

Seeds of Modernism

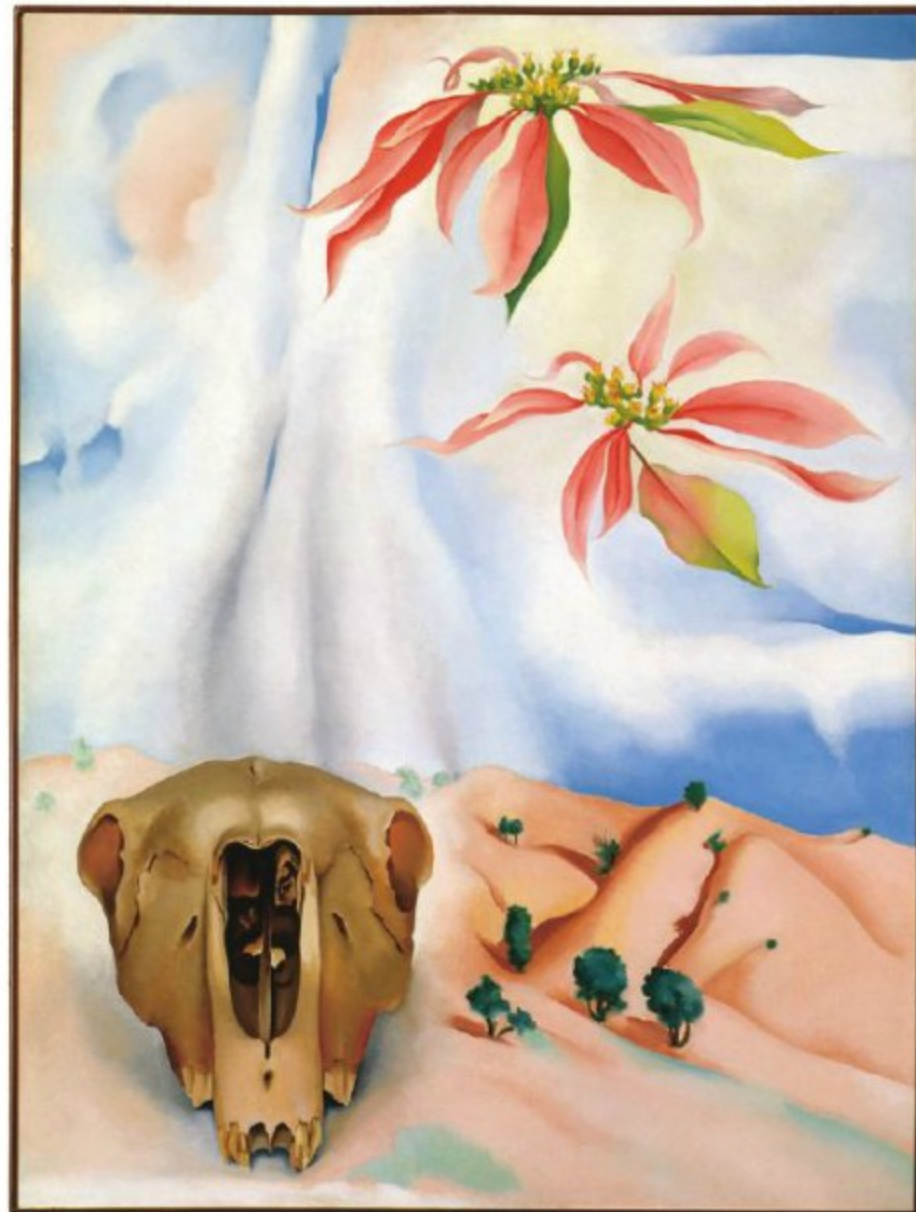
Ongoing Georgia O'Keeffe exhibit at the Indianapolis Museum of Art explores her still lifes in the Southwest.

In 1917, Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986) had her first one-person show at 291, the gallery that Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) ran in New York City. Later that year, she and her sister stopped in Santa Fe on a trip to the West. O'Keeffe was immediately impressed by the light, the vistas and the strong natural forms of the region. In 1929, she returned with her friend Rebecca Strand (1891-1968) and was invited by Mabel Dodge Luhan (1879-1962) to stay at her home in Taos. Toward the end of her stay, O'Keeffe wrote a note to Luhan: "Dear Mabel, it is 5 a.m. and I have been up for about an hour—watching the moon grow pale—and the dawn come...I wish I could see you this morning—more than that I wish I could tell you how important these months have been to me—Maybe you know." O'Keeffe visited New Mexico nearly every year after that and finally settled permanently in nearby Abiquiu in 1949.

The art community of Taos was well established when she arrived to paint in 1929. However, she and other artists with connections to Stieglitz and Luhan brought the seeds of modernism to the region. Their work would rival the modern movements on both coasts.

The exhibition *Georgia O'Keeffe and the Southwestern Still Life* focuses on a specific aspect of their output, an examination of objects and groups of objects rather than the vastness of the landscape or the people of Taos Pueblo. The exhibition continues at the Indianapolis Institute of Art through February 15.

The organizing curator is Dr. Charles C. Eldredge, former Director of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and currently Hall Distinguished Professor of American Art at the University of Kansas. Dr. Eldredge explains, "This exhibition brings much-needed attention to the painted interpretations of the American Southwest by O'Keeffe and her contemporaries. It explores the ways these artists took simple, seemingly mute objects and with them conveyed natural and human



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), *Mule's Skull with Pink Poinsettia*, 1936, oil on canvas, 40½ x 30". Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Gift of The Burnett Foundation. 1997.06.014. (O'Keeffe 876) © Copyright 2014 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum. Image courtesy International Arts®.

dramas that described a distinctive locale and its rich cultural history."

The exhibition contains more than 50

works, including those by Marsden Hartley, Gustave Baumann, Raymond Jonson and Victor Higgins. ☞

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Deer Horns, 1938, oil on canvas, 36 x 16". Collection of Louis Bacon. (O'Keeffe 941) Photography by Christie's Images. © Copyright 2014 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum. Image courtesy International Arts®.

Georgia O'Keeffe and the Southwestern Still Life



When: Ongoing through February 15, 2015

Where: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 4000 Michigan Road, Indianapolis, IN 46208

Information: (317) 923-1331, www.imamuseum.org



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), *Yellow Cactus*, 1929, oil on canvas, 30 x 42". Dallas Museum of Art, Texas. Patsy Lucy Griffith Collection, Bequest of Patsy Lucy Griffith. 1998.217. (O'Keeffe 675) © Copyright 2014 Georgia O'Keeffe Museum. Image courtesy International Arts®.



Georgia O'Keeffe (1887-1986), *Black Patio Door*, 1955, oil on canvas, 40½ x 30". Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas. (O'Keeffe 1283) © Copyright 2014 Amon Carter Museum of American Art. Image courtesy International Arts®.