

Robert Whitecrow Orduño Cover Artwork: *Hoop Dancer*

As a contemporary artist, Robert Whitecrow Orduño draws from his rich Gabrieleño/Tongva and Spanish heritage to create art that is both impressionistic and expressionistic with abstract qualities.

Orduño grew up on a small farm near San Fernando, California. After attending the Los Angeles School of Design, he spent 20 years as a graphic design artist before leaving the field to devote himself to his paintings. While living in Great Falls, Montana, he quickly achieved recognition among art circles in the Northwest and received numerous awards. He moved his studio to Santa Fe in the late 1980s, where the spiritual side of his Native American nature emerged to catapult him on a journey to new places of the heart, soul and mind.

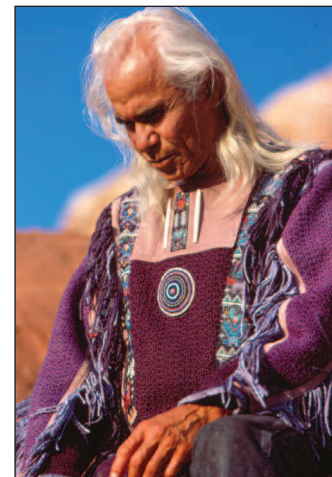
As a contemporary artist, Orduño's canvases come alive with color and energy from his total being. "I behold the expression of my art as a strong spiritual entity, echoing the philosophy that all of nature, including man, is unified with one essential heartbeat. Everything in nature is spiritual and interconnected, including the most basic, the most utilitarian things. They become the central theme in my thinking, bringing me to the point where art is a means of communicating and understanding the universal spirituality which weaves its way into the

essence of all cultures."

In the true spirit of creativity, Orduño's paintings continue to represent a progressive process of self-discovery. No image exists in an Orduño painting that has not first taken the artist to deep internal questioning. "When the ancient one chants to me," Orduño reflects, "I listen. My body becomes a vehicle for the dance and I abandon myself to the process, the journey of painting. I cross the abyss and when the old ones cease to speak, the dance comes full circle."

Orduño is listed in *Who's Who in American Art*. His work is now emerging as an important contender in the international contemporary art market and is rapidly gaining prominence for major private, museum and specialized collections. Orduño had a featured role in two episodes of Steven Spielberg's critically acclaimed mini-series, *Into the West*. ♣

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Robert Whitecrow Orduño

DAVID HAATAJA – MARCH'S EXTRAORDINARY EMPLOYEE



Indian Gaming magazine has named David Haataja Extraordinary Employee for the month of March 2012. David is General Manager of Ojibwa Casino Resort in Baraga, Michigan and Ojibwa Casino II in Marquette, Michigan where he oversees the daily operations of both casinos.

Warren C. Swartz, President of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) nominated David in recognition of his hard work and success over many years at both properties. "David is a no nonsense leader who is very loyal and trustworthy. He has a 'hands on' approach, and is also very humble," said Swartz.

Through the years, David has had an extensive career with the KBIC casinos. Chief Judge Bradley Dakota of KBIC, and also David's childhood friend, shared how he got his start in gaming. "David began working in the casino business on tribal lands 28 years ago. He started as a blackjack dealer working in the first tribally licensed Pines Casino, which was owned and operated by my father, Frederick Dakota on the reservation in 1983," said Judge Dakota. "When my father's casino was

forced to close, David was immediately hired by our tribe to help open KBIC's first tribally owned casino," he said.

David worked his way up from blackjack dealer to General Manager of the Ojibwa Casino II Marquette 15 years ago. Later he was appointed by the tribal council to manage both of the tribe's casino properties. "The tribal council based that decision on David's extensive knowledge and experience in the casino industry," said Judge Dakota.

As General Manager, David leads his teams by getting out of his office and onto the casino floors. "I like to spend time throughout the day communicating with each of the department managers and employees on the floor," said Haataja. "I want my team members to know that I am behind them one hundred percent and willing to do the same tasks they do."

The individual that has been most instrumental in David's gaming career is Fred Dakota, KBIC Tribal Council Member. "Fred is a well respected guy, full of energy and if it wasn't for him, I probably wouldn't be in this business," he stated. The future looks bright for David and KBIC members as they make plans to build a new casino and hotel. "Gaming has been good for our tribe," he said. "Over the years our business has grown and it's been so nice to see the opportunities it's created for our people." ♣