

Media Contacts:

Rebecca Heller, Communications and Marketing Manager
Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West
rheller@scottsdalemuseumwest.org
Office: 480-686-9539, ext. 219; Cell: 480-677-5005

Stuart Rosebrook, Senior Editor
True West Magazine
stuart@twmag.com
480-820-5545

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West Named Best Western Art Museum in the Nation

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (August 12, 2016) – Since opening in January 2015, Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West has garnered numerous awards, achievements and accolades, including the designation of Smithsonian Affiliate. To these, it can now add "Best Western Art Museum in the Nation" for its "extraordinary exhibitions and dedication to Western art and culture."

"We are honored to be recognized along with other well established and distinguished Western art museums," said Mike Fox, director and CEO of Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West. "This speaks to the dedication of our outstanding staff and volunteers and the quality of the artwork and Old West artifacts that have been generously loaned to us during our first year and a half of operation. The changing exhibitions and diversity of public programs have helped our guests gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the American West."

The honor, bestowed by True West magazine, appears in a ranking of Western art museums published in the September 2016 issue. The 63-year-old, national publication is based in Cave Creek, Arizona and presents true stories of Old West adventure, history, culture and preservation.

"Scottsdale's Museum of the West's dedication to its mission of preserving and interpreting our great Western art is inspiring," commented True West Executive Editor Bob Boze Bell. "They keep the spirit of the Old West alive."

The 43,000-square-foot, two-story museum building was built and is owned by the City of Scottsdale and is managed and operated by Scottsdale Museum of the West, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. It is located in downtown Scottsdale's arts district at 3830 N. Marshall Way.

The "top six" museums were selected by the magazine's editors and Spur Award-winning writer Johnny D. Boggs. They were chosen based on "the extraordinary efforts of the museums over the past year to create and host new temporary exhibits, as well as maintain dynamic permanent exhibitions."

Other institutions making the list of best Western art museums include, in descending order, the Whitney Western Art Museum (Cody, WY), the Briscoe Western Art Museum (San Antonio, TX), the Tucson Museum of Art (Tucson, AZ), the Stark Museum of Art (Orange, TX), and the C.M. Russell Museum (Great Falls, MT).

Cementing its position as a leading Western art museum, Fox said museum guests in the coming weeks and months can look forward to two art exhibitions of the highest caliber (one featuring contemporary artist John Coleman, opening Sept. 17, 2016, and "The Artists of Taos," opening January 10, 2017), plus announcements regarding donations of one-of-a-kind collections.

(more)

A complete listing of the museum's exhibitions follows:

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

• **“John Coleman: Past/Present/Future” (Sept. 17, 2016 — May 31, 2017)**

Coleman's images of American Indians infused with the history and mythology of the American West have made him one of the nation's most highly regarded contemporary artists. This exhibition, made possible by Scottsdale residents Frankie and Howard Alper, includes artworks spanning more than four decades in charcoal, graphite, oil and bronze, plus some works in progress by the pioneering painter, sculptor and influential teacher.

• **“The Artists of Taos” (January 10, 2017 through April 30, 2017)**

This major exhibition, presented by Scottsdale Art Auction, focuses extensively on the careers and artwork of the individuals comprising the Taos Society of Artists, one of the most influential artist groups in the nation's history. The exhibition will feature a selection of the finest works of art by these 12 members and seven associate members, on loan from institutions across the country, as well as private collections.

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

• **“Lone Wolf (Hart M. Schultz): Cowboy, Actor & Artist” (June 21, 2016 through August 31, 2016)**

This retrospective showcases the artwork and extraordinary life story of the Blackfeet Indian artist Lone Wolf (aka Hart M.Schultz; 1883-1970), who was one of the first American Indian artists to rise to fame in our country's art and society circles.

• **“Inspirational Journey: The Story of Lewis and Clark Featuring the Artwork of Charles Fritz” (Through October 31, 2016)**

On loan from the Peterson Family Collection

This 100-painting exhibition, which has attracted art and history lovers from around the country, allows museum guests to visually travel the course of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

• **Courage and Crossroads: A Visual Journey through the Early American West (Ongoing Exhibition)**

On loan from the Peterson Family Collection

The story of America's West in the 19th and early 20th centuries comes to life through more than 100 paintings by artists ranging from Thomas Moran and Alfred Jacob Miller to the Taos Society of Artists, as well as orotone photographs by Edward S. Curtis, Pueblo pottery, Navajo chief's blankets, and objects associated with Kit Carson. Several artworks by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell also highlight the exhibition.

• **Confluence of Cultures in the American West: A Selection of Contemporary Artists from the Peterson Collection (Ongoing Exhibition)**

On loan from the Peterson Family Collection

Martin Grelle, Paul Calle, Chris Calle, Lindsay Scott, Howard Terpning, Z.S. Liang and Alfredo Rodriguez are among the celebrated contemporary Western American artists featured in this exhibition. Themes include mountain men, American Indians, cavalry and settlers, buffalo, and the friendship and tensions between mountain men and American Indians.

• **The A.P. Hays Spirit of the West Collection (Ongoing Exhibition)**

On loan from The A.P. Hays Collection

A showcase of 1,250 saddles, spurs and other quintessentially Western objects from the one-of-a-kind collection of A.P. Hays. The exhibition features eight themes: working cowboys; Wild West shows; Western gear made in prisons; rodeos and fairs; Western movies and parades; outlaws and lawmen; Western saloons; and illustrations.

(more)

(Current exhibitions, continued)

- **Will James: Cowboy Artist and Author (Ongoing Exhibition)**

On loan from The A.P. Hays Collection

Illustrations by the prolific Western American writer and artist (1892-1942) who is perhaps best known for his award-winning book “Smoky the Cowhorse.”

- **Heritage Hall (Ongoing Exhibition)**

Guests can explore inspiring images and biographies of people, past and present, who have made contributions to the American West.

- **The Christine and Ted Mollring Sculpture Courtyard (Ongoing Exhibition)**

This innovative space features a changing array of sculptures by renowned Western artists, beautiful desert plantings, and a “weeping wall” set within its contemporary architectural design. The stunning Ponderosa Pine Saddle Bench provides a restful spot from which to enjoy the setting.

PAST EXHIBITIONS

- **“A Salute to Cowboy Artists of America and a Patron, the Late Eddie Basha: 50 Years of Amazing Contributions to the American West” (November 7, 2015 - May 31, 2016)**

A 50-year retrospective of artwork by all of the members of the Cowboy Artists of America, one of the most influential artist groups in the nation’s history. The exhibition honored the late Eddie Basha, an Arizona businessman and owner of one of the largest Western American and Native American art collections in the world.

- **Fine Art of the American West: People and Places (January 15, 2015 – September 30, 2015)**

A diverse and engaging selection of works by artists such as Charles Bird King, Charles M. Russell, Fritz Scholder, William R. Leigh, Ed Mell, Allan Houser, Kate T. Cory and Marjorie Thomas showcases the rich variety of themes, styles and imagery in Western art.

- **Process and Materiality: The Bronze Artistry of John Coleman with Erik Petersen (January 15, 2015 - September 30, 2015)**

Majestic sculptures in bronze by this highly regarded Western artist, accompanied by photographs revealing the fascinating and complex process by which Coleman creates his work, including the contribution of artist Erik Petersen.

ADDITIONAL HONORS AND AWARDS

Since opening in January 2015, Scottsdale’s Museum of the West has received awards and citations for excellence from the American Institute of Architects Arizona, the American Society of Interior Designers/Arizona North Chapter, the American Society of Landscape Architects Arizona Chapter, and Arizona Forward.

In November 2015, the museum was accepted into the Smithsonian Affiliations program. It is also a TripAdvisor top-rated attraction, and a LEED® Gold certified building, recognizing the museum’s environmentally conscious design, construction and operation.

For additional information about the museum, visit scottsdalemuseumwest.org or call 480-686-9539. For more information about True West magazine, visit twmag.com or call 888-687-1881.

###