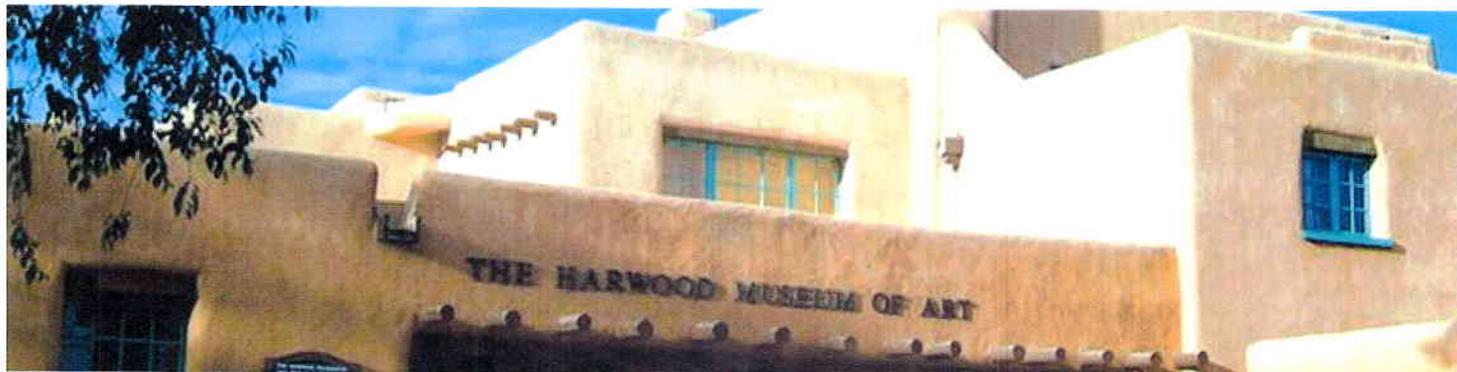


April 6, 2016 Taos, New Mexico

[The Harwood Museum of Art](#)



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Saturday, December 11, 2010 - Sunday, February 20, 2011

Mandelman and Ribak in Taos

Gallery: Mandelman-Ribak Gallery



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In 1944 Beatrice Mandelman and Louis Ribak left New York City and settled in Taos, NM, forming the nucleus of painters who would come to be known as the Taos Moderns. Big-city contemporaries of Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky and Jackson Pollock, their relocation to the Southwest propelled them in a new direction of modern art.

Fifty-six years later, Bea and Louis' legacy lives on with an intimate exhibition of twenty works (of the total 133) that have been gifted to the Harwood Museum of Art's permanent collection. The work spans five decades and demonstrates the inter-relatedness of Bea Mandelman and Louis Ribak's aesthetics. Fifteen spectacular works by the artists will be highlighted in the new Mandelman-Ribak Gallery, a space named in honor of the artists that will feature changing exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. A selection of seven smaller examples will be exhibited in the new adjoining Robert M. Ellis and Caroline Lee Gallery, and figurative and landscape works will be on view in the Ellis-Clark Moderns Gallery. A catalog of the works in the exhibition will also be available.

"The pieces in this show have been selected for their ability to work well together, and also for what they mean historically to Taos and the wider world," says Harwood Curatorial Manager Jina Brenneman. "In this work, you can see parallels of how America was changing. It tells not only the artists' story, but the story of a nation, moving from Social Realism to Modernism."

Beatrice Mandelman and Louis Ribak

Louis Leon Ribak was born in the Lithuanian province of Grodno Gubernia in 1902. When he was ten, he immigrated with his family to New York City. In 1922 he attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He studied with John Sloan at the Art Students League in 1923, and then at the Educational Alliance in 1924.

Beatrice Mandelman was born on December 31, 1912 in Newark, New Jersey. From an early age she was determined to be an artist. At age twelve, she began taking classes at the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art. In the 1930s, she attended Rutgers University, the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art, and the Art Students League in New York.

In 1942 Mandelman and Ribak were married, and in 1944 they traveled to Santa Fe to visit Ribak's teacher and mentor, John Sloan. Finding Santa Fe congested, they took the train along the Rio Grande and a stagecoach up to Taos, and decided to settle there. An impulsive and inspired move, it was a decision that would effectively remove them from the art world's mainstream.

In New Mexico, Ribak's artistic style underwent a transformation from Social Realism towards abstraction. He was captivated by the landscape and the diverse cultures of northern New Mexico. In 1947 Ribak founded the Taos Valley Art School. He was an integral force in the development of the Taos Moderns, an allied group of artists including Mandelman, Ed Corbett, Andrew Dasburg, Agnes Martin, Oli Sihvonen, and Clay Spohn. Ribak's mature style was characterized as lyrical Abstract Expressionism.

Throughout her lifetime with Ribak, and after his death in 1979, Beatrice Mandelman was adventurous and profoundly curious about art, life, and culture. She loved to travel, and drew inspiration from it. Over the years she lived for extended periods in Mexico and traveled extensively in South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Mandelman died on June 25, 1998 in her home in Taos. During the last months of her life, she produced the thirty-one works in the *Winter Series*. Over the span of seven decades, Beatrice Mandelman produced a body of work consisting of hundreds of paintings, prints, collages, and works on paper.

The *Mandelman and Ribak in Taos* exhibition and catalogue are generously sponsored by the [Mandelman-Ribak Foundation](#) and the [Harwood Museum Alliance](#).

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