

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Rising tells the story of passion for art and commitment to community

New exhibition highlights the best of many private art collections in the Valley of the Sun

PHOENIX (April 14, 2016) – This spring, Phoenix Art Museum presents *Phoenix Rising: The Valley Collects*, a new exhibition that highlights some of the most compelling works drawn from a select group of the Valley of the Sun’s most important private collections of visual art. With nearly 200 works spanning 1,000 years of art history, *Phoenix Rising* is emblematic of the increasing sophistication and cultural commitment of the city’s greater metropolitan area, the sixth largest in the nation. Sponsored by PetSmart, locally headquartered in the Valley, and organized by Phoenix Art Museum, the exhibition is a collaboration of the Museum’s curatorial staff working closely with 35 local collectors, all of whom live in the Valley.

“In many ways, the story of *Phoenix Rising* is similar to the story of Phoenix and its surrounding communities. As the city has grown over the decades, the achievements and individual passions of our art collectors have mirrored that growth,” said Amada Cruz, the Museum’s Sybil Harrington Director. “At Phoenix Art Museum, we are excited to provide our community with unprecedented access to important works from some of the Valley’s most significant collections. But this is only a taste of the treasures that reside in our area collections, and we will present even more in the future.”

The objects in *Phoenix Rising* mirror the collecting areas of Phoenix Art Museum itself, including modern and contemporary art, photography, and fashion design, as well as art of the American West, Asia, Europe and Latin America. The objects include ancient Native American pottery, Sri Lankan Buddhist art, contemporary couture fashions, and paintings and sculptures from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, all of which forge a complex, universal story of creativity and humanistic impulses. The exhibition includes some of the most recognized names in art, including artworks by Rembrandt van Rijn, Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, Alexander Calder, and Helen Frankenthaler. This is the first time the majority of objects in *Phoenix Rising* will be presented to the public.

The breadth and diversity of the exhibition weaves together a story of the diverse individual passions of the Valley’s art collectors. *Phoenix Rising* celebrates our city’s collectors, whose commitment to supporting visual arts elevates the cultural dialogue in our community. “This is a celebration of our own,” says Gilbert Vicario, the Museum’s Selig Family Chief Curator. “Local collectors are the lifeblood of museums. The relationships they build with museum curators and educators, their commitment to the growth and expansion of local arts organizations profoundly enrich their communities.”

The exhibition is made possible through the support of PetSmart, the nation’s largest pet specialty retailer, which was founded in the Valley in the 1980s and continues to be headquartered in Phoenix.

“It was important for PetSmart, an organization with deep roots in the Valley of the Sun, to support an exhibition like *Phoenix Rising*, and an institution like the Phoenix Art Museum,” said Michael Massey, president and CEO of PetSmart. “This collection represents the true spirit of our community and its local collectors. We are thrilled to support the making of *Phoenix Rising*, and for this exhibition to now be enjoyed by Valley residents and other visitors during its exclusive showing. Whether it’s the passions of the Valley’s private collectors or the dedication of local artists and arts organizations, arts and culture in our city have the power to unite our diverse communities and enhance the quality of life here in Phoenix. That is something PetSmart values everyday.”

About the Exhibition

Phoenix Rising: The Valley Collects is organized by Phoenix Art Museum and is made possible through the generous support of PetSmart. It is on view in the Museum's Steele Gallery April 16 through May 29, 2016. For press images or a list of objects included in the exhibition, contact the Marketing and Communications Office of Phoenix Art Museum, at 602.257.2105.

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. In addition to an annual calendar of special exhibitions, Phoenix Art Museum's permanent collection galleries are drawn from more than 18,000 objects of modern and contemporary art, fashion design, and photography, as well as American, Asian, Latin American, and European art. Each month, the Museum hosts a wide variety of public programs, including lectures, performances, tours, workshops, and film screenings designed for audiences of all ages to enjoy.

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