Tucson Museum of Art’s feature exhibitions are foundational to our mission of connecting art to life. These rotating exhibitions address contemporary issues, spark cultural dialogue, and thanks to our museum’s robust community engagement programs, offer accessible learning experiences that extend well beyond the museum visit.
Paintings from Spanish America (1600–1800)
from the Thoma Collection
October 3, 2024–January 19, 2025

This exhibition presents 16 works from the collection of Carl & Marilynn Thoma. Together they display a panorama of artistic creativity from present-day Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia and, Cuba dating from circa 1600 to the late 18th century. The selection of oil paintings on canvas and delicately rendered small works in oil on copper reveal the dynamic character of viceregal art, a unique combination of styles influenced by European artists and imported European prototypes translated and adapted by local hands. The majority of the works on view reflect the role played by the Catholic Church during three centuries of Spanish rule. Along with the portraits, most of the paintings featured in the exhibition originally hung in private homes where they were admired and invited contemplation and prayer.

Unidentified Artist, Saint Francis of Assisi Interceding for Mankind, Bolivia, Potosí, 18th century, oil on panel.
Collection of Carl & Marilynn Thoma. Image courtesy of: Federico Cia Madariaga.
The highly regarded Arizona Biennial, first organized as the Tucson Independent Artist group’s annual statewide exhibition in 1948, is a juried exhibition that showcases artworks from some of the most innovative and imaginative artists in the state. This exhibition provides an opportunity for both emerging and established artists to exhibit their art in a museum setting. For each biennial, a new juror from outside the state is chosen to select the works submitted by hundreds of artists and create a cohesive exhibition that serves as an overview of artistic creativity in Arizona.

This year’s juror is Natasha Becker, the curator for the Arts of Africa at the Fine Arts Museums in San Francisco since December 2020. Becker was born in Cape Town, South Africa, where she studied African history. She came to the United States in 2003 and participated in the art history graduate program at Binghamton University (New York) before heading to the Clark Art Institute (Massachusetts) where she specialized in contemporary African art and advanced academic programs in global art history. She trained as an independent curator, working closely with artists to develop exhibitions, advance a critical understanding of their work, and build relationships with collectors, galleries, and institutions.
Divergence of Legacy: Art of the American West in the 21st Century
February 22, 2025–June 22, 2025

How is art of the American West considered from the perspective of the 21st Century? To address this question, this exhibition will consider new constructs, advance scholarship, and investigate historic and contemporary presentations of this distinct art type. TMA will present an in-depth exploration of its Art of the American West collection through perspectives of community curators, partners, and TMA curatorial and community engagement staff. Considering the various nuances found within this collection, community curators will work with the museum in examining its historic origins, changes over time, and relevance to audiences today to develop new understandings. Seeking to both expand and honor existing traditional narratives, the exhibition will feature themes that highlight connections and meaningful stories found between people, histories, cultures, and art found within this geographic region, as well as concentrate on the roles that Southern Arizona has played in art of the American West’s development and interpretation. Visitors will discover new ways to understand this type of art and its significance to the past and present as well as investigate social contexts in relation to traditional conventions.

Ya Hecho: Readymade in the Borderlands
July 3, 2025–September 28, 2025

Ya Hecho: Readymade in the Borderlands presents new and recent work by 17 contemporary artists from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, highlighting artists’ engagements with the distinctive material culture of a region persistently underrepresented in U.S. American institutional narratives. Chicano artists of earlier generations authored a legacy practice of improvisatory assemblage of found objects, a practice often referred to as rasquachismo. Dialoguing with this history, Ya Hecho—or “already made”—proposes that a new generation of Borderlands artists is taking up the legacy of the Chicano readymade to create sculptural objects and installation works that meditate on the Borderlands and its materials. These works often present research-based inquiries into the region’s landscapes, histories, and contemporary challenges. This exhibition is guest curated by Rigoberto Luna.
On The Edge: Los Angeles Art from the Joan and Jack Quinn Family Collection

October 11, 2025–March 1, 2026

On The Edge: Los Angeles Art from the Joan and Jack Quinn Family Collection uses the Quinn Family Collection to explore a period of artmaking that is pivotal to understanding current art practices and the West Coast mentality. This exhibition highlights the significance of the Ferus Gallery’s “Cool School, the use and exploration of new materials, minimalism, the rise of conceptual art, Chicano art, early environmental practices, and portraiture.

Few individuals have left such an indelible mark on the artistic landscape of Southern California like Joan and Jack Quinn. This is an outstanding collection of artworks that define the history of contemporary art in Los Angeles and includes many of the artists who established Los Angeles as a competitive counter-market to the New York and European scenes.

The Tucson Museum of Art is committed to sharing our extensive collection with the public and we regularly make changes to our permanent collection galleries. Exhibiting TMA collection works requires resources. Please join in making the collections available by supporting the Permanent Collections Galleries.
Implied Narratives: Selections from the TMA Photography Collection
September 2024–August 2025

This exhibition features work from TMA’s photography collection that present narratives left to the imagination. In photography, as much as in painting and works on paper, often an implied narrative exists where a plot is suggested through the images and composition presented. Audiences are left to ponder the scene or the image, not quite certain of where the “story” is going. It can be an exciting proposition. They have the freedom to invent a story based on their own histories, imagination, and knowledge.

While documentary photographers capture real scenes that record actual events, without knowing fully the context or at what point in the story it exists, one is left with the “not knowing” as an intriguing point of departure. This exhibition, selected from the Tucson Museum of Art’s collection of contemporary photography, presents implied narratives—suggested stories but not necessarily directed or dictated by the photographer. Included in these selections are scenes from war, ritual, leisure, immigration, surrealism, staged figuration, and graffiti. In each, the works are not static—they present as if they are connected to other works as part of a longer narrative, a story yet to be told.
Paper is used every day, but only rarely is it closely observed with attention to its visual and tactile qualities. Paperwork looks to draw notice to paper, asking visitors to consider why artists choose specific paper types and how their selections contribute to the meaning and overall effect of an artwork. Drawing on the holdings of TMA’s permanent collection, Paperwork considers works made with materials like rice paper, amate, cotton rag, newsprint, and auto body sandpaper.

Located within the Hamilton gallery, a continuance of the ongoing community exploration, *The People of the West: A Rethinking of Westerners* will be installed in Winter 2024–2025. A special project begun in 2021, this community collaborative exhibition addresses how people living and working in the West are more than the often recognized or stereotyped cowboy and Indigenous imagery. These provide rich, significant histories that enhance the way we think about the region. Previous iterations of *People of the West* have been developed with contemporary artists Papay Solomon and Anh-Thuy Nguyen as well as students from Tucson High School. This new installation will be curated in collaboration with the Southern Arizona VA Polytrauma group using TMA’s collections.

INDIGENOUS ARTS
Winter 2025–Summer 2026

A dedicated gallery to the TMA Indigenous Arts collection, this space has been developed by Indigenous community curators to focus on the artistic achievements and stories of Indigenous peoples of the United States. It is refreshed annually with new examples of basketry, pottery, textiles, katsinas, works on paper, and additional art forms that present ideas of daily life, resilience, artistic development, and social justice.

With the permanent collections display, this coming summer this gallery will also feature work from the William Healey collection, highlighting Indigenous artists of the 20th century, as well as other new acquisitions.
SOUTHWEST ART: CONTEMPORARY CONVERSATIONS
Winter 2025–Summer 2026

A space dedicated to art of the Southwestern United States and its borderlands, this exhibition was created by a group of community curators who worked with TMA staff to present the various stories and nuances of the region. This gallery will be refreshed with new representations and interpretation that continues to broaden the intersections of cultures, histories, and ideas of this geographic area.

LATIN AMERICAN FOLK ART FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION
Winter 2025–Summer 2026

TMA holds over 3,000 works of Latin American Folk Art that were created in contexts across the Americas. The permanent collection exhibition for this area invites audiences to consider the meaning of tradition, asking what makes a work “traditional,” and exploring how this concept evolves to remain vibrant and relevant today. In its next rotation of works, new acquisitions, and selections from the collection will be debuted.

Discover another type of collection at the Tucson Museum of Art—the one outside! The outdoor sculpture collection is available so visitors can experience works of art in open environments, natural light, and daily atmospheric conditions. Located throughout the museum’s campus, 18 sculptures are currently displayed and are made from bronze, ceramic, steel, or stone.

From corner to corner and heights high and low, the outdoor sculpture collection offers points of interest throughout the museum grounds. Jerald Jaquard’s iconic Solar Tower, a yellow corten steel geometric pillar, greets visitors at the east entrance of the museum. In the Patricia Morgan and Peter Salomon Sculpture Garden works can be viewed during museum hours, including ceramic pieces by Viola Frey and Barbara Grygutis, bronzes of the American West by Allan Houser, Herb Mignery, Michael Naranjo, and Betty Saletta, and a 19th-century European bronze by Nogent Joseph. Patrons dining on the patio of the Café a la Cart can view several works along the borders of the Bonnie L. Bradford Courtyard, and passersby walking through downtown Tucson can observe additional examples outside the historic properties.
MISSION
The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block connects art to life through meaningful and engaging experiences that inspire discovery, spark creativity, and promote cultural understanding.