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The National Endowment for the Humanities Awards Prestigious Grant to the Autry Museum of the American West

The Autry will use grant to fund major exhibition and public programs

Los Angeles, CA (August 14, 2018)—The [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) has awarded the [Autry Museum of the American West](#) a Public Humanities Project: Exhibitions grant of \$400,000 to re- envision its current popular culture gallery as *Imagined Wests*, a new exhibition designed to expand public conceptions of the American West in mass media and the arts. Scheduled to open in spring 2021, the nearly 5,000-square-foot space in the Ted and Marian Craver Imagination Gallery will feature hundreds of objects from across the Autry’s collections. The project will include public programming and documentary media produced in collaboration with KCETLink Media Group.

“The new exhibition will weave the historic ‘Imagination Gallery’ spirit together with new ideas and themes thoroughly embedded in the twenty-first century,” said **W. Richard West, Jr.** (Southern Cheyenne), President and CEO of the Autry. “With the support of the NEH, *Imagined Wests* will highlight the important roles the many diverse communities in the West have played, and continue to play, in shaping the real and imagined West.”

For 30 years, the Imagination Gallery has explored how the Western film genre evolved in response to social and cultural changes taking place in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In line with the Autry’s mission to tell the diverse stories of the American West, *Imagined Wests* will place this genre in conversation with other ways the West has been imagined by many culture-makers, some of them far from Hollywood. The new exhibition will draw on the Autry’s outstanding collections in popular culture, art, music, material culture, and history, including the Southwest Museum of the American Indian Collection, which tells many stories about the imagining of the Southwest and Native America, including from the perspectives of Latino/a and Native people. It will also feature the immersive design that has become a hallmark of Autry exhibitions.

The project director for *Imagined Wests* is Josh Garrett-Davis, the Autry’s Gamble Assistant Curator of Western History, Popular Culture, and Firearms. “*Imagined Wests* will place our wonderful collections around cowboy Westerns in dialogue with many other, often overlapping, ‘imagined Wests’ in popular culture,” Garrett-Davis said. “These include the imagined Southwest and Latin American borderlands, ‘Indian Country’ as envisioned by both Native and non-Native creators, the sublime Western wilderness, and even the urban and suburban West. Not only film and television, but music, fashion, architecture,

literature, and museums themselves have been—and remain—places to imagine and re-imagine the West.”

Extending this creative conversation about the West and American identities will be television and online video media, plus educational and public programs. Just as exhibition research has found that the imagined West has been made and remade through media and institutions, this public humanities project will convey its ideas and themes through multiple channels from its base in the gallery, to appeal to various tastes, interests, ages, and learning styles among diverse audiences. A documentary film component, produced with KCETLink Media Group, will build on the organizations’ award-winning portfolio of collaborative projects and extend the project to a national audience.

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About the Autry Museum of the American West

The Autry is a museum dedicated to exploring and sharing the stories, experiences, and perceptions of the diverse peoples of the American West, connecting the past to the present to inspire our shared future. The museum presents a wide range of exhibitions and public programs—including lectures, film, theatre, festivals, family events, and music—and performs scholarship, research, and educational outreach. The Autry’s collection of more than 500,000 pieces of art and artifacts includes the Southwest Museum of the American Indian Collection, one of the largest and most significant of Native American materials in the United States.

Museum admission is \$14 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors 60+, \$6 for children ages 3–12, and free for Autry members, veterans, and children age 2 and under. Admission is free on the second Tuesday of every month.

About the National Endowment for the Humanities

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: www.neh.gov.

HOURS

Museum and Autry Store:

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Crossroads West Cafe:

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

The museum, store, and cafe are closed on Mondays. Visit TheAutry.org for more information.