MEDIA RELEASE

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**EXPLORING THE NORTHWEST’S ARTISTIC IDENTITY**

**INSPIRATIONS FROM AND RESPONSES TO THE AMERICAN WEST**

TACOMA, WA – What characterizes the Northwest’s distinct cultural and artistic identity? How has that identity been shaped by the broader story of the American West? Tacoma Art Museum delves into these questions through *Northwest in the West: Exploring Our Roots*. Opening Saturday, May 10, 2014 and running through fall 2015, this exhibition looks at how the complex and ever-evolving character of the West has shaped, and continues to inspire, regional artistic responses.

Featuring 70 works in all media drawn from the museum’s collection, *Northwest in the West* provides a visual framework for discussing themes such as the significance of the land, cultural and environmental impacts, movement and restlessness, our regional identity, and the psychological constructs involved in our complicated relationship with our place in the West. The exhibition also includes a ‘sneak peek’ at two works from the Haub Family Collection of Western American Art.

“The museum’s collection of Northwest art provides a rich reservoir to draw upon for this exhibition,” said Stephanie A. Stebich, Director of Tacoma Art Museum. “This is a welcome opportunity to introduce our visitors to ways in which the Haub Family Collection relates to our focus on the art and artists of the Northwest. This exhibition views the West from the Northwest and we hope it will inspire our visitors to make their own connections. ”

The Northwest contributed significantly to the early dramatic story of the West: the lure of its lush landscapes and abundant resources; the new life it symbolized as the Eden at the endpoint of every migrant trail; and as the last piece of the puzzle that tied the United States together from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The definitions of “West” and “Northwest” shifted dramatically as westward expansion stretched geographic boundaries through the Plains states, into the Southwest, across the Rocky Mountains, and over the Cascades. Today, the 12 states defined as the western region encompass a wide variety of landscapes and lifestyles that share a history shaped by exploration, immigration, displacement, settlement, tradition, resources extraction, and rapid change, all of which has influenced artistic expressions in the West and Northwest.

“Curating this exhibition has been a fascinating challenge. The relationship between the West and the Northwest is so complex and still evolving,” said Margaret Bullock, Curator of Collections and Special Exhibitions. “It is hard to capture all the threads in a single selection of works, so I envision this as an ongoing discussion with our visitors. The exhibition is on view long-term, and we will change out artworks from time to time, reflecting different threads and keeping the conversation interesting.”

The gift of the Haub Family Collection enables Tacoma Art Museum to continue to explore the relationship of Northwest regional art to the broader context of art of the American West. *Northwest in the West* is the first of many opportunities to look at this complex interweaving of influences and how the Northwest’s artists have adopted, adapted, or reacted against them.

*Northwest in the West: Exploring Our Roots* is organized by Tacoma Art Museum. Generous support provided by Propel Insurance.

**Related Events**

**Sculpture in the West with Curator Laura Fry**  
**Wednesday, May 7, 11 am**  
Look at casting and carving of sculpture created around the American West. This lecture is part of Tacoma Art Museum’s [Lunch & Learn](https://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/page.aspx?hid=9446) series. Cost: Free with museum admission

Northwest in the West with Curator Margaret Bullock  
**Saturday, May 10, 11 am**  
Discover relationships between the artistic development of the West and the Northwest. This lecture is part of Tacoma Art Museum’s [Lunch & Learn](https://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/page.aspx?hid=9446) series. Cost: Free with museum admission.

The Western Landscape in Art with Curator Laura Fry  
**Wednesday, May 28, 11 am**  
See how artists have responded to the mountains, valleys, and vast plains of the western United States over time, influencing perceptions of the West. This lecture is part of Tacoma Art Museum’s [Lunch & Learn](https://www.tacomaartmuseum.org/page.aspx?hid=9446) series. Cost: Free with museum admission

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**HOURS** – Wednesdays–Sundays 10 am–5 pm, Third Thursdays 10 am–8 pm  
**ADMISSION** – Adult $10, Student/Military/Senior (65+) $8, Family $25 (2 adults and up to 4 children under 18). Children 5 and under free. **Third Thursdays free from 5-8 pm**. Members always free.  
**CONTACT** – 253.272.4258, [www.TacomaArtMuseum.org](file:///C:\Users\lmckeown\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\55OPQ8U9\www.TacomaArtMuseum.org), [info@TacomaArtMuseum.org](file:///C:\Users\lmckeown\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\55OPQ8U9\info@TacomaArtMuseum.org)