



Santa Fe Art Institute

For immediate release:

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Page 1 of 2

“Fair Trade Art”

What: Photo-documentarians Armando Espinosa and Craig Johnson **Lecture**

Where: Tipton Hall

When: Monday, July 21, 6pm

How Much: \$5 general public, \$2.50 students/seniors/SFAI members

What: Photo-documentarians Armando Espinosa and Craig Johnson **Workshop**

Where: SFAI

When: Tuesday, July 22 to Friday, July 25, 10am - 4pm

How Much: \$400, 10% discount for SFAI members, generous scholarships available

The Santa Fe Art Institute is proud to welcome documentarians, Armando Espinosa and Craig Johnson as part of SFAI's 2008 lecture season “Outsider: Tourism, Migration, Exile.” Espinosa and Johnson will discuss and screen their documentary *La Danza de la Pluma (The Feather Dance)*. The film is part of the “Metamorfosis Documentation Project,” a collaborative project with the community of Teotitlán del Valle, a village in southern Oaxaca. The presentation will focus on what Espinosa and Johnson refer to as “fair trade art and anthropology.”

La Danza de la Pluma is a traditional ritual dance still being performed in the Oaxacan valleys in Mexico. It is a cross-cultural conquest dance, part of the cycle of Conquest Dances, and closely related to the Matachín dances, which are still performed today in the Indian Pueblos and several Hispanic communities in New Mexico.

Espinosa and Johnson interviewed the dancers and other community members in Teotitlán del Valle in November and December 2007, and then filmed the presentation of the Dance for the feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe on December 12. After returning to Santa Fe and editing the documentary, they returned in May 2008 to Teotitlán del Valle where they worked with the Community Museum Committee and other community members to establish a permanent exhibit of *La Danza de la Pluma* in the Community Museum.

On June 8, 2008 on the Civic Plaza of Teotitlán del Valle, in conjunction with the local authorities, Metamorfosis Documentation Project presented the community with the documentary *La Danza de la Pluma*. The rights of reproduction for the documentary were given to the

Espinosa & Johnson **“Fair Trade Art”**

Community Museum, so that it can sell the DVD to its visitors. The Museum will receive all of the proceeds from these sales, with the additional income designated for the maintenance and improvement of the Museum. This event also featured the official opening of the permanent exhibit of *La Danza de la Pluma* in the Community Museum, a performance of *La Danza de la Pluma* by the current Grupo de Promesa (Promise Group), and a screening of the documentary in the Municipal Auditorium for the community.

In Teotitlán del Valle, the Isaac Vasquez García family assisted Espinosa and Johnson in developing *La Danza de la Pluma* project. The Vasquez García family, are owners of the Bug in the Rug weaving shop, and were central to the re-establishment of natural dying techniques in traditional weaving. Coincidentally, Espinosa and Johnson discovered that the family was in the process of applying to the 2006 Santa Fe International Folk Art Market for the first time. They assisted the family by personally bringing their application back to Santa Fe, which was ultimately accepted. The Vasquez Family is returning to Santa Fe in 2008, for their second year of participation in the Folk Art Market.

Espinosa and Johnson's relationship with the Vasquez family became pivotal to the proposed documentation project of *La Danza de la Pluma*. Indeed, personal relationships with members of the local community can greatly facilitate gaining the community's confidence when presenting them with a documentation project proposal. Espinosa and Johnson will host a four-day workshop to explore the process and skills necessary to respectfully enter into an unfamiliar social and / or cultural environment with the purpose of documenting a certain event with photography or film. The workshop will help those with projects at various stages of development to realize their vision with the guidance of two acclaimed documentarians.

This series partially funded by the city of Santa Fe Arts Commission and the 1% Lodgers' Tax. Made possible by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

For more information about Espinosa & Johnson or interview requests, please contact Michelle Laflamme-Childs at mchilds@sfai.org or (505) 424-5050.