

## REVIEWS

### Dancers meet visual art

"Dance and American Art — A Long Embrace" by Sharyn R. Udall

University of Wisconsin Press, \$29.95, 348 pp.

BY DAVID STEINBERG

Journal Staff Writer

Isadora Duncan plays a prominent part in Sharyn R. Udall's new scholarly yet lively work that joins dance and American visual art over almost 150 years.

Inside and outside of the dance community Duncan was known as a pioneering American modern dancer who was born in the late 19th century, and lived until 1929.

But what some may not have known — until Udall shined a light on the subject — is that visual artists focused their canvases and cameras on her.

In the book, you will find Russian-American artist Abraham Walkowitz's ink-and-watercolor on paper titled, "Isadora Duncan Dancing" (1916); German-American photographer Arnold Genthe's print "Isadora Duncan Dancing" (c. 1915-1918); Ernest Blumenschein's gouache "Isadora Duncan — Paris Opera about 1900"; painter John Sloan's etching "Isadora Duncan" (1915); and German-American Arnold Rönnebeck's watercolor "Andante" (1912), which Udall says "presents Duncan as an overripe Amazon with an attitude, an *artiste* taken more seriously by herself than by the painter."

Duncan used her art to promote her politics. The blood-red tunic she wore in the Walkowitz watercolor was for the dance she performed to the French national anthem the "Marseillaise." In the United States, the dance inspired American recruits to help the French military in World War I, according to a source Udall cites.

Walkowitz made a decades long documentation of Duncan in paintings and drawings.

The book's cover presents a stunning detail of John Singer Sargent's 1882 oil on canvas "El Jaleo," which is seen in full inside. The book's chronology states that contemporary artists considered the Sargent work of a Spanish Gypsy dancer a "tour de force" but the public considered it "ugly."

Other famous painters referenced in the book are Winslow Homer, who did wood engravings of Parisian dance halls for Harper's Weekly; Jackson Pollock, whose large-scale "Mural" presents tangled dance forms; Mary Cassatt, who painted "Spanish Dancer Wearing Lace Mantilla"; and John Marin, whose 1942 oil "Dance by the Sea" shows nude dancers.

A 14-page chronology and the main sections of the book give the subject historical context by bringing in non-American dancers and art by non-American artists, as well as developments in music, such as jazz, that relate to art.

Udall, a Santa Fe resident, is an art historian and independent curator.

### History on land-grant heirs

"Trespassers on Our Own Land" by Mike Scarborough

Dog Ear Publishing, \$19.95, 284 pp.

REVIEW BY KAREN R. ROYBAL

Land grants are a definitive part of the rich cultural history of New Mexico. As part of the vast territory sought by the United States in the 19th century, New Mexico land — and land grants in particular — have been at the center of historical accounts and lawsuits for well over 150 years. Many in-depth studies, books, dissertations and legal briefs have documented this history. However, none of these accounts offer the thoughtful combination of historical facts, legalese, oral history and humor that Mike Scarborough's "Trespassers on Our Own Land" provides. The book is an oral history that details not only the land-grant struggle in northern New Mexico from the 19th century to the present, but it also includes the family history of Juan P. Valdez, a descendant of Juan Bautista Valdez, an original grantee who acquired a large parcel of land from the Spanish government in 1807.

In "Trespassers," Valdez reminds the reader of the value of those quotidian practices — such as oral history — as he relays to his grandson the story of his involvement in the 1967 Rio Arriba County Courthouse Raid,



NICOLÁS OTERO ILLUSTRATION

# Metaphorical flora

A trio is rescued.  
And, hollyhocks blossom where  
they hadn't grown before.

"How Hollyhocks Came to New Mexico" by Rudolfo Anaya, illustrations by Nicolás Otero, Spanish translation by Nasario García

Rio Grande Books, \$24.95, 43 pp.

BY DAVID STEINBERG

Journal Staff Writer

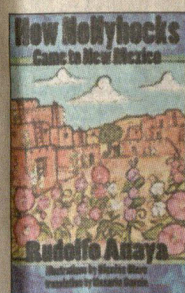
Rudolfo Anaya, the dean of Chicano literature and the author of "Bless Me Ultima," has written a charming new children's book. The book presents an Anaya-created folktale that explains the origins of hollyhocks — a popular, drought-resistant garden flower — in New Mexico.

This bilingual tale begins far from the Land of Enchantment and hollyhocks aren't mentioned until late in the tale.

King Herod is infuriated that Jesus also is called "king" and doesn't show up before him as demanded. So Herod orders the death of all the children of Bethlehem. An angel named Sueño tells Jesus, Mary and Joseph to flee to Egypt.

Because Egypt is so far, the angel comes to their rescue, offering them a ride on his back. Trouble is Sueño gets lost and they all end up in New Mexico, parts of which apparently resemble the Holy Land. Sueño later blames the misdirected flight on his nearsightedness.

The Holy Family find their way to some of the Pueblo people. Joseph helps the men cut trees for doors and roofs. Jesus helps the boys carry adobe bricks



Heritage and Arts, 251 Main St., Los Lunas.

to workers building houses. Mary grinds blue-corn kernels in a metate for unleavened bread.

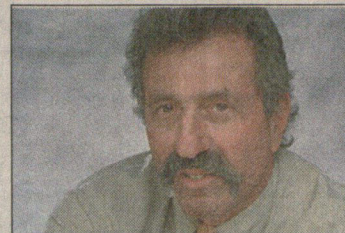
Jesus, Mary and Joseph head north to a large pueblo where they witness dances. They notice the ladders for access to second stories of pueblo homes and to cave dwellings.

The Holy Family doesn't plan to remain in New Mexico forever. Jesus wonders if Sueño needs a ladder to climb down to retrieve them and take them back home. So Joseph cuts trees for the ladder. Before they depart up the ladder with the now bespectacled Sueño, Joseph plants his walking staff in the ground. Miraculously, hollyhocks make their appearance in the next growing season exactly where the staff is. The flower has since spread statewide.

In Spanish, hollyhocks are called "varas de San José" or staffs of St. Joseph.

Anaya says the tale was inspired by the surprise appearance of hollyhocks in the garden of his Albuquerque home.

DAVID STEINBERG



Of the Journal

## Authors talk cat, fish, dogs and barns

Santa is sick, too sick to travel this year. Who's going to fill in for him when it's time to deliver presents? Pete the Cat, of course. Pete is happy to help because helping others is pretty groovy. At the North Pole, Pete and his canary-friend fill Pete's red minibus with gifts. From there, Santa's reindeer pull the minibus through the skies to deliver the presents to all the kids.

That's the basic story of "Pete the Cat Saves Christmas," the most recent book in a popular series for children.

James Dean, who created and illustrated the book, will be at Bookworks, 4022 Rio Grande NW, at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 3, to read the story.

The website [www.harpercollinschildrens.com/petethecat](http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/petethecat) has several song and activity downloads, and a "Pete the Cat Saves Christmas" event.

**AT BARNES AND NOBLE:** The bookstore in Coronado Shopping Center hosts these two events on Saturday, Dec. 8 ... Heidi Schulman chats about her book "The Original Dog Tarot — Divine the Canine Mind!" from 11 a.m.-noon. Schulman lives in Santa Fe with her beloved dog Bosco and his canine little sister Tille. ... William Sine talks about his book "Guardian Angel: Life and Death Adventures with Pararescue, The World's Most Powerful Commando Rescue Force" from 1-2 p.m. The book explores the dangerous adventures of parajumpers of the U.S. Air Force Pararescue unit.

**AT PAGE ONE:** The bookstore at 11018 Montgomery NE, hosts two author events this week. ... Noted New Mexico novelist John Nichols and fishing guide Taylor Streit team up at 3 today for a presentation titled, "To Fish Out of Water." The presentation is in connection with Nichols' new novel "On Top of Spoon Mountain," and with the release of the second edition of Streit's "Instinctive Fly Fishing: A Guide to Rituals and Practices." ... Kathryn Ravenwood talks about her New Age book, "How to Create Sacred Water: A Guide to Rituals and Practices," at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7. She is a minister of the Universal Life Church, is a certified teacher of alchemical healing and is a licensed massage therapist.

**AT UNM BOOKSTORE:** The bookstore is hosting three author events. ... Sari Krosinsky talks about her new poetry collection "god-chaser" at noon on Tuesday, Dec. 4. ... Nicole Blaisdell and Bill Peterson discuss the new book they edited, "Gus Blaisdell Collected," at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 5. The late Gus Blaisdell was the proprietor of Albuquerque's Living Batch bookstore. The book includes essays on art, film and literature. ... Judit Kádár discusses her book "Going Indian: Cultural Appropriation in North American Literature" at 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 6. While at the University of New Mexico, Kádár offered an eight-week course

