

The Art of

George Toya



At the age of ten, George Toya knew he wanted to be an artist. While perusing books in the library of the San Diego Mission School at Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico, he was so inspired by the work of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo that he decided then and there to hone his drawing skills. Some 40 years later, Toya has perfected those skills and is not only a professional artist, but a prolific one at that.

Toya's early professional years were spent studying design, engineering and screen-printing, all of which are evident in his meticulously drafted paintings, prints and drawings. Toya's home and cultural base of Jemez Pueblo inspires and informs his work, as well. Traditional Pueblo symbols for the sun, moon and stars--just to name a few--overflow with the vibrant colors so often seen in New Mexican skies and landscapes. More abstract interpretations of meaningful shapes take flight on canvas through Toya's strong graphics and bold placement of color. His pieces are one part fantasy, one part reality, and always filled with a narrative waiting to be discovered. Toya says his art is "...a conglomeration of tribal experiences, history, travels, observations and even comic books."



A regular participant in art fairs, Toya has won awards at the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Arts and Crafts Show, the Tulsa Indian Art Festival, the Dallas Indian Art Market and more. His paintings have been selected to grace the posters for both the American Indian Arts Alliance Show in Scottsdale, Arizona and the Albuquerque Indian Market in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was honored with a one-man show, "Pueblo 3D," at the Poeh Museum in Pojoaque, New Mexico in 2007. Toya's work can be found in the permanent collections of the Poeh Museum, the Bernie Figenbaum and Sheila Klebanow Collection in New York City, New York and in numerous private collections in Sweden, England, Germany, Japan, Canada and the United States.

Utilizing everything from quill pens to watercolor brushes to his fingers as tools Toya says, "I draw and paint because it is a part of my life that is essential for existence. When a piece is going well, time seems to have no meaning and everything else, no matter how important, doesn't really matter. Energy is flowing and total contentment is achieved."