

COMMUNITY EVENTS

YAN artist Jerry Whagado is premier silversmith

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Yavapai-Apache silversmith Jerry Whagado of Middle Verde deserves the recognition for creating great works of art using silver to make high-fashion jewelry. It's not an easy task to sit in a studio bent over sawing thin silver sheets into various designs and then soldering them together.

It is the work of a genius.

Cleaning the silver involves bathing the pieces of silver in an acid bath to completely take away the burnt impurities from the soldering. Finally, the buffing of the pieces using a special polishing stick applied to a buffing wheel that brings the completed silver pieces to a glow.

Jerry's special techniques of silver overlays involves the use



Jerry Whagado- Yavapai artist

of micro-sawing techniques that requires high powered magnifying glasses that is worn like a welder's helmet.

Overlay techniques involve sandwiching two pieces of silver on top of one another,

sometimes, stamping the background with a micro-chisel to give it a textured effect. Finally, staining the pieces with a special chemical dye that turns the silver completely black. The final special buffing



Silver bracelet with traditional Yavapai deer.

technique then leaves the dark recesses of the completed pieces with a dark background to bring out the cut-out designs that are soldered to the top of the bottom plate. This is the distinctive part of Hopi jewelry that Jerry has adapted to develop his Yavapai pieces.

Jerry spent several years living on the Hopi Reservation in the village of Shungopavi where he learned the process of silversmithing under the tutelage of well-known Hopi artists such as the late Fred Kabotie and mentors such as the late Michael Kabotie, son of Fred.

Other mentors included the Saufkie family who are well-known Hopi artists. Jerry gives credit to the Second Mesa Hopi Artist Guild where he

started his artistic career under the prodding of Fred Kabotie.

Jerry has a Yavapai-Hopi son, Gerald Lomaventama of Second Mesa who is a renowned artist in the Indian jewelry art circle. In 2016, Gerald was named 'Master Apprentice' by the South West Folklife Alliance of Tucson, a prestigious organization that honors and recognizes talented artists.

Jerry also has another son, Lionel Honwyteawa of Bacavi who is a wood carver and artist.

Jerry has been back to the Nation now for many years and spends most of his time getting ready for prestigious art shows competing with some of the other top Indian silversmiths from across the country in such places as the Sante

Fe Indian Art Market held in August.

His designs are all Yavapai or Apache motifs rather than Hopi because Jerry is Yavapai. As a child, he moved to Hopi land where he grew up with his siblings with the last name of Honwyteawa who were his half brothers and sisters. Jerry's mother was the late Marion Whagado who retained her father's last name (the late Scott Whagado). Jerry also acquired the same last name in honor of his grandfather. Jerry's father was a Yavapai from Middle Verde.

Jerry has perfected his jewelry making techniques and his works are highly prized.



Buckle for the woman's silver belt with 11 conchos

Silversmithing students gather for first instructions

BY DON DECKER,
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With a special grant for community artists, YAN qualified artists are now in the community teaching their skills and creativity to various YAN members. Reba Franco taught dress making while Troy Kaska taught word burning crafts using cottonwood roots.

Silversmithing is one of the crafts that is being taught by Jerry Whagado throughout the community that has generated lots of interest.

Whagado is an award-winning Yavapai-Apache artist. Having garnered several recent awards from the Santa Fe Outdoor Indian Market, Whagado has attracted

the attention of Indian jewelry aficionados who look forward to each new piece.

Whagado learned all of the silversmithing techniques while living among the Hopi people with his family in his formative years. While there, he also learned the sacred ceremonies and language of the people.

Whagado was prepared for his class on Monday, January 28 as he distributed to each of his students the various tools necessary for the



Tracie Hunter's horse medallion which is about 2.25 inches.

instruction. This was just an introduction.

Students are receiving the 1:1 instruction that is generating some great pieces for the very first time for the students.



Silver smithing students start with the basics.

Who knows—another award-winning silversmith in the future.

You couldn't ask for

a better teacher-Jerry Whagado.

Update: As of

February 28, all the jewelry students participating made jewelry pieces and learned all of techniques in producing fine jewelry.

"I enjoyed doing it and they were eager to do it. They were pretty excited. They (Linda Russell and Tracie Hunter) were happy with what they accomplished. I think they were surprised," said Jerry about his 2 students who began the workshop and went to the very end.



Linda Russell's dragon fly.



Linda Russell filing her piece.



Master teacher Jerry Whagado adjusting the heat source for soldering. Photos by Laura Wathogoma