

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MUSEUM CELEBRATES 35 YEARS ON APRIL 26TH

The award-winning Museum of Western Art will celebrate its 35th anniversary with a reception and ribbon-cutting on Thursday, April 26, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. The event will include proclamations by Mayor Bonnie White and State Senator Dawn Buckingham.



For many years the average American's exposure to Western Art in public museums was confined to the works of Remington, Russell, and a few old masters. By the late 1970's, a major revival of national interest in art of the West was taking place, capturing its history, landscapes, and traditions. Unfortunately, the works of a growing group of contemporary cowboy artists were primarily confined to the walls of private collections. Those who were aware of this situation sensed that something was amiss. Arizona's Senator Barry Goldwater, a collector himself, perceived the need for a public venue for this growing genre. Thoughts were finally turned into action by a couple of Kerrville and South Texas leaders who were already acquainted with each other and had a mutual interest in collecting art.

A conversation between L.D. Brinkman, a cattle breeder and a manufacturer, with Robert R. Shelton, an heir to the legendary King Ranch, provided the spark. They both lamented the fact that as collectors themselves, they had limited access to an extensive body of contemporary Western art tucked away in private collections. Soon they corralled a group of kindred spirits. They shared a goal that envisioned building and establishing the first museum to honor the work of living American painters and sculptors.

These founders pledged the large amount of private funds so necessary to launch their project. Oilman William F. and Carolyn Roden from Midland, Texas donated a prime ten-acre piece of land adjacent to Riverhill Country Club in Kerrville. This would place the museum in the center of an area rich in Western history. The Great Western Trail had once traversed the land on its way to Dodge City.

Enough money had been raised by 1981 to commission the construction of the museum. It would become the last public facility designed by the famed Texas architect O'Neil Ford. The public opening took place on April 23, 1983. Ground was broken on April 27, 1981, and by autumn the fourteen thousand three hundred sixty-six square foot edifice was completed. The public opening took place on April 23, 1983.

The Museum of Western Art is located at 1550 Bandera Highway. Museum hours are 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For more information, please call 830.896.2553 or visit www.museumofwesternart.com.