turquoise Bear.

Burlin's paintings are on view at Peyton Wright Gallery, 237 Palace Avenue in downtown Santa Fe, among many other prestigious galleries around the world.

The film that includes the above material, and concludes with a performance of the *Indianisches Tagebuch I* that I created for The Society for American Music's 2022 annual conference, can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/675584259/44709e2252>. ❖

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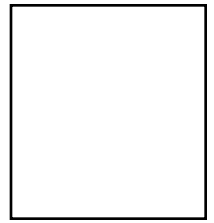
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Roberge, Marc-André, "Ferruccio Busoni in the United States." <https://doi.org/10.2307/3052618>

Sowa, Cora Angier, "Natalie Curtis, Busoni, and Grainger." <https://percygraingeramerica.org/blog/8767622>



## DIRECTOR

Continued from Page 1.

other walls were constructed of adobe bricks on cobble foundations. The floor may have been the dirt of the corral, but later floor construction has eliminated direct evidence of the earlier floor. Room 6 provided offices for the US Marshall and an attorney.

In 1880–1881, major remodeling within Room 6 included cutting into the corral surface for a new level subfloor, digging trenches for acetylene gas lines, and removing the trench fill from the room area. Pipes for gas lights on the east and west interior walls were laid, but without backfilling the trenches. Floor joists rested on the level subfloor while joist ends were notched to rest on joist plates supported against the existing west and east walls. Stones were used to fill interjoist spaces above the plates, keeping the joists spaced and upright.

Before floorboards were installed on the joists, at least one window to the courtyard was cut into the east wall,

and a doorway into Room 5 was either cut or enlarged. Debris from these demolitions was left within the joist spaces and within the gas line trenches but did not fill the spaces or trenches.

In 1882, the Lincoln Avenue face of the remodeled room is depicted in J. J. Stoner's *Bird's Eye View of the City of Santa Fe* map. A narrow boardwalk and portal face the street, and a doorway is flanked by windows. Room 6 was office space at this time, but in 1888 it was taken over as part of the post office at the west end of the Palace, and it remained as the post office until 1909.

Electricity displaced acetylene gas beginning in 1890, the west end of the Palace was refurbished multiple times, but the Room 6 footprint was stable. At some point the gas lines above the floor were disconnected. The Museum of New Mexico took over the Palace in 1909, but even Jesse Nusbaum's extensive remodeling of other areas of the Palace didn't impact below the floor of Room 6. Small repairs to the floor itself were made. ❖

## MAKE YOUR MARK ON NM ARCHAEOLOGY!

Please consider supporting the Office of Archaeological Studies by making a gift to education or research by check, credit, stock, IRA rollover, or planned gift. Your tax-deductible donation through the Museum of New Mexico Foundation will have a lasting impact. One hundred percent of your donation will be directed to the OAS. No administrative fees are charged. Give online: [museumfoundation.org/give/](https://museumfoundation.org/give/). For questions, or to donate, contact Lauren Paige, at (505) 982-2282, or via e-mail at [lauren@museumfoundation.org](mailto:lauren@museumfoundation.org).

