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Lantern Dancer

124 East Pagosa Street

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www.lantern dancer.com



For Immediate Release:

**Tommy Singer Debuts
Mother Earth™ Collection
Exclusively at Lantern Dancer Gallery**

Pagosa Springs, Colorado: "I saw you on TV last night," master Diné artist Tommy Singer said referring to a local access TV commercial featuring Lantern Dancer Gallery owner Doris Green. Lantern Dancer has sold Tommy Singer jewelry for several years, yet the two had never officially met until that day in 2011. Singer and his son Ben visited with Green for several hours and during their first face-to-face conversation, Singer showed her a photo of a necklace he designed in 1970, then he told her he wanted to re-create the line of jewelry and have Lantern Dancer handle it exclusively. The Mother Earth™ collection was born.

The first ensemble, Rebirth™ by Tommy Singer, is symbolic of renewal. The design features a rich, green gemstone from Utah known as Variscite. The color is reminiscent of the reawakening spring set in layers of hand-stamped sterling silver symbolic of the life flow of water as it comes from the clouds, the sky, the mountains and circulates into rivers. The complete set of Rebirth™ is one-of-a-kind and includes a necklace, two cuff bracelets, a pair of earrings, and rings for each hand. Available for purchase as a complete set to be worn in the Navajo tradition, each piece is numbered and comes with a certificate of authenticity signed by Tommy Singer.

It is traditional for Diné women to wear a complete set of jewelry: necklace, a cuff on each wrist, a ring on each hand and earrings for special occasions—especially during the rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood. This type of ornamentation is part of the celebration of Changing Woman, the Navajo deity that represents the natural order of the Universe. Each day when the sun rises banishing the dark, we are renewed. During a sacred Diné healing tradition, patients are cured by going through an experience of death and rebirth. Even the seasons are celebrated for their rites of passage through birth, maturity, growing old and dying until the earth is born again in the spring. Therefore, it is appropriate that this first collection be called Rebirth™ and be made of Variscite.

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By mixing traditional methods of jewelry making with new found materials and techniques, Tommy Singer continues to revise his signature style. In the Mother Earth™ collection he is not only the designer, but is personally selecting the highest-grade, cut and polished stones, inlaying them in silver crafted by his own hand. His mastery of materials and years of experience provide him with an opportunity to recreate previous concepts in an entirely new way.

And it somehow seems fitting that Singer selected Lantern Dancer Gallery in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, nearly halfway between Blanca Peak to the East and Hesperus Peak to the West, two of the four sacred Navajo mountains. Every act of the Diné is interconnected. Every action, every creation, every waking moment is a living prayer. There is no concept of religion as an activity separate from daily life.

And there is only one Rebirth™ and only one place to purchase the ensemble and future ensembles in the Mother Earth™ collection—Lantern Dancer Gallery.

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Professionally photographed, high resolution imagery is available upon request.

On August 6, 2011, Tommy Singer will be available for interviews with the media at Lantern Dancer Gallery. Please contact Lantern Dancer to arrange.

Tommy Singer was born in a small community on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. His father, Tsinnigine Hathali,



was a Navajo Medicine Man and silversmith who began teaching his son when he was 7 years old. By the age of 21, Singer was creating jewelry full-time. Like his father, he is also a Medicine Man. Singer incorporates many traditional sandpainting and rug designs into his jewelry. In the 1960s, Singer invented and perfected the use of turquoise and coral chips in inlaid silver. This method of design referred to as “chip-inlay” has been shared and copied by other Navajo artists. In recent years, Singer returned to silversmithing and has created silver overlaid jewelry with intricate designs. Overlay is created by soldering two pieces of silver together. The top piece features a design element meticulously cut out of silver, the bottom piece is oxidized and often textured to produce a contrasting background. His most recent works often include 14-karat gold overlaid on silver and carved silver beads. Singer signs each of his works with his distinctive marks: T. Singer, T and a crescent moon, or Thomas Singer.

Navajo Silversmithing can be traced back to the 1860’s, though some suggest that the Navajo were forging silver as early as 1795. The first Navajo silversmith, Atsidi Sani, learned his craft from a Mexican blacksmith and passed it along to his sons. Later in the 1880s, J.L. Hubbell hired several Mexican silversmiths to teach the craft to Navajos at this Trading Post in Ganado, Arizona.

Variscite is an aluminum phosphate mineral colored by traces of chromium. According to larger mythology, Variscite is a good meditation stone and centers the Solar Plexus and heart chakras. It helps with remembrance of past lives.

Lantern Dancer specializes in Native American and contemporary Southwestern jewelry, Southwestern art and pottery. Singer chose Lantern Dancer and owner Doris Green to represent this line exclusively because of the way she promotes and supports the artists she carries. Lantern Dancer provides *Santa Fe Quality at Pagosa Prices* available worldwide at www.lanterndancer.com.