

Community Focus

“GROUNDED IN CLAY: The Spirit of Pueblo Pottery” is a community curated exhibition that will debut July 31 at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This traveling exhibition will feature more than 100 historic and contemporary works and “offers a visionary understanding of Pueblo pots as vessels of community-

based knowledge and personal experience.”

Organized by the School for Advanced Research and the Vilcek Foundation, the exhibition draws items from both collections that were hand-selected by the Pueblo Pottery Collective. The group consists of more than 60 individuals of 21 tribal communities, and along with selecting the pottery

to exhibit they wrote about its distinct artistry and culture. The show also marks the 100th anniversary of the creation of SAR’s Indian Arts Research Center’s pottery collection.

The approach of community curation for the show allowed Native Americans to show the complexities of the Pueblo history and contemporary artwork through their

own eyes, voices and visions. It communicates firsthand knowledge, family rituals, traditions and more from those who know and understand how to make the vessels as well as their history.

Artwork in the show includes a circa 1890 Zia water jar with a beautiful deer design; a San Ildefonso storage jar with lid from circa 1905 by Martina Vigil and Florentino Montoya; and a Cochiti storage jar that was made around 1800 to 1820 that features a simple design and a thick red band at center.

SAR president Michael F. Brown says, “‘Grounded in Clay’ is part of our public education mission which, in this case, enables the public to experience pottery through the eyes of Native peoples.”

