

ART AS DEVOTION

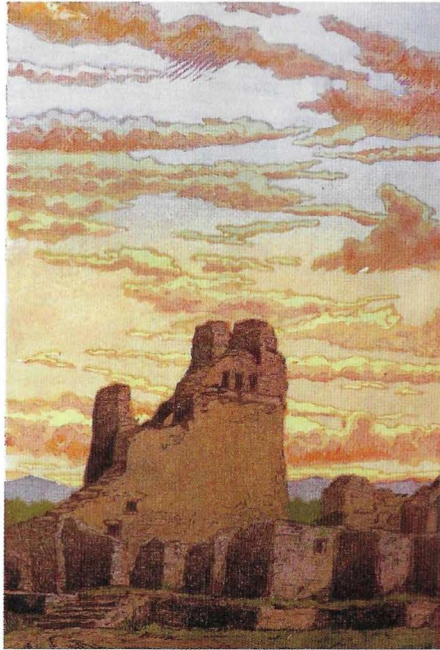
SANTA FE

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through September 2

Gerald Peters Gallery is exhibiting recent works by the master printmaker Leon Loughridge. Based in Colorado, he employs the Japanese technique of *moku hanga*; the woodblock prints are created by hand, and although his hand-printing process is simple, it is also labor-intensive. To underscore this point and to answer visitors' questions, Loughridge himself will demonstrate the process at the gallery July 11-15.

Titled *Sacred Ground*, his show features woodblock prints, watercolors, and serigraphs of the places in New Mexico that represent Loughridge's spiritual roots and personal story. The artist is characteristically eloquent about how these recent works came to be: "*Sacred Ground* is a personal issue for me. Having grown up in open spaces, wandering freely, I have come to depend on moments of isolation in an environment where the rules are clear, if not stark. The



constancy of that stark reality allows me to trust my environment, to explore my emotional reactions to what is in front of me, and to observe the subtle nuances of color and light in a landscape."

LEON LOUGHRIDGE (b. 1952), *Spirits of Abo Mission*, 2023, woodblock print on paper [edition of 12], 18 x 12 in.

He continues, "These familiar locations are a never-ending display of beauty. They are sites where I am continually inspired, where I am familiar with the folds and creases of the land, so much so that I can mentally step into the landscape and walk those folds while standing at my easel. As light and shadow dance across those folds and creases, the landscape becomes a living stage, offering glimpses of artistic renderings."

Loughridge asks, "At what point does the land become a living entity in one's mind? My constant return to these sites develops a symbiotic nurturing of spirit between myself and the land, where concern for the ground enlightens my own being. As one becomes more and more devout in caring for the landscape and observing its beauty, the ground begins to take on a sacred aspect, becoming a portal or apparition of a state of mind. My artworks from these sites are devotional statements of my encounters with the reality and beauty they offer."