



WESTERN ART PATRONS

Newsletter: Spring, 2021

Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block  
140 N. Main Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85701

---

## First Virtual Cowboy Cantina Zooms into Focus

For seven years, the signature event of the Western Art Patrons' winter calendar has been the **Cowboy Cantina**, unfolding on an annual basis at the Mountain Oyster Club with nattily Western-garbed art lovers circulating like honeybees amid mountains of hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Add a pandemic to the mix and what do you get? Art lovers sipping tequila and munching crackers, clad in sweatshirts and sweatpants, lounging contentedly on their living room couches glued to their computer screens for the first (and hopefully last) Zoom version of the Eighth Annual Western Art Patrons Cowboy Cantina on **Friday evening, February 19th**.

But the couch crowd would not emerge disappointed, as this year's virus-free event featured fascinating conversations among Glasser Curator of Western Art **Christine Brindza** and two legends of Western art, **Deborah Copenhaver Fellows** and **Fred Fellows**, prerecorded at the couple's Sonoita ranch.



Deborah Copenhaver Fellows chats with Christine Brindza during the virtual Cowboy Cantina

Fred Fellows reminisced about his career, starting out in California as a commercial artist in the aircraft industry while learning to wrangle horses, rope cattle and build saddles on the side. Eventually moving to Montana to pursue his dream of becoming a full-time Western artist, he ultimately achieved success, ascending to membership in the Cowboy Artists of America in 1969. He continues to be a much-celebrated artist more than a half-century later.

The daughter of a professional bronc rider in Idaho (and a rodeo athlete in her own right), Deborah Copenhaver Fellows grew up on a cattle and quarter horse ranch in Idaho. It was in college that she learned to sculpt, honing her skills during a post-graduate stay in Italy. From small bronzes, she would go on to design and supervise the production and installation of important monumental sculptures in various locations throughout the country. Her insights about the genre of Western art, and especially regarding the place of women within that largely male-dominated world, were particularly revealing.

Married for over three decades, the Fellows are the unsurpassed “power couple” in the world of Western art today.

The Cowboy Cantina is the primary annual fundraising vehicle for the Western Art Patrons. Despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, we are pleased to report that participation in our Zoom event exceeded expectations, raising approximately \$4,500 for our general fund.



A sampling of the WAP virtual audience for the Cowboy Cantina

## Riskind Residence Art Tour: Virtually Fabulous

On Thursday evening, **January 28th**, a virtual horde of Western Art Patrons mounted an online invasion of the beautiful home of **Ken and Judy Riskind** for a live tour of their outstanding collection of Western art, including paintings, sculpture, prints, textiles and photography. The collection includes Ken's own photography, a passion he's pursued and perfected over the past seven decades. WAP expresses its great appreciation to the Riskinds for their hospitality.



Judy and Ken Riskind warn Christine Brindza of impending elk attack

## A Potpourri of Western Art Talks

Kudos to **Christine Brindza** and **Kit Kimball** for taking to the Zoomwaves with fascinating online presentations on a myriad of Western art topics during the past several months. Programs included Christine's "**The Lady's Accomplishment: Women Artists of the American West**," a **December 2nd** contemplation on how women artists of the American West have persevered in a traditionally masculine genre, considering the work of women artists of the American West of the past and present, women's art shows, women's art organizations, art by Indigenous women, and representations of women in art; and Kimball's **November 6th** presentation, "**Tucson 7 Artists: Pillars of Southwest American Art**," celebrating the

contributions of the Tucson-associated artists **Harley Brown, Duane Bryers, Don Crowley, Tom Hill, Bob Kuhn, Ken Riley, and Howard Terpning**. The WAP fall season opener was Christine Brindza's **October 18th** panel on the current state and future prospects of contemporary Western art scene as viewed from the perspectives of a gallerist (**Robert P. "Bob" Brown**, owner of Big Horn Galleries in Cody, Wyoming and Tubac, Arizona), two prominent Western artists (**Logan Maxwell Hagege and Donna Howell-Sickles**) and a Western art curator (Christine). The October 18th panel is available on YouTube [here](#). Click the hyperlinks in this sentence to view [The Riskind Tour, Kit Kimball's Tucson 7 talk, and Christine's talk](#).

## Upcoming Events

### *Peter Hurd: From the Wyeths to the West*

On **March 25<sup>th</sup>** at 11 A.M., **Christian Waguespack**, Curator of 20th Century Art at the New Mexico Museum of Art, will present an online lecture on New Mexico artist **Peter Hurd** (1904-1984), arguably Southern New Mexico's most prominent painter of the 20th century. Born in Roswell, Hurd studied with N.C. Wyeth in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania before returning to the Southwest and setting up his own studio at his ranch in San Particio, New Mexico, where he made a career painting the people and the land he loved. The talk will explore Hurd's development as an artist, examining his time as a student of N.C. Wyeth, his relationship with Henriette Wyeth and their mutual careers in New Mexico. Preregistration for this event is required; please [click here](#) to register.

### *A Conversation with Mark Bahti*

Mark your calendars for 7 P.M. on **Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>** for **Mark Bahti: Indigenous Art and Family History**, an online Zoom event featuring longtime Tucson gallerist **Mark Bahti**, proprietor of **Bahti Indian Arts**, a dealer in Native American arts and crafts for over seventy years with gallery locations in Tucson and Santa Fe. Sign-up details appeared in a March 16<sup>th</sup> email to all WAP members from Christine Brindza.



Dealer Mark Bahti and his wife, artist Emmi Whitehorse

### ***Western Art Patrons Annual Meeting***

The **WAP Annual Meeting** will take place in cyberspace at **6:30 P.M. on April 29th**, so keep your computers charged and ready to go. Special guest for the evening will be **Stephanie Campos**, a talented artist specializing in exquisitely detailed charcoal portraits of figures of the Old West. Please join us in facilitating the election of members of the WAP Board and in expressing our heartfelt appreciation to outgoing WAP President **Linda Ender**, Vice President **Jeff Gartner** and **Jerry Freund**, each of whom will be leaving the Board having served the maximum three consecutive terms.



Stephanie Campos, ***Iron Shield (Sioux)***, Charcoal

## Curator's Corner

### *Community-Based Curation*

These past 18 months, I have been working on a three-year grant project called *Expanding Narratives* through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with TMA's Community Engagement department. This project focuses on the creation of culturally responsive approaches to curatorial practices. A National Leadership grant, this was the largest that TMA has ever received. I wanted to share with you updates about its progress.

In the first half of the grant period, attention was on the **Indigenous Arts** gallery exhibition. The biggest change in the "usual" exhibition process was using a community-based curatorial approach. In this case, it was not me acting as the curatorial voice or expert. Instead, there was a committee that was comprised of Indigenous community members that looked at the TMA Indigenous Arts collection and chose works of art, created themes, and wrote texts for the exhibition. With my colleague, Marianna Pegno, we worked directly with them and I conveyed their ideas into the final exhibition design. Along with countless emails and phone calls, we logged a myriad of hours of meetings over Zoom!

The Indigenous Arts exhibition opened to the public on March 11, 2021, with the new installation and main themes of cultural traditions, 21st century Indigenous people, sovereignty, and land and environment. There are areas devoted to different communities such as the O'odham, Yaqui, Hopi, and Diné, along with multi-tribal sections that present cross-cultural conversations between time and place, form and design. The Amerind Foundation provided loans of baskets for the exhibition as well as private lenders.

Among my takeaways from this project is the joy of working with external collaborators as well as artists. There are works in this exhibition that were made specifically for this exhibition. We also tried new display methods for baskets, katsinas, and other works of art on view. This process can take longer than a traditional curatorial process but can have large payoffs. It can help build relationships with these communities and create more meaningful exhibitions.

Thank you for your continued support in this major endeavor in the display and interpretation of Art of the American West. I encourage you to visit TMA and see the new Indigenous Arts exhibition on the lower level. In addition, we have **The Wyeths: Three Generations** exhibition on view until **May 9, 2021**. A COVID study was recently released saying that visiting museums are safer than any other indoor activity! For further information on this issue please consult this [link](#).

-- *Christine C. Brindza*, Glasser Curator of Art of the American West



New Indigenous Arts installation, Tucson Museum of Art



Another view of new Indigenous Arts installation, Tucson Museum of Art

## **Western Art Patrons Board of Directors**

<b>Linda Ender</b>	President
<b>Jeffrey Gartner</b>	Vice-President
<b>Jim Betty</b>	Treasurer
<b>Phylis Carnahan</b>	Secretary
<b>Judy Betty</b>	Events and Travel Chair
<b>Rachel Sattinger</b>	Membership Chair
<b>Art Hittner</b>	Art Acquisition Committee Chair/Newsletter Editor
<b>Louise Glasser</b>	Board of Directors Nominating Committee Chair
<b>Jerry Freund</b>	
<b>Dan Kimball</b>	
<b>Nancy Landes</b>	
<b>Judy Riskind</b>	
<b>Woody Wood</b>	
<b>Christine Brindza</b>	Senior Curator, James and Louise Glasser Curator of Art of the American West

Special thanks to Woody Wood and Christine Brindza for the photographs appearing in this edition of the WAP Newsletter.