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**Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West Among the First to Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Apollo 11 with New Exhibition Focused**

**on NASA and Western Artist, Paul Calle**

Landmark All-American Exhibition Features Western Lifestyle, NASA/Space Art, Postage Stamps and Sketches in Retrospective of Paul Calle’s Artwork

**SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – Feb. 19, 2019 –** In celebration of this year’s 50th anniversary of NASA’s successful Apollo 11 mission, Smithsonian Affiliate, Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West (SMoW), announced today the public opening of the new exhibition ***Paul Calle’s Life of Exploration: From the Mountains to the Moon***. This landmark exhibition shares the rich artistry of Calle’s work documenting epic moments in American history including Neil Armstrong’s first step on the moon, pioneers of the West, Major League Baseball World Series games and portraits of famous people including President John F. Kennedy and General MacArthur, among others.

The exhibition, available to the public Feb. 19, 2019 – Oct. 11, 2020, is among the first to commemorate Apollo 11’s 50th anniversary this year. It will be on view in SMoW’s 3,550-square-foot Bruner-Messinger Gallery and features a comprehensive range of Calle artworks and artifacts, including a recreation of the artist’s Ridgefield, Conn.-based art studio.

**The Artist, Paul Calle**

This retrospective exhibition -- the first-ever major showing of the artist’s work -- traces the career of American artist Paul Calle (1928-2010), who was best known for drawing and painting the historic American West featuring mountain men, fur traders and Native Americans, as well as NASA artwork and postage stamp designs including the iconic *1969 First Man on the Moon* artwork and stamp.

While traveling in the American West for many years, Calle established friendships with Native Americans and observed some of their events and ceremonies. Early in his journeys, he witnessed a Hopi ceremonial dance, and he always remembered that moment, which shaped how he painted and depicted the Native American people throughout his entire career. Calle sought to honor their lives and culture through his artworks.

Calle was also an official NASA artist for many decades. In 1962, he was chosen as one of the original eight artists of the newly established NASA Art Program, with a mission to chronicle history and space exploration through the eyes of artists. Calle artistically covered pre-launch activities at Cape Canaveral, aircraft carriers picking up astronauts in the ocean, lift-offs and more across all NASA missions from Gemini to Apollo. His detailed paintings and powerful drawings became synonymous with the NASA program.

Calle was the only artist present on July 16, 1969, during the pre-launch activities of the successful Apollo 11 mission to the moon. That day he sketched various scenes including the crew’s breakfast, suiting up and the walk-out to the space craft – visual records of the historic day and these pre-flight activities. Several of these exclusive sketches will be included in the exhibition.

In addition to his work with NASA, Calle’s prolific career included numerous artworks of distinction created for renowned individuals and entities such as the U.S. Department of

Interior Artists in the Parks program, the White House Historical Association, Schering Company, the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Air Force. He also created works for Major League Baseball, as well as a variety of medical and sports journals and popular titles such as *Ladies’ Home Journal* and *The Saturday Evening Post*.

**Bridging the Old West with the Space Frontier**

The exhibition is summed up in a quote from Paul Calle in the book *Celebrating Apollo 11, The Artwork of Paul Calle* written by son Chris Calle and published in 2009,

“I have always likened the image of mountain man John Colter, his moccasin-clad foot first stepping on the newly fallen snow of the Yellowstone valley, to the moon boot of Neil Armstrong, stepping in the dust of the moon’s surface at the Sea of Tranquility…two worlds apart, yet each at the edge of a new frontier…”

The exhibition powerfully presents the vast range of Calle’s artworks, his unique engagement with NASA and the U.S. Postal Service, and Calle’s position as a renowned sketch artist and realist painter.

“We are thrilled to be collaborating with so many partners, including Guest Curator, Tim Peterson, Paul’s son, Chris Calle, and nearly 20 lenders to showcase Paul Calle’s extensive range of artistry,” said Dr. Tricia Loscher, Assistant Director -- Collections, Exhibitions and Research at SMoW. “Paul Calle was an important realist artist and his artworks feature intricate details that interpret -- as well as expertly document – America’s great historic achievements, while aiding viewers in the enjoyment of his work.

“With this exhibition's breadth of exquisite work, we are enabling our members, locals here in the Phoenix metro area and visitors from across the globe to have an in-depth experience of this important American artist and illustrator who was a unique part of history. We’re confident our guests will be awed by this exhibition, and Calle’s legacy will be remembered by generations yet to come.”

The exhibition will include objects on loan from the Smithsonian Institution, among other museums and collections. Celebrated artworks featured in this exhibition include:

* ***1969 First Man on the Moon***, original pencil sketch, graphite on paper, postage stamp; Collection of Lawrence McGlynn.
* ***Neil Armstrong Suiting Up,*** 1969, pen and ink; The Chris Calle Collection.
* ***The Great Moment***, c. 1969***,*** oil on masonite; Collection of the Orlando Museum of Art, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. John J. McMullen. Copyright The Calle Family.
* ***Power to Go,*** 1969, oil on panel; Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC. Copyright The Calle Family.
* ***Something for the Pot II***, oil on canvas; The Peterson Family Collection.
* ***A Breath of Friendship,*** oil on canvas; The Peterson Family Collection.
* A range of postage stamp designs and sketches as published in various publications and portraits of famous people including President John F. Kennedy and General MacArthur, among others.

**A Powerful Collaboration**

Tim Peterson, a renowned collector of Western and Native American art and artifacts, regularly collaborates with SMoW to feature his artworks on loan throughout the museum and in the museum’s second floor galleries.

Peterson bought his very first Western artwork as a youth – a Calle print titled *Something for the Pot*. He also became close personal friends with Paul Calle, and got to know the artist who ignited his love for Western art.

Knowing the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 and Armstrong’s first step on the moon was coming in 2019, in 2014, Peterson concepted the idea of this exclusive all-American exhibit and the collaborative creative process began among Peterson, Chris Calle and Dr. Loscher.

“To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the significant success of the Apollo 11 mission, I was excited to work with Scottsdale’s Museum of the West, Chris Calle and other institutions nationwide to assist with and create this exhibition. It truly celebrates America through Paul Calle’s art of exploration,” said Peterson. “Paul Calle’s work inspired me at a young age with his detailed style, rich Western content like *Something for the Pot* and the vast range of his work. I am thrilled to be able to share his all-American artistry with new and diverse audiences through this landmark exhibition at SMoW.”

Chris Calle is following in his father’s footsteps as an artist and postage stamp designer. He even had the pleasure of playing his father in a brief role in Universal Pictures’ film First Man, sketching the Apollo 11 crew before the legendary flight.

“I’m honored to share and build upon my father’s legacy through this retrospective exhibition at Scottsdale’s Museum of the West,” noted Chris Calle. “To be able to showcase the stories told through my father’s artwork in such a manner ensures that his passion, skill and love of the history of our country are carried on and told to a broad, multi-generation audience.”

The exhibition’s Presenting Sponsor is Elaine & Tim Peterson. The Education Sponsor is ON Semiconductor Corporation with funding support dedicated to providing transportation and admission costs for students to attend the museum from under-served public schools in the Phoenix metro area, specifically in ON Semiconductor’s neighborhood of south central Phoenix.

**Note to media:** Scottsdale’s Museum of the West PR team has a sampling to share of high-resolution photos of Calle’s work, which will be featured in the exhibition.

Dedicated to telling stories of the greater Western region with both permanent and rotating exhibitions, the Calle exhibition is among eight new exhibitions coming to four-year-old Scottsdale’s Museum of the West in the 2018-19 season.

**About Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West (SMoW)**

Since its opening in Jan. 2015, SMoW has become a **Smithsonian Affiliate** organization. The museum is also a recipient of the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence, enjoys a 4.5 out of 5 star rating on TripAdvisor and Yelp and is recognized as the “**Nation’s Best Western Museum”** (2019 Editors’ Choice, *True West* magazine). SMoW features regularly changing and permanent exhibits of Western and Native American art and artifacts, entertaining events and informative programs that bring the West’s heritage, culture and community to life. Permanent exhibitions continuously on display include ***Canvas of Clay: Hopi Pottery Masterworks from The Allan and Judith Cooke Collection***, which features 65 of the finest examples of Hopi pottery spanning six centuries, and ***The Abe Hays Family Spirit of the West Collection***, a showcase of more than 1,400 saddles, spurs, cowboy gear and other Old West artifacts.

Featured Collections include: Alper Bronze John Coleman Collection; Cooke Hopi Pottery Collection; Hays Legendary Cowboy Collection; Peterson Early and Contemporary Western Art Collection; and Strickland Golden West Poster Collection.

Buildings and Campus

SMoW is owned by the City of Scottsdale and the museum is managed by Scottsdale Museum of the West, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. It features an award-winning 43,000-square-foot, two-story main building designed by Phoenix-based architectural firm Studio Ma. The museum campus was designed by landscape architect Colwell Shelor of Phoenix and features low water- use desert plantings. Both indoor and outdoor spaces are certified as LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold, conserving precious natural resources, while raising public awareness of their vital importance to the Western region.

SMoW also features the beautiful outdoor Christine and Ted Mollring Sculpture Courtyard with a rotating selection of sculptures. The 135-seat Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust Theater/Auditorium hosts performances, special programs and events. The Sue and Robert Karatz Museum Store offers a rare and wide selection of Western-themed art and gifts.

Museum Hours

Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat.: 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Thursday: 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (November-April) & 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. (May-October)

Sunday: 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Closed Monday

Admission Prices

Adults: $15

Seniors (65+) and Active Military: $13

Students (Full-time with ID) and Children (6-17 years): $8

Members and Children 5 and under: FREE

Thursdays, November-April, Scottsdale residents with proof of residence (e.g., driver’s license, utility bill) receive FREE museum admission.

Location

3830 N. Marshall Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85251

SMoW is located in Old Town Scottsdale, one block west of Scottsdale Road at First Street. The museum is readily accessible from throughout the metro Phoenix area and is within easy walking distance of numerous art galleries, retail stores and restaurants. Day-long, come-and-go admission allows guests to tour SMoW, have a bite to eat in a local Old Town restaurant and return for more viewing.

General Contact:

480-686-9539

www.scottsdalemuseumwest.org

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**Media Contact:** Mardi Larson, Director of Marketing & Communications

Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West

Office: 480.530.3446; Cell: 480.530.3446

[mlarson@scottsdalemuseumwest.org](mailto:mlarson@scottsdalemuseumwest.org)