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Southern Arizona Fashion to be Featured in *Desert Dweller* Exhibition at the TMA

TUCSON, ARIZONA (September 13, 2017) – Southern Arizona’s historic and contemporary fashion retailers and designers of the mid-to-late 20th century established an evolutionary style that transcended the fashions of the times. Their style was established by intersecting cultures of the region, defined, in part, by the Old West and Mexican influence from the nearby border.

The exhibition, *Desert Dwellers*, to open at the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block in October, will present the “Tucson style” through the work of Southern Arizona’s most well-known and innovative retailers, designers, family businesses, artisans and craftsmen. The exhibition, guest-curated by Paula Taylor and organized by the Tucson Museum of Art, opens when the museum’s renovated and expanded galleries reopen on October 21.

“This exhibition is a glimpse into the fascinating history of the region’s fashion industry and the people who made Tucson a special place to live,” said TMA CEO Jeremy Mikolajczak. “It includes the work of some of the most famous and historic local retailers, fashion designers and artisans, and at the same time presents an interesting portrayal of how contemporary influencers have a profound effect in Southwestern style.”



The exhibition, which will remain on view from October 21 through January 21, 2018, explores the distinct local style that was developed and defined by iconic retailers and artists like Cele Peterson, Dolores Gonzales and Ted DeGrazia, and family businesses such as Levy's, Jacome's and Steinfeld's, that nurtured a culture of shopping and a deep attachment to the growing city and the region. The local style encapsulates the independent spirit and fashion nuances that accompany a strong sense of place, integrating elements of street style, high fashion, cowboy, and Native American and Mexican cultures into global fashion trends.

Artisans and craftsmen added to the fashion and art scene with retailers including Dark Star Leather, producing bags, wallets, and leather belts, and three generations of silversmiths and jewelers from the Patania family, which continues to create refined artisan pieces supporting and reinventing the local fashion identity.

Taylor, as guest curator, has an extended history in the fashion industry as a retailer, fashion executive and educator, and through elite event production in the Southwest and around the globe. She trained with Neiman Marcus designer Pejji Goldin, and partnered with her to launch her first line of clothing. Taylor is the co-owner and producer of Tucson Fashion Week, an annual fashion event that brings celebrities, fashion designers and artists from all over the world to Tucson.

The exhibition will include educational events and a fashion show to close the exhibition, and will be accompanied by a limited-edition exhibition catalog available for purchase in the museum store. *Desert Dweller* includes garments and ephemera from Cele Peterson, Berta Wright, Dolores Gonzales, Rochelle K, Lloyd Kiva New, Alex F. Jacome, Dark Star Leather, the Patania family, Ted DeGrazia and Desert Vintage. There will be photographs in the exhibition by New York-based celebrity and portrait photographer Henny Garfunkel, as well as Puspa Lohmeyer, Steven Meckler and many others.

Among the educational events will be a retail panel on December 7 at 6:00 p.m., exploring the idea of place and how it has directly affected changes in marketing, curating and designing throughout the decades. Join TMA's CEO Jeremy Mikolajczak and Paula Taylor in conversation with Tucson retailers including Rochelle Katzeff of Rochelle K, Desert Vintage owners Salima Boufelfel and Roberto Cowan, Toyo Gilman of Dark Star Leather, Katya Peterson, daughter of Cele Peterson, and Charlette Padilla and Jeffery Brown, who co-owned J. Karieva Menzwear.

The event is free and open to the public in support of the museum's Free First Thursday program.

In support of *Desert Dweller*, TMA and Paula Taylor, in collaboration with Film Fest Tucson, will co-present the Arizona premiere screening of *House of Z*, on Saturday, October 21 at 9 p.m. at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Tucson. *House of Z* chronicles the meteoric rise of fashion designer Zac Posen at the age of 21, his brand falling out of favor several years later, and his challenges to rebuild his company and his reputation. It is both a portrait of an artist, and a look behind the glamorous curtain of one of the most distinguished designers and brands in the world, revealing the tenuous dance between art and commerce that informs every move. Tickets are \$10 and available via FilmFestTucson.com.

Museum Directions

The museum is located at 140 N. Main Avenue in historic downtown Tucson at the crossroads of West Alameda Street and North Main Avenue. Parking is free in the museum's lot on West Washington Street.

Museum Hours

Beginning October 21, 2017, Tuesday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Closed Mondays.

Free First Thursday @ TMA: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Free admission for all, make, drink, and explore.

Second SundAZE: Family Day @ TMA, Sponsored by The Stonewall Foundation: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Free admission for Arizona and Sonora, Mexico residents every second Sunday of the month. Art-making activities and music. Fun for all ages.

Admission

Adults, \$12; Senior (65+), \$10; Student (with college ID), \$7; Youth (13-17), \$7; Child (12 and under), free; Veteran and active military with ID, free; Museum Member, Free.

About the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block

The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block's mission is *Connecting Art to Life*. The Museum was founded in 1924 in the El Presidio Historic District of downtown Tucson. It is Southern Arizona's premier presenter of fine art and art education programs.

The Museum features permanent and traveling exhibitions of Modern and Contemporary, Native American, American West, Latin American, and Asian art. The 74,000-square-foot Museum offers guided tours, education programs, and studio art classes in a contemporary building. The Museum's Historic Block of 19th and 20th C. adobe and Mission Revival-style buildings, encompassing an entire four-acre city block, includes the John K. Goodman Pavilion of Western Art, displaying the Museum's notable art of the American West collection, the highly acclaimed Museum restaurant Café a la C'Art, and additional exhibition and studio spaces. For more information, please visit www.TucsonMuseumofArt.org or call (520) 624-2333. Follow the latest events on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. TMA is a private 501(c)(3) charitable arts and education organization.