

TACOMA ART MUSEUM

MEDIA RELEASE

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Media Contact: Julianna Verboort, 253-272-4258 x3011 or JVerboort@TacomaArtMuseum.org



Creative Cowboys: Two TAM Exhibitions Roundup the Art of Western Culture

Tacoma, WA – [Tacoma Art Museum](#) highlights the creative cowboy culture of the Pacific Northwest in two new exhibitions opening Saturday, October 31: [Saddles, Spurs, and Quirts: The Art of Leatherworking](#) and [Northwest Cowboys in Art](#) will be on view through May 15, 2016.

Northwest Cowboys in Art celebrates the ranching and cowboy culture that has been part of the Pacific Northwest for more than a century. The exhibition includes works from a local favorite, painter Fred Oldfield, among a selection of Northwestern artists. Born in Washington in 1918, Oldfield grew up on the Yakama Indian Reservation. He worked as a cowhand before joining the United States Army during World War II. The G.I. Bill allowed him to attend art school in Seattle, after which Oldfield went to work painting murals and landscapes in Alaska, Canada, and the Northwest. His colorful, award-winning work has been the subject of numerous one-man exhibitions. At 97, Oldfield continues to paint. He has also taught children and adults, and is the generous and active founder of the arts education non-profit [Fred Oldfield Western Heritage and Art Center](#) in Puyallup.

[Saddles, Spurs, and Quirts: The Art of Leatherworking](#) spotlights the intersection between art and function through 31 beautifully hand-crafted works. Artisans and makers span from Argentina to Oregon, and the designs come from cultures as far-reaching as the Spanish Moors. Embellished saddles, bridles, quirts, and spurs add an undeniably artistic flair to the tools of American cowboys and ranchers. What is a quirt, you might ask? TAM welcomes you to learn this and more.

These exhibitions will be on view in TAM's Haub Family Galleries, celebrating the new wing's one-year anniversary. This marks the first change from the inaugural exhibition, [Art of the American West: The Haub Family Collection](#), which has been attracting visitors since November of 2014.

“It has been a remarkable year for Tacoma Art Museum and for western American art fans in the Pacific Northwest. We welcomed the Haub Family Collection and opened our new wing just last November. Visitors love it!” says Laura Fry, TAM’s Haub Curator of Western American Art. “Western American art resonates with people of all ages and backgrounds. Many of us can relate to the themes, the feelings, and the stories evoked in these works. TAM has been able to add to the scholarship around western American art too, through educational programming, our annual contemporary artist lecture, and our TAM Symposium.”

Saddles, Spurs, and Quirts and *Northwest Cowboys in Art* will be followed by two more new western American art exhibitions slated to open Nov. 21, just in time for Thanksgiving holiday visitors. [\(Re\)Presenting Native Americans](#) will explore how artists of varying backgrounds represent Native American identity, and how those works of art have affected our ideas of American identity. [Artists Drawn to the West](#) examines the artistic styles, trends, and movements that influenced imagery and perceptions of the American West.

Several select favorites from *Art of the American West: The Haub Family Collection* will remain on view, and visitors will also see some works from the Haub collection that have not yet been on view.

For more information, visit <http://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/>

Image Credits:

Bill Heisman, *Spurs and Spur Straps* (detail), c.2000. Steel, leather, silver, gold, 10¼ x 3 x 1 inches. Collection of J. Brent and Connie McKinley, Washington State.

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About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating 80 years, Tacoma Art Museum has become an anchor in the city’s downtown and a gathering space for connecting people through art. TAM’s collection contains more than 4,500 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader American west. The collection includes the world’s largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on continued view; the world’s largest collection of jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. TAM recently welcomed a gift of 295 works of western American art in the Haub Family Collection, one of the premier collections in the nation and the first major western American art museum collection in the Northwest.

HOURS – Tuesdays–Sundays 10 am–5 pm

ADMISSION – Adult \$14; Student (6-17), Military, Senior (65+) \$12; Family \$35 (2 adults and up to 4 children under 18). Children 5 and under free. **Third Thursdays free from 5–8 pm**. Members always free.

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