

# Registrar's Quarterly

Fall 2025



Updates and News  
from the  
WMA Annual Meeting

**RCWR**  
REGISTRARS COMMITTEE  
WESTERN REGION

Since 1979, the RC-WR has advocated for the profession of Registrars and Collections Managers across the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington, and promoted high standards and best practices in registration.



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State Updates

COVER:

From the Wood River Museum of History & Culture, a recently acquired 19th-century painting of Ketchum's Philadelphia Smelter. The full story of its unusual discovery in the Idaho state news, page 15.

Gift of John R. Lane in honor of Jenny Emery Davidson and Mary Tyson. Image courtesy of the Wood River Museum of History and Culture



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



### HELLO RC-WR,

Hello RC-WR!

It's been quite a month for me. First, the annual WMA meeting was a hit! I hope all of you who joined us in Reno, Nevada, learned a lot and made new connections. The RC-WR board learned about your year's successes when it encouraged a room full of

collections people to share positive stories. We also did a lot of great work for Thunderbird Lodge at Lake Tahoe through our CSI:Registrars program.

Immediately after WMA, I attended the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) conference in Cherokee, North Carolina. I spread the word about RC-WR to folks there and learned about the Indigenous-focused work being done in museums and collections. I then had an epic adventure trying to get home which involved a flat tire at the base of the Smoky Mountains and missing my flight! I eventually got home.

Then on Monday the 13th, our Center here in Tempe experienced a sudden, violent microburst right over our repository that knocked over most of the trees in the parking lot. Thankfully none of our cars were damaged beyond a few scratches. However, there were several water leaks in the building, though thankfully the collections were safe. I'm really glad I've been reviewing the Disaster and Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan with staff (we go over a snippet of it each week together). We all jumped in and did what needed to be done.

It's been an adventure, but I wouldn't have it any other way!

Melanie Deer | RC-WR Chair | [chair@rcwr.org](mailto:chair@rcwr.org)

Collections Manager and Assistant NAGPRA Coordinator for Cultural Items at the Center for Archaeology and Society Repository, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona



# RC-WR BOARD CHANGES

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A heartfelt thank-you to Stephanie Mohr and Melanie Tran as they step down from their duties on the board. We wouldn't have been as successful these past two years if it weren't for them.

RC-WR welcomes two new board members:

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Jennifer Gritt is the Museum Curator at the Woodburn Museum in Oregon and is now serving as the Vice Chair for RC-WR.

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Dylan Hoffman is the Collections Manager at the Puget Sound Navy Museum in Washington and is now serving as the Secretary for RC-WR.

## PRESENTERS WANTED

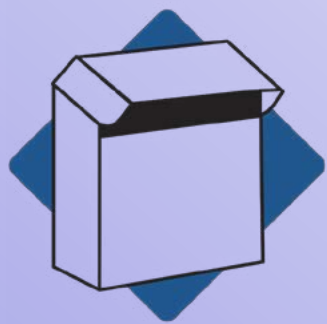
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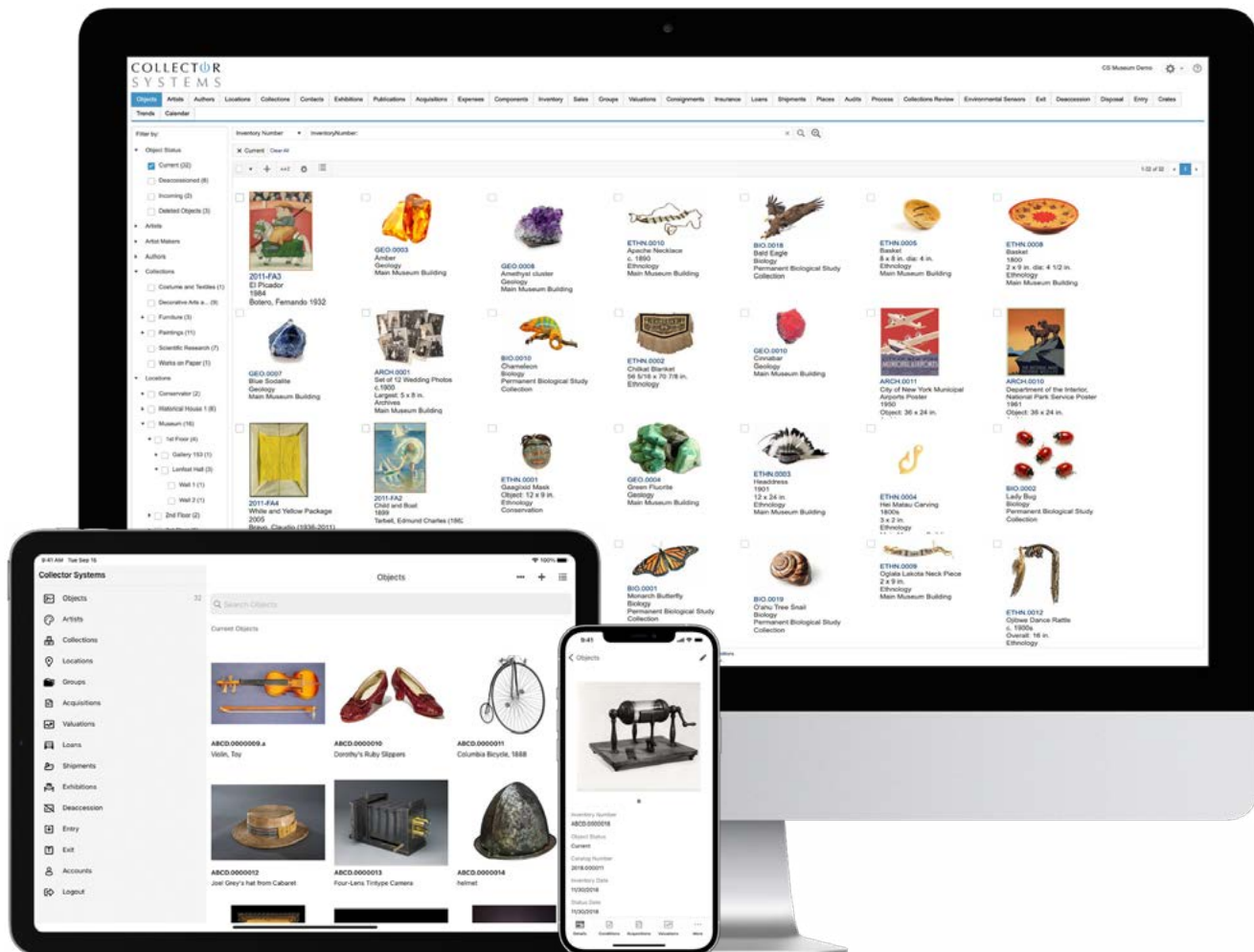
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# Announcements from the 2025 Annual Meeting

We made some exciting announcements at WMA this year  
and would like to share them with those who couldn't be there:

1 Grants will continue into the next year! So once we finish off the grants for this year the board will be working on setting up grants for next year!

Reminder you can find information on the open grants at  
<https://rcwr.org/registrars-committee-western-region-grants/>

2 We are working in the background to make mini CSI:Registrars for throughout the year, so if you or someone you know has a mini project (or a major project that could use some bites taken out of it) and would like some additional trained help, please let your state representative know (you can find your state rep at <https://rcwr.org/about/leadership/>).

3 **The next webinar is: November 5th 10AM PDT**  
**Creative Access in Museums: Accessibility in Collections, Exhibition Design and Curation with Ana Moyer, PhD candidate at Western University**  
Registration link:  
[https://washington.zoom.us/meeting/register/0nE1\\_n0sRgGvJU\\_3aPmbbA](https://washington.zoom.us/meeting/register/0nE1_n0sRgGvJU_3aPmbbA)

# Argus.

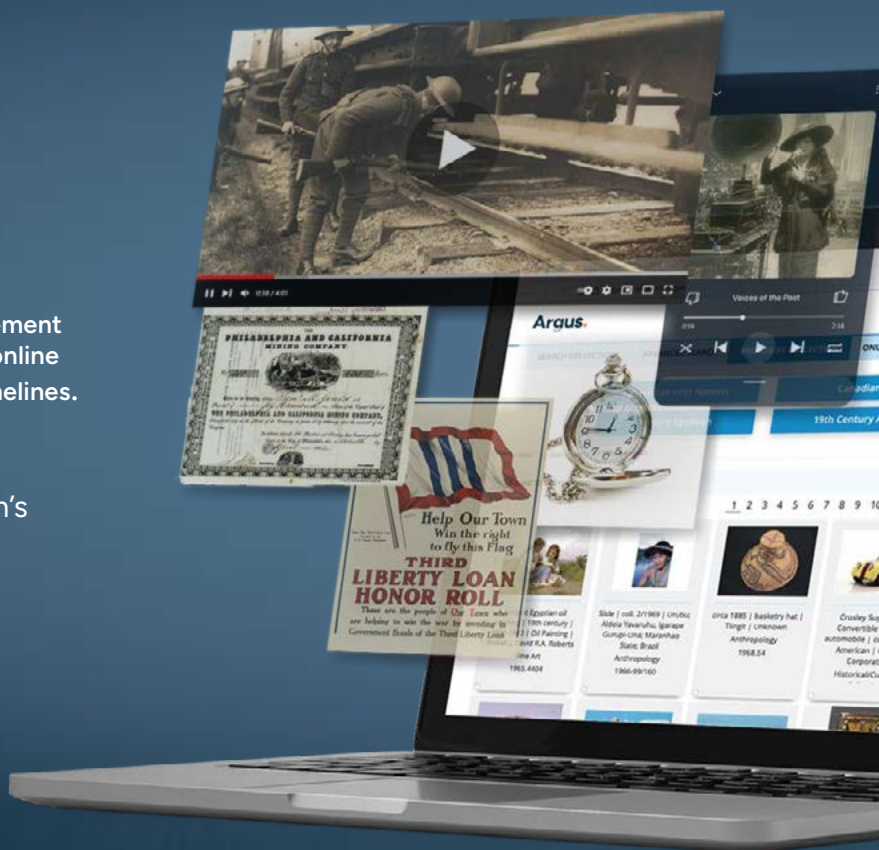
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# CSI:REGISTRARS

## THUNDERBIRD LODGE LAKE TAHOE



Left: CSI:Registrars crew at Thunderbird Lodge  
Above: The crew is shown their tasks by Christine Johnson  
*Photographs courtesy of Stephanie Mohr*

Every year at the Western Museums Association's annual conference, Registrars Committee Western Region organizes a day of service called CSI:Registrars with the goal to ease the workload of our colleagues and strengthen our connections across state lines.

This year, ten collections specialists from five states volunteered their time to help out with the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society. Thunderbird Lodge is one of the few remaining heritage organizations in the Lake Tahoe region. When we reached out to local groups about hosting CSI:Registrars, Thunderbird Lodge requested aid with inventorying their off-site storage.

Lake Tahoe is an hour drive away from the conference city of Reno, Nevada and the trip out to Thunderbird Lodge was absolutely beautiful. Our volunteers carpooled as a group and enjoyed getting to know each other before arriving at the host site. Christine Johnson welcomed us to the off-site storage location and gave us a brief tour of the collection. In particular, she highlighted that the collec-

tion had grown significantly following the closure of some other heritage sites in the area due to the pandemic.

Armed with clipboards, measuring tapes, and enthusiasm, our team of volunteers began inventorying four spaces in the collections storage area. In total, we were able to inventory 131 objects in the collection. New identification tags, dimensions, and photographs were made as needed.

We gathered for lunch at a local restaurant before ending our time in Lake Tahoe with a tour of the historic Thunderbird Lodge itself. Christine shared insights into the history of the family who built the lodge and the efforts to restore and preserve it. If you're ever in the Lake Tahoe area, be sure to check it out!

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers for sharing your expertise and valuable time with us! And thank you to Christine and the Thunderbird Lodge Preservation Society for hosting! We hope to see you all again. ●



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## ALASKA

—Amanda Lancaster

The **Kodiak History Museum** has a new temporary exhibit up in 2025. Co-curated with the Filipino-American Association of Kodiak (Fil-Am), *Anchored in Kodiak* explores the legacy of Filipino immigration to Kodiak and showcases Kodiak's Filipino community. Representatives from Fil-Am and KHM worked together to create the exhibit and a number of free public programs coming this fall. These programs are opportunities to learn more about different aspects of Filipino culture in Kodiak, such as a dance performance, parol lantern craft, and a cooking workshop.



*Anchored in Kodiak* exhibit.  
Photograph courtesy of the  
Kodiak History Museum

photographs, and costumes with the community. We hope this exhibit will empower the community and provide a deeper understanding of the Filipino American experience. This exhibit will allow Filipino Americans to remember our history and be a window for the community to learn about our rich history and culture.” The exhibit will be up from September to December 2025. This project was made possible by a grant from the 2024/2025 Social Justice Grant at The Alaska Community Foundation.

Learn more: <https://kodiakhistorymuseum.org/khm-exhibits/>

Fil-Am comments on the project, “Fil-Am is thankful for the opportunity to share our culture and history through personal stories,

The **Alaska Native Heritage Center** in Anchorage debuts a historic new exhibit titled *Education in Alaska*, which focuses on Alaska Native experiences in the boarding school era. The exhibit will trace the history and impact of federally and religiously run boarding schools across Alaska, examining the policies and practices that sought to assimilate Indigenous children and disrupt Indigenous ways of life. Through firsthand accounts, rare photographs, archival material, and survivor testimonies, the exhibition will illuminate the resilience of Alaska Native peoples in the face of historical trauma—and the ongoing efforts to reclaim language, culture, and identity. This boarding school exhibit will be the first of its kind and will include:

- An interactive GIS map that highlights the 120 boarding schools and 20 assimilative day schools in Alaska featuring the findings of ANHC’s research department.
- The most in-depth timeline of this era to exist which tells the progression of forced assimilation affecting the wider United States.
- Cultural items from the era which show the more specific elements of forced assimilation that occurred during this era by both Church and State.

This exhibit will also highlight the roles of eugenics, ethnology, and the relationship between the various Protestant and Roman Catholic denominations/religious orders with the United States Federal Government.

Learn more:

<https://www.alaskanative.net/resources/news/alaska-native-heritage-center-welcomes-home-rare-denaina-parka-hundreds-of-ancestral-belongings-and-unveils-three-historic-exhibitions/>



The **Anchorage Museum** has a new temporary exhibit in the Patricia B. Wolf Family Galleries. *Dog Show* is a celebration of human-dog relationships across geography and time. The exhibition considers the histories of dogs in the Circumpolar North, their importance to lifeways and culture in the region, and the role of dogs in contemporary life across the US as pets, helpmates, and family members. Contemporary and historical artworks, cultural belongings, archival images, and ephemera from Canada, Greenland, Norway, and the Lower 48 showcase the ways dogs have shaped our place as well as our society, shedding light on the myriad ways we understand affective and relational bonds between people and animals. Family-friendly interactives, outdoor art installations and experiences, and robust programming will accompany the in-gallery experience of *Dog Show*. The exhibit will run from May 2, 2025 to April 5, 2026.

Learn more:

<https://www.anchoragemuseum.org/exhibits/dog-show/>

## ARIZONA

—Lindsay Vogel-Teeter

In October, the **S'edav Va'aki Museum** in Phoenix reopened after being closed for the entire summer for an HVAC replacement project. Once the units were (mostly) operational, the collections and exhibits teams worked together to install two travelling exhibits at the Museum including *Parched: The Art of Water in the Southwest* and *Su:dagi/Shu:thag: Rekindling Our Connection* both on display through May 2026.

*Parched* is an art exhibition initiated by Creative Flagstaff. It features nine bodies of work by Arizona artists, all using different mediums evoking themes of survival, sovereignty, and spirituality. Ultimately reflecting diverse perspectives and provocative insights into our complex relationship with water in natural, cultural, and political landscapes.

*Su:dagi/Shu:thag* is an exhibit produced by the Arizona State Museum, the Gila River Indian Community, and

the Huhugam Heritage Center. It explores the Akimel O'odham's (River People) longstanding relationship with water and focuses on the intersection between the politics of water rights and the celebration of traditional agricultural knowledge.



S'edav Va'aki Museum maintenance team and collections staff moving a lenticular piece by the late Diné artist Klee Benally, on display in *Parched*.



S'edav Va'aki Museum collections and exhibits staff adjusting lighting in *Su:dagi/Shu:thag*.



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"Point of Infinity" by Hiroshi Sugimoto. Photo by Project Equity.

## IDAHO

—*Olivia Terry*

The **Idaho State Museum** now boasts a brand-new Smokey Bear collection, donated by the Central Idaho Historical Museum. The collection features over 100 items illustrating the iconic bear's marketing journey through time. The collection encompasses artifacts that range from shoelace ties to Smokey Bear mascot costumes. Many of these objects were created by Woodland Catalog LLC, a family-owned company, formerly run out of Moscow, Idaho. Since his creation in 1944, Smokey has become a beloved figure, teaching outdoor stewardship and protecting America's forests against wildfires. Welcome to the Museum Smokey!

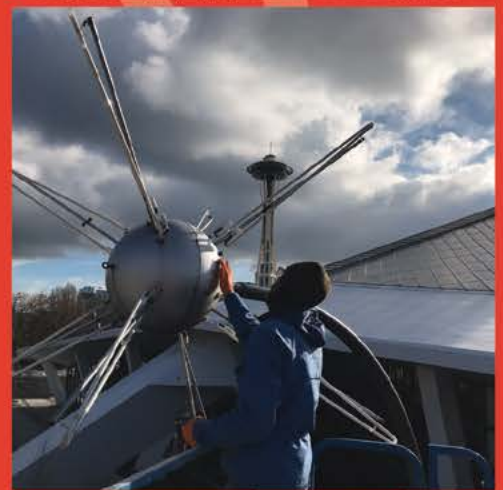
The **Wood River Museum of History & Culture** (WRM) recently acquired a striking 19th-century painting (seen on the cover of this newsletter) of Ketchum's Philadelphia Smelter through a cross-country provenance unraveling. The work was identified by Lisa Hammell of Noonmark Antiques—who found it at auction in Connecticut—after she noticed a Union Pacific insignia on the locomotive. WRM staff, Hammell, and local scholars and collectors, including John R. Lane, collaborated to piece together its story. They traced the image back to an M. M. Hazeltine stereograph at UC Berkeley. Ultimately, Lane generously gifted the painting to the Wood River Museum, bringing it home to Ketchum. Now on display, the painting stands as both an art object and a story of discovery—proof of the collaboration that makes museum work possible.



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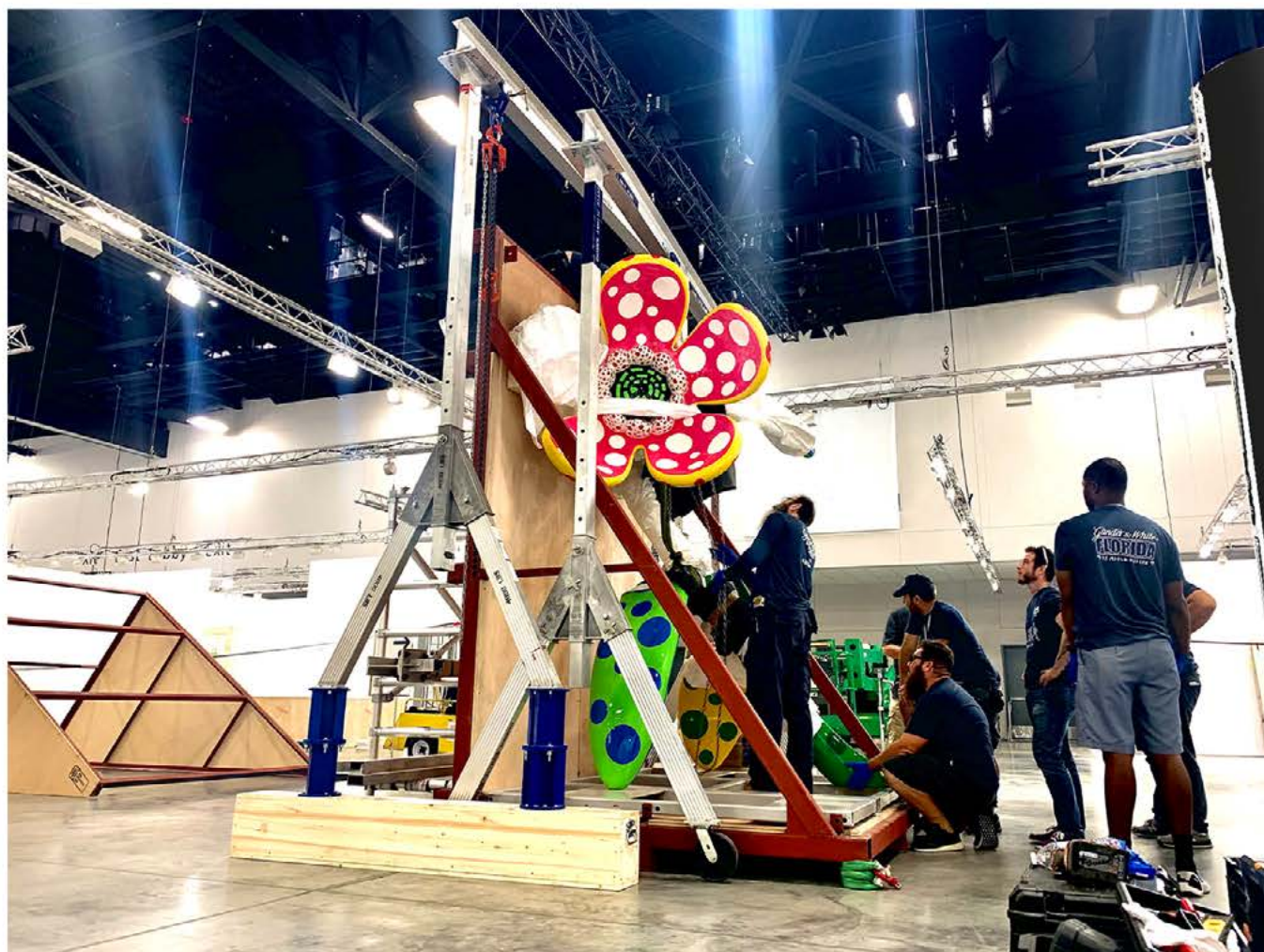
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## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

—Carrie Cohen

Northern California's museums are showcasing powerful and thought-provoking exhibitions this season, spanning critical works on social justice, environmental issues, and American art history. The **Crocker Art Museum** is hosting [\*Black Artists in America: From the Bicentennial to September 11\*](#). This significant exhibition explores works by Black artists made during the transitional period from the late 1970s through the early 2000s. Featuring over 50 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper from artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Romare Bearden, the display considers how these artists challenged the cultural, political, and social issues of the time. This exhibition is on view from October 5, 2025, through January 11, 2026.

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The **California Museum** exhibit, [\*Revolutionary Grain: Celebrating the Spirit of the Black Panthers in Portraits and Stories\*](#) explores contemporary portraits and personal stories by photographer Susanna Lucia Lamaina. The exhibition focuses on former Black Panthers who continue to impact their communities as teachers, lawyers, and activists. This compelling look at the enduring legacy of the Party's members runs through December 14, 2025.

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The [\*Manetti Shrem Museum of Art\*](#) at UC Davis features two major exhibitions, running through November. *OJO* is a mid-career survey of artist and curator Julio César Morales, reflecting on the past and future through the lens of his experience growing up along the U.S.–Mexico border. *Breath(e): Toward Climate and Social Justice* brings together contemporary art, photography, and multimedia works from artists, scientists, and activists to consider the deep connections between social and environmental injustice.

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

—Brooke Garcia

On September 29th, UC Irvine confirmed acquisition of the Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA). “As of today, OCMA and the UC Irvine Jack & Shanaz

Langson Institute and Museum of California Art are unified as the **UC Irvine Langson Orange County Museum of Art**,” stated Chancellor Howard Gillman in a campus statement. UCI confirmed that both the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa (OCMA) and the Von Karman Avenue location in Irvine (UCI Langston IMCA) will continue to operate, with exhibition programming at the Irvine site scheduled through January 2027. This new combined institution will now care for and exhibit over 9,000 works of California and contemporary art.



David Geffen Galleries at LACMA; view northwest at dusk.  
Photograph © Iwan Baan

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The **Los Angeles Museum of Art (LACMA)** has begun installing artworks in the David Geffen Galleries. This expansion has been over 20 years in the making, and over the summer, LACMA invited the public to preview the new galleries. In September, staff started artwork installation, beginning with large stone Assyrian reliefs dating to 3,000 years ago. The David Geffen Galleries are scheduled to open in 2026.

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After nearly a decade of planning, The **Navy SEAL Museum San Diego** opened on October 4th. The National Navy SEAL Museum is the only museum dedicated solely to preserving the history of the United States Navy SEALs and their predecessors. The original location in Fort Pierce, Florida, is on the training grounds of the original Navy combat divers, the Frogmen.

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## NEVADA

—Cynthia Sanford

*To Hold a Form: Art with sound in the work of Jennie C. Jones, La Rissa Rogers and Naama Tsabar* will be on exhibit through November 15 at the **John and Geraldine Lilley Museum of Art**.

**Nevada State Museum**, Carson City is hosting seasonal events including the Fright at the Museum haunted house on October 25th and the Dia de los Muertos Celebration on November 7th and 8th.

The **Mob Museum** has partnered with the LeRoy Neiman and Janet Byrne Neiman Foundation for the exhibit *Art of the Mob: The LeRoy Neiman Portraits*, on exhibit until December 31. It features 13 portraits of iconic organized crime and law enforcement figures by LeRoy Neiman.

## OREGON

—Meg Glazier-Anderson

This July, **Oregon Military Museum** had their grand reopening after nearly two decades of closure. With the opening of the museum, the Temporary Gallery hosts *History in Art: Selections from the Oregon Military Museum Collection* with artwork to help connect the past.

Due to a projected budget shortfall, the **Independence Heritage Museum** is set to close. However, the city isn't planning to lay off any employees for the 2025–2026 fiscal year which started July 1. A levy that would have prevented this shutdown was rejected by voters in 2024. When the time comes, the museum collection will move into the library.

The **High Desert Museum** opened a new outdoor play experience for children, the E. L. Wiegand Ponderosa Playscape. The Playscape immerses children in the life cycle of the ponderosa pine through interactive elements like 12-foot-tall pinecones. It also offers climbing features and educational space for kids, school groups, and visitors.



The fighter jet sits outside the Tillamook Air Museum, set to be demilitarized and prepared for permanent exhibition.

Adding to its permanent collection, the **Tillamook Air Museum** received a historic, combat-tested fighter jet, an AV-8B Harrier II. The jet was flown directly to Tillamook from a U.S. Navy test facility in California's Mojave Desert. During its 30-year career, the jet was flown in operations in Iraq and Syria, and was used in roles in Singapore, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, and the Arabian Gulf.



Voted the Best Annual Event for four years straight, the **Powerland Heritage Park** celebrated the 55th annual Great Oregon Steam-Up. This event celebrates pacific northwest logging equipment with steam engines, equipment, cars, trucks, 14 heritage museums, trains, trolleys, tractors, threshing, stationary engines, a steam powered sawmill, and a parade! The event took place over two full days on two week-ends in July and August.

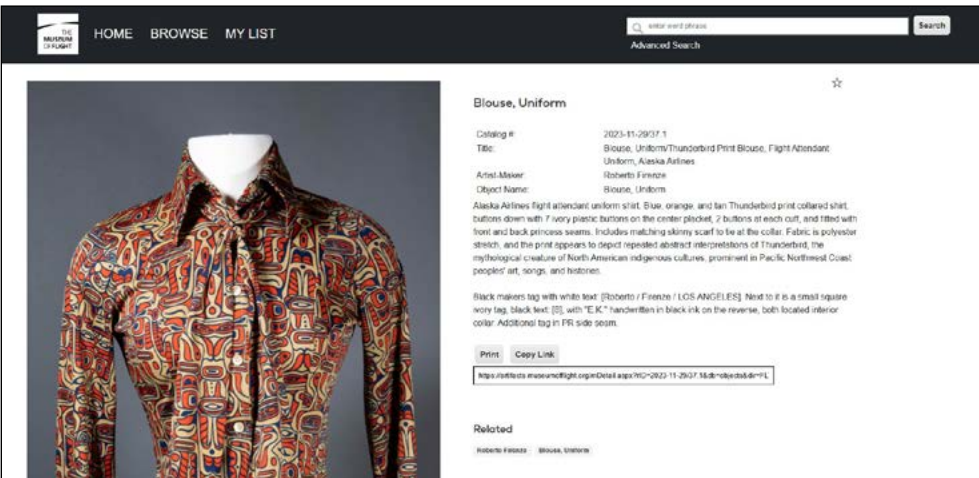




**Rainier Oregon Historical Museum** celebrated its grand opening on August 9th. Guest speakers included Kerry Tymchuk from the Oregon Historical Society and Oregon Representatives, Rob Nosse and Darcie Edwards. Along with the small exhibits inside, Rainier's first fire truck was on display outside.

Two new exhibition openings at the **Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art** in Eugene, Oregon include the large exhibition, *James Lavadour: Land of Origin* which presents the most comprehensive survey to date of works by painter and printmaker James Lavadour.

Also, a large photography show, *Gathering: A Photographer's Collection* that presents a wide-ranging selection of photographs from the personal collection of Portland, Oregon based photographer and curator, Christopher Rauschenberg.



## WASHINGTON

—Katherine Browne and Sarah Frederick

The **Museum of Flight** in Seattle is happy to announce the completion of a multi-year effort to implement a new digital asset management system to highlight portions of the collection, as well as a separate project to make available all the museum's three-dimensional object catalog records. The digital collection site features digitized materials from our archival, library, and artifact collections, while the small objects site currently includes over 16,000 catalog records, with more being added in phases. Please find further information at:

<https://digitalcollections.museumofflight.org/>  
<https://artifacts.museumofflight.org/>

Introduced in 1916, the 200-pound MK V diving rig was the Navy's standard deep sea diving system until the early 1980s. Generations of Navy divers shared the experience of diving the MK V, tackling the challenges of their eras with expertise and ingenuity. *Behind the Faceplate*, a new exhibit now open at the **U.S. Naval Undersea Museum** in Keyport, looks inside the iconic copper helmet to tell stories of MK V divers across the decades. Explore their remarkable feats as innovators, salvage experts, and leaders through historic artifacts, personal stories, and hands-on interactives.

