

Bill Rabbit – Cover Artwork: *Rainbow's Dance*

Bill Rabbit was born in Wyoming of Cherokee ancestry. Growing up, he listened to the wind, old legends and stories. He watched the colors changing in the skies and noticed the form of the world around him. Rabbit completed his first drawing as a kindergartener and still has the certificate of completion given to him by his teacher. “He doesn’t necessarily get along with the other students,” she wrote. “But he might have some artistic ability.”



When U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War was raging, Rabbit enlisted in the Army after graduating from high school. For eighteen months he served in the 25th Infantry Division alongside future filmmaker, Oliver Stone, who earned an Academy Award for his 1986 film *Platoon*, which was based on Stone’s experiences during the tour of duty they shared. Rabbit now resides within the Cherokee Nation in northeast Oklahoma. The Vietnam War taught him that life’s moments are precious, so he is especially pleased to be working at what he loves.

Rabbit is self-taught in the crafts of making jewelry as well as in acrylic painting. “I am influenced by all artists,” he said. Out

of admiration for other artists’ approach to skies, colors and forms, Rabbit tries to capture the essence of their works through his own experimentation. He does little preliminary sketching for his pieces, allowing color to shape the forms in his paintings.

Rabbit’s work has garnered both critical acclaim and awards at major art shows. He and his daughter submitted a collaborative entry in the Native Art of Horse Painting National Competition, which is sponsored by Southwest Art magazine and the “Trail of Painted Ponies.” Their piece, titled “Sounds of Thunder,” was among the top ten selected from a field of several hundred artists. Rabbit has also placed highly at such shows as the Cherokee Nation Art Exhibition and the Annual Red Cloud Indian Art Exhibition.

Rabbit’s work has been displayed in museums and at events across the nation, including the Governor’s Art Gallery in Oklahoma City and the “Night of the First Americans,” a benefit concert for Native Americans held at the John F. Kennedy Center. He is a member of IACA, SWAIA, and the Cherokee Historical Society. “Life has been kind to me,” said Rabbit. “I’m thankful I’ve had the opportunity to see the things I’ve seen and to do the things I’ve done. But if I died tomorrow, I would feel so blessed and hope God puts me in charge of painting rainbows.” ♣

Bill Rabbit can be reached by calling (918) 825-3716 or email buyndnart@sbcglobal.net. To view more of his work, visit www.billandtracirabbit.com.

DESTINY MONTGOMERY – JUNE’S EXTRAORDINARY EMPLOYEE



Destiny Montgomery

Indian Gaming magazine has named Destiny Montgomery Extraordinary Employee for the month of June 2011. Destiny is a Human Resources Clerk at Black Oak Casino, where she has worked since December 2004.

“Destiny is a conscientious learner, always looking for a challenge and ways to improve the status quo,” according to Ron Patel, Black Oak’s General Manager, who nominated

her for the award. “Her innate curiosity gives her the ability to ask the right questions at the right time, and to provide the very best guest service possible.”

Destiny began at Black Oak as a parking attendant, keeping traffic moving and helping guests to and from the casino. Her pleasant personality quickly caught the attention of casino management, and when a receptionist position opened in Human Resources, she was encouraged to apply. Destiny became a Tribal Intern, learning each of the disciplines within Human Resources, such as benefits, risk management, and employee

relations, as well as learning the roles of HR managers.

“I’m kind of like a sponge,” she said. “I just want to learn everything I can and I hope to keep moving forward in the company.” Destiny was recently promoted to Tribal Management Trainee, where she will be working with supervisors and managers to increase her knowledge of their daily duties, how scheduling is managed, and how to manage people.

Destiny is also a member of the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians, which owns and operates Black Oak Casino. Part of her drive at the casino is to help make younger tribal members aware of the opportunities at the gaming property. “I am a fairly young tribal member, myself, so I think I have a lot of information and experience to offer younger members of our tribe,” she said. “I can tell them what’s available here and encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities.”

She also enjoys working with all of the team members, as well as customers, at Black Oak. “I have a lot of individuals who remember me from my previous positions,” she said. “I have two guests that still keep in touch with me, sending cards and contacting me during the holidays. I just love that I can talk with guests and they tell me about their lives. It’s one of my favorite parts of working at this property.” ♣