



# WESTERN SPIRIT

## SCOTTSDALE'S MUSEUM OF THE WEST

A great place to enjoy this summer, or any other time for that matter, is the newly opened Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, located in the city's historic arts district. The \$11.4 million museum features stunning rotating exhibitions of Western art, cultural treasures and historic artifacts on loan from some of the world's foremost collectors and institutions. Enlivening the experience are interactive exhibits, multi-media productions, and an ongoing schedule of fun, educational programs and public events.

The museum opened in January 2015 to rave reviews. "People are awestruck when they visit," said Michael Fox, museum director. "They are surprised by the unique Western architecture of the building, the vastness of the collection, and the emphasis on storytelling in the exhibits."

The exquisite new 43,000-square-foot, two-story main building, designed by the architectural firm Studio MA, is located at the site of the historic Loloma Transit Station, which was designed by noted architect Vito Acconci. Building materials, many indigenous to the area, are

meant to represent the American West and include old and new materials with some selected to age over time.

"It is a beautiful facility, new and fresh, with exhibits set up extremely well," said Jan Patton, museum docent. Anthem residents Jan and husband Jim signed up to become docents when the museum opened, having also been docents at the Heard Museum for the past nine years. They are part of the team that provides three different one-hour docent tours, available each Tuesday through Friday.

"The museum is a much needed addition to the area, the state, and all things Western," said Jan. "Visitors have told us that it was the highlight of their trip to Arizona."

The spectacular building and the exhibits transport visitors to another place and time. Interactive activities as well as multi-media kiosks strategically located throughout the galleries engage the interest of children and adults alike, providing insights into the art and artifacts on exhibit, as well as topics such as Western geography, history, flora and fauna.



Some of the current highlights include:

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

Contemporary painter Charles Fritz chronicled the historic early 19th century expedition of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in a dynamic series of 100 paintings accompanied by complimentary sculptural bronzes by artists including Barry Eisenach, Richard Greeves and Harry Jackson. Interactive audio/video kiosks feature commentary by Fritz on his work.

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

A selection of saddles, spurs, and other quintessentially Western items from the collection of Scottsdale gallerist Abe Hays. Highlights include a John Wayne business card signed by the iconic actor; a Colt 1977 double action revolver with an ivory grip; and vintage tooled leather holsters from the Albert Furstnow Company (1890-1900) and the F. Ronstadt Company (circa 1910), whose founder was the grandfather of singer Linda Ronstadt. Other treasures include a David E. Walker leather saddle circa 1880 and a selection of Texas Ranger badges from the 1890s.

Several exhibitions will run only until September 30, including majestic sculptures in bronze by John Coleman with Erik Petersen; fine art of the American West by renowned artists; and the artwork and books that illuminate the life and work of the prolific Western American writer and painter, Will James.

Ongoing exhibitions of more than 80 paintings provide a visual treasure of the epic story of America's West in the 19th and 20th centuries. There are also gold-tone photographs by Edward S. Curtis, Pueblo pottery, Navajo chiefs' blankets, and objects associated with the legendary man of the West, Kit Carson. Rounding out

the exhibition are monumental bronze sculptures by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. In addition, there is an exhibit of celebrated contemporary Western American artists.

Coming in November is the 50th anniversary exhibition of Cowboy Artists of America, a retrospective exhibition featuring one piece of art by every artist who has ever been a member of the organization.

In addition to these exhibitions and galleries, the museum also features the beautiful outdoor sculpture courtyard, with an ever-changing array of sculptural exhibits. The 135-seat theater/auditorium hosts performances, special programs, events and an ongoing film production highlighting the story of the West. In April, the theater hosted a special event featuring Johnny Western who, among other things, wrote the theme song "Ballad of Paladin" for the Western series "Have Gun, Will Travel." At the event, the iconic musician, actor and radio show host was inducted into the Arizona Music and Entertainment Hall of Fame.

Serving as a center for the community, the auditorium was recently used for a job fair and business meetings; plans are in place to use it for wedding receptions.

The museum is a terrific summer outing for the entire family. "Representing all 19 Western states, it is a great way to visit the American West without traveling," said Fox.

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West  
3830 N. Marshall Way, Scottsdale  
480-686-9539, [scottsdalemuseumwest.org](http://scottsdalemuseumwest.org)

*Adults: \$13, Seniors (65+) and Active Military: \$11, Students (with ID) and Children (6-17 years): \$8, Members and Children 5 and under: Free*