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**“National Treasure” of Hopi Pottery Masterworks Donated,
to Go on Exhibit Sept. 16, 2017 at Scottsdale’s Museum of the West**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (Aug. 11, 2017)—More than 65 of the finest examples of Hopi pottery will go on exhibit for the first time Saturday, September 16, 2017 when the “Canvas of Clay: Hopi Pottery Masterworks from The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection” exhibition opens at Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West.

Spanning six centuries, the exhibition explores the history and stylistic traditions of the Hopi, who have excelled in the creation of ceramics for generations. Among the historic and contemporary masterworks are 18 ceramics by Nampeyo of Hano (Hopi/Tewa, c. 1860-1942), the most famous of the Hopi potters. Twenty-two other master potters are also represented in the exhibition, including Nampeyo’s daughters and other descendants.

The exhibition includes approximately half of The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection, one of the finest private collections of Hopi pottery, which has been gifted to the museum. Ceramics from the collection will be permanently featured in a new museum gallery, The Allan and Judith Cooke Gallery. Sponsored by the City of Scottsdale, the gallery honors the donor and his late wife, and the Hopi people whose tribal land lies in northern Arizona.

Exhibitions of ceramics from the Cooke collection will be in ongoing rotation in the new, permanent gallery. The inaugural “Canvas of Clay” exhibition is scheduled September 16, 2017 through December 2019. Native American guests will receive free museum admission September 16, 2017 through December 30, 2018. The museum is located in downtown Scottsdale, Arizona, at 3830 N. Marshall Way.

“The City of Scottsdale is privileged to provide its residents and the millions of annual visitors to our community with the opportunity to see this national treasure first-hand,” commented Scottsdale Mayor W.J. “Jim” Lane. “It serves as a point of pride not only for the city, but for the state of Arizona.”

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“We are honored to be entrusted with this exquisite collection,” said Mike Fox, museum director/CEO. “This exhibition is an ongoing tribute to the people of Hopi, and as such serves as an important resource for research, education and inspiration for the tribe, our local community, students, artisans and visitors worldwide. We are deeply appreciative of Dr. Cooke’s generosity and this opportunity to celebrate these gifted artists.”

“It’s amazing to see how far back Hopi pottery goes, and the awesome condition the ceramics are in,” commented Rose Hawee, Hopi cultural advisor to the museum. “This permanent exhibit provides the tribe, and all people, with the opportunity to enjoy the Hopi’s legacy, and realize how important it is. Hopefully, it will also encourage the younger generation to continue making pottery.”

According to Tricia Loscher, chief curator of Scottsdale’s Museum of the West, Native American artists played a vital role in transforming Scottsdale from a small farming and ranching community into a nationally acclaimed creative and artistic regional hub. Among the best known are fashion and textile designer Lloyd Kiva New (Cherokee) and jeweler and potter Charles Loloma (Hopi), who have inspired generations of Native American artists with their innovative designs.

Shortly after World War II, New founded Scottsdale’s Craftsman Court on Main Street and then, in the early 1950s, the highly successful Kiva Craft Center (a series of small shops operated by individual artists) on Scottsdale’s Fifth Avenue. Loloma and his wife Otellie Loloma (Hopi) were the first tenants of the Kiva Craft Center.

“This collection tells seven centuries of stories about Hopi life and culture, and speaks to how the cultural legacy of the Hopi pottery tradition is carried on today by the descendants who create their own masterful ceramics,” commented Loscher. “Having these pots return to Arizona, and placed on permanent exhibit in Scottsdale, is especially relevant given the integral role Native American artists and their artworks played in elevating the city’s cultural standing.”

About the Collector

Allan Cooke, M.D., and his wife Judith (1945-2001) began collecting indigenous Southwestern pottery more than 25 years ago after a driving vacation to Santa Fe, New Mexico from the couple’s home in Kansas City, Kansas. On that trip, they visited several Pueblo ancestral centers, where they first learned about Native American ceramics and the potters who created them. They purchased six jars, one of which was made by a Hopi potter, before returning home.

Their passion for Hopi pottery grew over the years, as did their collection. The Cookes admired not only the Hopi potters’ sculpture and painting skills, but also their manual craftsmanship. Traditional Hopi potters hand coil and scrape the clay, sculpting the pot or bowl with extraordinary sensitivity, without using a mechanized wheel to throw a vessel.

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In time, the Cookes' Hopi pottery collection grew to reflect the evolution of Hopi ceramics over seven centuries, spanning all of the major Hopi stylistic traditions. The more than 120 pieces in The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection include early black on white ware; 14th- through 16th-century Sikyatki polychrome (multi-color) masterworks characterized by exuberantly painted and sculpted ceramics; and more fluid, artistic interpretations by Hopi potters of the 20th and 21st centuries.

As a professor of medicine at the University of Kansas, Kansas City, Kansas, Cooke became aware of Scottsdale's Museum of the West. "After touring the museum, hearing what the museum's director had to say about the aims for the future of the enterprise and the sincerity of the vision, I must say I was most impressed," Cooke commented. "I believe the leadership will make this a great museum. For these reasons and others, I am gifting my collection of Hopi pottery to the Museum of the West."

The story of Hopi pottery, illustrated by individual ceramics from the Cooke collection, is told in the book "Canvas of Clay: Seven Centuries of Hopi Ceramic Art" by Edwin Wade and Allan Cooke. In addition to being a scholar and interpreter of Southwestern ceramics, co-author Wade has a background in museum management and private and institutional curation. Published in 2012 by El Otro Lado Press, Sedona, Arizona, the richly illustrated catalogue of the collection is available from the museum store (hard cover signed by the authors, \$75; unsigned paperback edition, \$34.95).

"Each piece in The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection is the finest example of Hopi ceramics," Wade said. "The collection is unparalleled."

For more information, visit scottsdalemuseumwest.org or call 480-686-9539.

About the Museum

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West is located at 3830 N. Marshall Way in downtown Scottsdale, Arizona. It is owned by the City of Scottsdale and managed by Scottsdale Museum of the West, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that relies upon private support to fund the museum's operation.

The museum became a Smithsonian Affiliate in 2015, and has been named "Best Western Museum" in the nation for two consecutive years by the editors of True West magazine (2016, 2017). For more information about the museum, visit scottsdalemuseumwest.org or call 480-686-9539.

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