

**East**

# **Santa Fe Life**

The key to your community

**The Artwork of Carlos Carulo**  
**MOMENTS OF EMOTION**  
**Trout Fishing in America**  
**HOOK A CUTTHROAT**  
**USS Santa Fe Returns To Port**  
**A PROUD HOMECOMING**

March 2014

## **Maverick of the Arts**

**Documentary on Art Patron Mabel Dodge Luhan**



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Art patron Mabel Dodge Luhan is the subject of "Awakening in Taos," which is now under development and slated to appear on PBS.

Photo courtesy of Mark J. Gordon



### You could be a community contributor!

Mark J. Gordon writes about longtime Santa Fe artist Carlos Carulo in this edition. It's easy to join the community conversation; just email articles, photos, information and ideas to the email address shown below.

Get involved! Send your photos, stories or events to:

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Photo courtesy of Carlos Carulo



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# Documenting a Taos Arts Maverick

*Arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan is the subject of a planned national broadcast.*

by Kathryn Davis  
Community contributor

Awakening in Taos' is a biographical documentary-in-progress produced by an independent Santa Fe-based film company in partnership with New Mexico PBS. Planned for completion and broadcast in 2014 to a national PBS audience, the film explores the story of Mabel Dodge Luhan's transformational life (1879-1962). Mabel was a writer, salon hostess, art patron and catalyst for change, who fostered the way for Modern American art and culture to evolve into the early 20th century. How did this offspring of an upper-class Victorian family from Buffalo, N.Y., grow to become an outspoken 20th-century writer, feminist and social activist — and influence the careers of artists in Europe, New York and New Mexico?

A woman of wealth and status, Mabel was living in Florence in 1910, when she was introduced to the salons held by Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas in Paris. There, Mabel met Picasso, Matisse and the writers, poets and artists in their milieu. Mabel inhabited the elite circles that initiated the flowering of early European and American Modernism. In an era that discouraged women from thinking for themselves, Mabel made an incredible leap into self-discovery. Like other well-bred, turn-of-the-century women, she had been trained to define herself through marriage. In this pursuit, she would endure several unfulfilling marriages and failed love affairs until she finally took responsibility for her own happiness.

When she returned to New York in the years before World War I, Mabel asked her second husband, Edwin Dodge, to move out because she felt stifled by his presence and wanted to become healthy, whole and independent. She began hosting Free-Speech salons in her apartment, where Greenwich Village radicals and the movers and shakers of her day could express their thoughts and ideas. As the film's producer, Kathleen Peters, notes, "Mabel grew up a tormented young woman. For her



Mabel Dodge Luhan at the gate of her first home in Taos, 1918. She was a prolific arts patron and is now the subject of a documentary in progress on her prolific life in the Santa and Taos area.

Photo courtesy of Mark J. Gordon

to expand from a repressed Victorian into a leading exponent of the Modern age was a huge character arc. She did so using the tools of Modernism—art, psychiatry, travel, marriage and divorce."

Shortly after arriving in Taos in 1917, Mabel serendipitously met her spiritual match in a romantic partnership. She fell in love with and married Tony Lujan, a Taos Pueblo native. Their marriage lasted for 40 years, until her death. Tony passed shortly after.

Narrated by actor Ali MacGraw, "Awakening in Taos" features Marsha Mason as the voice of Mabel. Taos actor and photographer Zoe Zimmerman is slated to portray young Mabel's character in historic re-enactment sequences.

## The team behind the scenes:

This project is being produced by a Santa Fe-based independent film company, Awakening In Taos, LLC, whose mission is to make meaningful films in New Mexico with a focus on the





en: Mabel Dodge Luhan. From its producers and actors, script consultants and advisors, “Awakening in Taos” is the result of strong women working in close collaboration. Peters says about working with Gordon, “Mark has given this whole project a backbone, and visualized it into a reality. The women involved with the project have all contributed to his understanding of Mabel’s character, defining her themes and personal development. We’ve all become a family — passionate and committed to seeing this project to completion.”

Jill Drinkwater, who has been a producer with the project since its inception, has been a financial advisor for 36 years. She is particularly aware of how relevant Mabel’s story is for women today. “One hundred years later, we’re still dealing with the same issues! The old paradigm was about having control over someone or something. The new paradigm is about owning your personal power and being open to collaboration. It’s about co-creation, going with the flow and creating win-win scenarios.”

As the documentary’s writer and director, Gordon emphasizes that this project would not be possible without the support, collaboration and commitment of a team of creative, independent women (and men). After all, as he says, “Awakening in Taos” is the story of a woman whose personal growth and evolution intersects with important artistic and progressive events. Mabel was a visionary, seeing beyond the limitations of conventional thinking and mores. She envisioned a world without racism and sexism, where one could be transformed by the beauty of a landscape or the creation of art.”

During her lifetime Mabel made many contributions, both private and public. She and Tony lent money and support to community members in the Town of Taos and at the pueblo. They participated in a campaign to defeat the Bursum Bill, legislation in 1924 that would have taken away hundreds of thousands of acres belonging to the 19 New Mexico Tribes. This campaign put into motion events and actions that eventually lead to the return of 45,000 acres belonging to Taos Pueblo, and their sacred Blue Lake. In addition, Mabel donated a home she had built for her son, which became Taos’ first hospital: Holy Cross.

people who live or have lived here. Partners in AIT, LLC are Santa Fe and Taos residents who are passionate about bringing this local story to a national and world audience. The film has found grassroots support in the form of local businesses, private individuals, foundations and government agencies that have made tax-deductible donations to complete this production.

***The film is supported by a unique consortium of creative and independent women, actors, film professionals and volunteers who believe in this story about one of New Mexico’s most remarkable women: Mabel Dodge Luhan.***

Heading this project are producers Katie Peters, Pat Hall, Jill Drinkwater and writer-director Mark J. Gordon. The film is supported by a unique consortium of creative and independent women, actors, film professionals and volunteers who believe in this story about one of New Mexico’s most remarkable wom-

#### **Principal participants:**

Kathleen (Katie) Peters, Filmmaker — Producer  
Mark J. Gordon, Filmmaker — Director, Screenwriter  
Michael Kamins: Executive Producer at New Mexico PBS  
Marsha Mason, Actor — Voice of Mabel Dodge Luhan  
Ali MacGraw, Actor/Activist — Narrator  
Zoe Zimmerman, Actor/Artist — Appearing as Mabel in re-enactment scenes

Bob Willis: Cinematographer  
Pat Hall, Filmmaker — Producer  
Jill Drinkwater, Financial Advisor — Producer and Story Consultant

Nancy Kenney, Filmmaker — Producer, Sound Track Supervisor

Jennifer Schiffmacher, Grant Writer — Script Consultant  
Ellen Bradbury, Executive Director of Recursos de Santa Fe,

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A film documentary is underway to tell the story of Mabel Dodge Luhan. The biographical documentary-in-progress is being produced by an independent Santa Fe-based film company in partnership with New Mexico PBS.

Top photo: Mabel Dodge Luhan's farmhouse.

Far right: Tony Lujan was born and raised at Taos Pueblo and became the husband of Mabel Dodge Luhan.

Bottom far right: Debrianna Mansini has been cast for the onscreen and voice over characterization of Georgia O'Keeffe.

Center: Mark Gordon is writer/director of "Awakening in Taos."

Bottom center: Actress Zoe Zimmerman will play the on-camera part of Mabel Dodge Luhan

Bottom left: Actress Marsha Mason recounts the patron's life as the voice of Mabel Dodge Luhan in "Awakening In Taos."

Center, far left: actress Ali MacGraw is the film's narrator.

Photos courtesy of Mark Gordon



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a Non-Profit Fiscal Agent

Kathryn M. Davis, Art Historian —Writer, Editor, Script Consultant

Beth Kennedy-Jones, Script Consultant, Actor, Dramatic Coach

Lois Palken Rudnick: Script Consultant, Biographer

Flannery Burke: Biographer

Suzanne Campbell, Art Historian — Script Consultant

Cindra Kline, Writer/Editor — Script Consultant

Martha Corder, Pharmaceutical Sales Manager — Funding Development Director

Carole Baker, Internet Consultant — Social Media Director

Marti Felton, Artist and Blogger— Story Advisor

If you would like to become part of this project, contact:

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