

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Temporary closure of Phoenix Art Museum galleries inspires fresh look at collection of American and Mexican art

Several galleries in Museum's North Wing closed for infrastructure repairs, rarely-exhibited works will be on view in new locations

PHOENIX (June 29, 2017) – Through next spring, Phoenix Art Museum's North Wing will be partially closed to accommodate repairs and improvements to the infrastructure of the building. In order to facilitate vital updates to fire-prevention systems, the Museum will temporarily close approximately half of its North Wing galleries, throughout the duration of the construction, which concludes April 2018. The closure also provided the Museum's curatorial team with a rare opportunity to re-imagine its exhibition spaces, and will result in a new exhibition featuring art of Mexico and the American Southwest.

"We look forward to improving our vault system, which will ensure the proper safekeeping and preservation of our treasured collection for decades to come," said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. "Our registrars, preparation staff, and curatorial teams have collaborated to create a plan for the move and renovations that will be efficient and seamless, minimizing the amount of time that part of the North Wing galleries will be closed, while taking the opportunity to re-imagine the possibilities for the display of our American and Mexican collections."

Solving the Museum's space issues inspired creativity and collaboration among curatorial departments. Vanessa Davidson, the Shawn and Joe Lampe Curator of Latin American Art, and Betsy Fahlman, adjunct curator of American art, have collaborated to re-home American works of art alongside works by Mexican artists. *Border Crossings: Mexico and the American Southwest* speaks to the region's shared heritage and cultural commonalities, in addition to underscoring the powerful resources in the Museum's collection. The works featured, all created between 1916 and 1950 and drawn from internal collections, re-enact across gallery walls a cultural conversation that has been taking place between Mexico and the United States throughout centuries of shared history. Featured works include paintings by Paul Pletka, Diego Rivera, Georgia O'Keefe, and Alfredo Ramos Martínez. The lens of focus encompasses four broad themes: women artists, landscape, indigenous subjects, and portraits.

As Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator, said, "Preparing for the move required that we conduct a more thorough audit of the objects stored in our vaults, which provided our curators with a unique opportunity to develop an even deeper understanding of the works in our collection. What resulted is a thoughtful presentation of the art of Mexico and the American Southwest, which we are especially excited to share with our community."

Other works affected by this move will also be on view in new spaces throughout the Museum. Long-term loans of European art will be on view in *Selections from the Schorr Collection*, located in the Harnett Gallery in the South Wing and the Ullman Gallery, on the first floor of the North Wing. Rarely-seen works by Philip C. Curtis will be on view as part of the exhibition *Philip C. Curtis: The New Deal and American Regionalism* in the Lewis Gallery.

About the Exhibition

Border Crossings: Mexico and the American Southwest will be on view through summer 2018 in the Marshall and Hendler Galleries. This exhibition is organized by Phoenix Art Museum. It is made possible through the generosity of donors to the Museum's annual fund. For more details about the exhibition, please visit phxart.org/exhibition/border-crossings.

Admission is free for Museum Members; veterans, active-duty, and retired military; Maricopa Community College students, staff, and faculty (with ID); and youth aged 5 and under. Entrance to the exhibition is included in general admission for the general public. During voluntary-donation, free-access times, the exhibition is offered free to the general public. Free-access times include Wednesdays from 3 –

9 pm, the first Fridays of every month from 6 – 10 pm, and the second weekend of each month (Saturday from 10am – 5pm and Sunday from Noon – 5pm). For a full breakdown of general admission prices and hours, see bit.ly/VisitPhxArt.

To request interviews and high-resolution photography, contact Phoenix Art Museum's Marketing and Communications Office, at 602.257.2105 or email margaree.bigler@phxart.org.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum's permanent collection of more than 18,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit PhxArt.org, or call the 24-hour recorded information line at (602) 257-1222.

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