



Kathryn Stedham

Reimagined

Kathryn Stedham lives in Northern New Mexico. Last year, she attended the Procession of the Virgin Mary at Taos Pueblo on Christmas Eve. "That event was a scene that was etched in my mind," she explains. "It stayed with me for a long time. I wanted to see if I could paint it. Can I make

people feel how I felt when I was there—that magical time."

The event begins in the early evening with mass in San Geronimo Chapel followed by a procession in which a statue of the Virgin Mary is carried through the plaza accompanied by gunfire welcoming the birth of Jesus.

"There are magnificent pitchwood

bonfires that are several stories high that light the underside of the cottonwood trees. It's a very interesting perspective... It causes a glow and, in the distance, the sun is going down."

The composition of her painting *Bonfires at San Geronimo Chapel, Taos Pueblo* captures the magical light in the cottonwoods and on the adobe



Bonfires at San Geronimo Chapel, Taos Pueblo, 2025, oil on canvas, 30 x 36 in.



Place Where the Rocks are Red, oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in.



Navajo Point, Sunset View, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in.

buildings from a vantage point on the opposite side of Red Willow Creek, the pueblo's sacred water source. "I liked this perspective because it gave a quiet space before you get into the very active space," she explains.

The painting will be included in the exhibition *West: Reimagined* at Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe, August 28 through September 10.

Leah Garcia, the gallery's marketing director, says, "Kathryn Stedham brings a deeply personal and contemporary voice to Western painting. Rather than simply documenting the landscape, she draws upon memory and lived experience to capture its vastness, solitude, shifting light, and quiet power."

Shining Rock, West Light, illustrates her training in the style of the Old Masters but is inspired by 20th- and 21st-century aesthetics and the influence of contemporary masters such as Maynard Dixon, Victor Higgins and Ed Mell. Another major influence is her friendship with the eminent photographer of the Western landscape, William Clift, "who taught me

to see," she explains.

"To begin a painting," she says, "I start with three colors—a neutral, a warm neutral and a cool neutral and paint a monochromatic image of the major shapes. I learned to paint from life, so everything has a light, a dark and a middle ground. You can create anything from those three things. I then carve the forms into three-dimensions using lights and darks."

A prize-winning equestrian, she was also a rock climber. "I climbed all over

the world," she relates, "so I'm very, very aware of how light falls on rocks because, you know, we judge the light to see whether or not we're going to climb."

In *Shining Rock, West Light*, she employs classic atmospheric perspective to create depth in the image of soft forms. Moisture, dust and light scatter over the distance, causing far-off objects to appear paler, bluer, and less detailed. Her paintings employ traditional methods shaped by her unique contemporary vision. 🐾



Shining Rock, West Light, oil on canvas, 36 x 58 in.