

Western Spirit

SCOTTSDALE'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST CELEBRATES THE CONFLUENCE OF CULTURES THAT MAKES THE WEST SO DARN ROMANTIC.

THE CITY THAT BILLS ITSELF AS “THE West’s Most Western Town” just got more Western with the opening of **Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West**. Located in the downtown historic arts district, the museum began decades ago as the dream of a former Scottsdale, Arizona, mayor, the late Herb Drinkwater, and a small group of citizens that included Mike Fox, who now serves as the museum’s director.

Designed by Phoenix-based Studio MA, the spectacular 43,000-square-foot two-story structure blends striking modern design with Old West charm. Hundreds of cactuses and succulents hug the museum’s perimeter and surrounding plaza, where one bronze statue depicts a Native American holding out a peace pipe and another depicts artist Maynard Dixon with sketchbook and writing implement. Near the museum entrance, Curtis Pittman’s *Diamond Bloom*—a 27-foot sculpture of painted steel, laminated dichroic safety glass, and brass panels—conjures a cactus flower. Visitors can walk underneath the overlapping arches, which seemingly change color and form with the movement of the sun and clouds.

Concrete walkways near the entrance are imprinted with tooled leather designs inspired by Western saddles, and textured concrete walls mirror the ribs of towering saguaro cactuses. Weathered metal graces indoor and outdoor spaces, including a sculpture courtyard that rotates works by Western giants like John Coleman, Allan Houser, and Doug Hyde.

The pairing of natural and man-made materials continues in the museum’s interior, where custom cedar millwork and brushed steel accents provide a complementary contrast to the colorful artwork, and floor-to-ceiling windows frame the exterior desert landscaping.

Throughout the museum, folks also see the juxtaposition of Old and New West. Wagon wheels hang suspended from industrial ceilings sporting exposed pipes. High-tech digital kiosks show videos that run the gamut from Will James to Howard Terpning. Light projections with tumbleweed and cowboy designs move across stained concrete floors.

Visitors can take their own souvenir snapshots against the backdrop of a mural complete with campfire and covered wagon. Curved banners hang from the high ceilings, sharing quotes or single words such as *creativity*, *resilience*, and *perseverance*. You can ponder their



destination

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history

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lifestyle

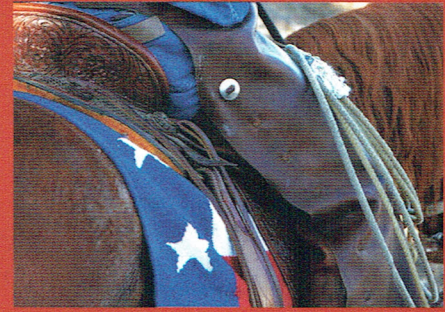
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Capturing the Magic in the Ordinary and
Creating Images Which are Extraordinary



Riding the Red, White and Blue



Smoke Over Snake River



Assorted Colors



Chuckwagon Sunrise

meaning while seated beside a stuffed bison on a plump leather couch that looks like it's been drenched in butterscotch sauce.

A corridor called Heritage Hall displays photographs of more than 100 people who have been significant in the story of the West: Geronimo, Annie Oakley, John Muir, Dorothea Lange, Frank Lloyd Wright, Wyatt Earp, John James Audubon, Red Cloud, American Horse, and Sandra Cisneros among them. There's a 135-seat theater/auditorium and a gift shop carrying everything from coffee-table books about featured artists to lamps with a sculpted cactus base to barware embellished with frosted glass branding symbols.

And, of course, there are galleries. Scottsdale's Museum of the West doesn't have its own collection; instead, its galleries rotate long-term exhibitions filled with items loaned by collectors, museums, and other organizations. Among the most remarkable currently on view is A.P. Hays' Spirit of the West collection, which features Western memorabilia from guns to saddles and ephemera that includes a July 2, 1920, issue of *Wild West Weekly* that sold for 7 cents.

On view through May 2016, *Inspirational Journey: The Story of Lewis and Clark Featuring the Artwork of Charles Fritz* presents 100 contemporary paintings chronicling the historic early 19th-century expedition of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, along with sculptural bronzes by Barry Eisenach, Richard Greeves, and Harry Jackson that complement Fritz's storytelling. Depending on when you visit, you might also enjoy works by Frederic Remington, Fritz Scholder, Ed Mell, Will James, John Coleman, and Erik Petersen. Opening in November: a retrospective exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Cowboy Artists of America. U

—Lynn Trimble

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West is located at 3830 N. Marshall Way, Scottsdale, Arizona.
www.scottsdalemuseumwest.org

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AI WEIWEI

Circle of Animals | Zodiac Heads

May 9 – October 11, 2015



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Zodiac Heads: Bronze, 2010.
Images courtesy of the artist.
Photo credit: Tim Nighswander.
Size: 134 x 66 x 77 inches.



NATIONAL MUSEUM
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destination

Go West In Scottsdale

Scottsdale, Arizona, is a city rich in arts and culture, where locals and out-of-towners converge on a walkable downtown to enjoy outdoor events, public art, galleries filled with traditional and contemporary works, and eateries like Cowboy Ciao (the Stetson Chopped salad!) that channel the city's charming blend of the Old and New West. Horse-drawn carriages and golf cart taxis share the streets with free trolleys that move people between popular destinations, including Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, Scottsdale Fashion Square, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Scottsdale Stadium, and the Scottsdale Waterfront. Out where the trolley doesn't run, experienced hikers might want to give the trails on Camelback Mountain a go. Here are some other reasons Scottsdale's a destination after our own Western hearts.

Hashknife Pony Express

Every January, mail delivery by riders on horseback traveling between Holbrook, Arizona, and Scottsdale commemorates the Pony Express established in 1860. More than two dozen riders in authentic cowboy attire relay mailbags along the 200-mile route, concluding in downtown Scottsdale in front of *Passing the Legacy*, a bronze sculpture by Cowboy Artists of America member emeritus Herb Mignery that features a vintage 1860s horse and rider representing the original Pony Express. www.hashknifeponyexpress.com

Native Trails

Outdoor performances presented by Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation explore the First Nations of Arizona and North America through traditional Native music, dance, and art. Produced by the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts in collaboration with the Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, the free performances take place January through April at Scottsdale Civic Center Park. www.experiencescottsdale.com

Parada del Sol Parade

The world's largest horse-drawn parade takes place each February in downtown Scottsdale. Preceded by a cattle drive and followed by a block party, the free parade is affiliated with the Parada del Sol Rodeo, a four-day PRCA rodeo at WestWorld of Scottsdale, which presents additional Western-themed events throughout the year. www.paradadelsol.rodeo

Scottsdale ArtWalks

Held from 7 to 9 p.m. every Thursday (except Thanksgiving) in the downtown Scottsdale arts district, Scottsdale ArtWalks include dozens of galleries and studios, many of which feature Western and/or Native art. One Scottsdale ArtWalk each month has a special theme. www.scottsdalegalleries.com

Scottsdale Public Art

The city's outdoor art collection features several works with Western or Native themes, including Arizona artist Ed Mell's first large-scale sculpture. His bronze *Jack Knife*—located in the downtown arts district near Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West—is modeled after Scottsdale's official city seal and depicts a rider astride a bucking horse. Other Western-themed bronze sculptures in town include George Ann Tognoni's *The Yearlings* and *Winfield Scott Memorial* at the Scottsdale Civic Center Mall. In North Scottsdale, you'll find *Hopi Deity* by Doug Weigel and *One With the Eagle* by Pat Mathieson. www.scottsdalepublicart.org

—L.T.