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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SAVED FROM THE FIRE

Artwork and Rare Studio Artifacts of Alfred Morang to Appear at Matthews Gallery

Santa Fe, NM—When Alfred Morang’s Canyon Road studio caught fire on January 29, 1958, the Santa Fe art community was shocked to the core. “*Alfred Morang, 56, one of Santa Fe’s best known and most colorful Bohemians died at about 1:30 am last night in a tragic fire at his home in the 600 block of Canyon Road,*” reported the Santa Fe New Mexican the next morning. For the first time since Morang’s death, artifacts of the artist plucked from the ashes will return to Canyon Road’s 600 block. Matthews Gallery is excited to present MORANG AND FRIENDS, an exhibition of artwork by Alfred Morang and his contemporaries, opening December 12 with a special reception from 5-7 pm and closing December 26.

“There’s a reason Morang has been called a ‘neglected master,’” said owner Lawrence Matthews, as he looked from the gallery to the spot nearby where the artist’s studio had stood, just behind the building that once housed the legendary Claude’s Tavern. “He was a Renaissance man, a genius, but his colorful life and tragic death often distract from his powerful artwork.”

Morang moved from Portland, Maine to Santa Fe in 1936, seeking relief from tuberculosis. He had been a highly successful musician and fiction writer back East, publishing in literary magazines alongside Twain, Poe, Frost and others. In the City Different, Morang and his wife Dorothy became fixtures on the social scene. Morang had studied painting under American Impressionist Carroll S. Tyson as a teen, and the dramatic vistas of the Desert Southwest inspired him to develop his abilities as a colorist. He made impressionistic, heavily impastoed landscapes and portraits, treating his pigments like a sculptural medium. As a revered art teacher and prolific painter, he helped shape a generation of Santa Fe artists.

Decades after Morang’s death, local art scholar Paul Parker conducted a national search for a box of the artist’s writings and personal effects that had passed down through the Morang family. The ephemera he discovered—including a charred violin, sketches and extensive writings—will appear alongside artwork by Morang and other New Mexico modernists of the period. For more information, please contact Matthews Gallery at 505-992-2882, or email us at [jordan@themattthewsgallery.com](mailto:jordan@themattthewsgallery.com) or [lawrence@themattthewsgallery.com](mailto:lawrence@themattthewsgallery.com).

*Matthews Gallery shows distinctive European and American masters, Santa Fe and Taos artists, American Modernism and Contemporary art by established artists. Our exhibition program features a fresh approach to combining recognized master works with the art of today.*