

Welcome



Experience in Silversmithing

with Jamie Halpern, Steve Wikviya LaRance and Patte Ranney

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January 22-28, 2024

Dear Silversmith students,

Shortly we will be together at Ghost Ranch creating jewelry and learning about silver and stones and Southwestern cultures. We wish to welcome you to our two classes Introduction to Silversmithing in the Southwest Tradition and Experience in Silversmithing and tell you a little bit about ourselves and what you can expect from our program. The first class, Introduction, is a two-week course for both beginning and experienced silversmiths. The second class, Experience, is a stand-alone one-week 'open studio' class for experienced silversmiths who want to work in the Ghost Ranch studio with Ghost Ranch instructors, and/or for students who want to continue their studio work after the Introduction class ends.

Silver jewelry making in the Southwest has a long and rich history. Today, the making, trading and selling of silver and stone jewelry is a vital part of Southwestern art and culture. These classes are both a hands-on course in the basics of making silver jewelry and lapidary with stones and shell, and in the history of Southwest jewelry-making and its role in the culture and economy of local families and communities. In addition to time in the studio with master teachers and guest artists, participants in the Introduction class will have the opportunity to tour museum collections and visit the historic Santa Fe plaza where native makers have been selling their creations for generations. All participants will leave the class with wearable and sellable jewelry of their own making.

The Ghost Ranch jewelry studio is fully equipped with tools, supplies, silver and stones to work with. If you have hand tools of your own and wish to bring them to class, please make sure your name is on them. If you have your own silver and/or stones to use, please bring them along, too.

PLEASE NOTE: While class tuition includes supply costs for consumables and most rocks used in the class, students should plan on an additional cost for the silver used in class projects – we will have it available for purchase at the studio. Based on past experience, students should expect to spend an additional \$100-\$300 for their silver purchases and perhaps some special stones, depending upon the desired number and types of jewelry pieces you wish to make. We occasionally have higher-quality rocks available for purchase, as well.

Students should bring warm clothes (its wintertime!) and clothes that can get soiled as our work involves chemicals and tools that can damage clothing. Please see the Ghost Ranch website for additional information about what to bring with you to the ranch.

The class schedule is 9AM - noon and afternoons from 1:30 – 4PM, weekdays. For those who are interested, the studio may remain open late afternoons and evenings, though participation in other Ghost Ranch activities is highly encouraged. Ghost Ranch is a wonderful place with many things to do and places to explore. The Introduction class will also take a field trip into Santa Fe, weather permitting, to visit the jewelry collections at the Wheelwright Museum and learn about the history of southwest jewelry arts. We will visit the Santa Fe plaza and its Native American jewelry artists, several art galleries, and perhaps a Santa Fe jewelry supply store.

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For the Introductory class, we anticipate that many students will have had no experience with jewelry-making and we are excited to teach new skills. Some of you may come to the class with prior experience and we offer you a chance to develop your skills further in the inspiring environment of Ghost Ranch. The Experience class will operate as an open studio for independent work and Ghost Ranch instructors will be available for consultation and instruction as needed. For both classes, students will produce several wearable pieces of jewelry, demonstrating their understanding and command of the jewelry-making process from sawing and soldering, bezel-making and stone-setting, channel construction and curved stone setting for channel inlay, and casting.

Your instructors:

Jamie Halpern is a silversmith and lapidary artist living in Santa Fe and is the lead for the Ghost Ranch silversmith program. He has a deep appreciation for Southwestern arts and jewelry-making styles and has been influenced by extensive travel. He works with colorful semi-precious stones and silver through inlay and other stone-setting techniques. He makes and sells his jewelry on commission and has taught silversmithing at Ghost Ranch for over ten years.

Steve Wikviya LaRance is an acclaimed artist of Hopi descent. He has studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM and has exhibited his work and won numerous awards at some of the most prestigious Native American Art shows in the nation including The Heard Museum Indian Market (Phoenix, AZ), Eiteljorg Museum Native Arts Market (Indianapolis, IN), National Museum of the American Indian (Washington DC) and the Santa Fe Indian Market. Steve creates unique one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces utilizing the Tufa Cast technique originating from the metalsmiths of the Native Southwest. Steve's work is found in many private and public collections throughout the world.

Patte Ranney first visited Ghost Ranch in 2009 and has returned nearly every year since. A Ghost Ranch silversmith display reignited Patte's interest in silversmithing - a craft she first fell in love with in high school. For the past 6 years, Patte has devoted most of her frequent ranch visits to refining the art and craft of silver and lapidary in the southwest style and she sells her work on Etsy and at local art markets.

If you have any questions about our class, please feel free to e-mail Jamie at: finnpern@gmail.com

We are excited about the opportunity to be with you and help you bring your jewelry creations to life!

Sincerely,

Jamie, Steve and Patte