



## **Autry Museum of the American West Receives Donation of Cotsen Native American Collection and Grant From the Cotsen Foundation for Academic Research**

Los Angeles, CA (November 8, 2021)—The [Autry Museum of the American West](https://www.theautry.org/) is proud to announce that it has received nearly 100 Native American cultural materials from the esteemed collection of the late Lloyd E. Cotsen, as well as a grant of over \$40,000 from the Cotsen Foundation for Academic Research. The grant will go towards the conservation of the newly acquired collection and support its integration into the Autry’s existing collections.

“The museum is honored to be the caretakers of the Cotsen Native American Collection, which further underscores our commitment to providing exemplary stewardship to the significant Native cultural

materials housed within our institution,” said **Stephen Aron**, President and CEO of the Autry. “The Autry provides a wide range of access points to Native collections to promote research, engagement, and awareness about Indigenous histories, peoples, and cultures of the American West. Thanks to the grant from the Cotsen Foundation for Academic Research, the Cotsen Native American Collection will be interwoven into the Autry’s collections stewardship, access, research, and engagement efforts. The Autry looks forward to continued collaboration with the Foundation.”

Together with representatives from Native communities, Autry curators and collections staff reviewed the Cotsen Collection to ensure that the donated cultural materials were appropriate to be housed in a museum. The Autry worked closely with the Cotsen Foundation to transfer the materials to the Autry’s Resources Center—a state-of-the-art collections stewardship, education, and research facility in Burbank, CA. The Autry is a caretaker of 238,000 historical and contemporary Native American artworks and cultural materials, considered one of the most extensive collections of its kind in the United States.

“Museums across the country often have cultural materials in their collections that have direct ties to Native American communities. These items were created by the Ancestors of today’s Native peoples,” says **Joe Horse Capture** (A’aniih), the Autry’s Vice President of Native Collections and Ahmanson Curator of Native American History and Culture. “Since museum collecting began, there has been a disconnect between institutions, their collections, and Native Americans. Too often, Native people have little to no access to the works their Ancestors created. Many of these items hold knowledge necessary for the cultural health of 21st Century Native communities and the vibrancy of community, history, tradition, family, and artistic and spiritual knowledge. These materials are important tools that can support the intergenerational transfer of knowledge within Native communities. The Autry is committed—by mission—to connecting the materials within the Cotsen Collection and its entire Native Collections to their tribal communities.”

The Cotsen Foundation for Academic Research grant will assist with the thoughtful integration of the Cotsen Collection into the Autry’s existing Native American collections. Grant funds are supporting a research assistant, whose responsibilities are to catalogue and photograph the collection, to assist with outreach to tribal communities, and to support research. In line with the Autry’s mission to tell the stories of the peoples and cultures of the American West, this funding allows the Autry to assess the Cotsen Collection and ensure it is placed in the broader context of its cultural region, as well as made available to tribal communities and researchers.

The late Lloyd Cotsen was a passionate art collector, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and the former chief executive officer and chairman of the board of Neutrogena Corporation. Throughout his life, Cotsen amassed a remarkable collection of objects from around the world, including textile fragments, Japanese bamboo baskets, illustrated children’s books, contemporary Asian ceramics, Asian art, antiquities, and more. Within his vast international collection was an extensive assemblage of Native American cultural materials. During his lifetime, Cotsen donated much of his collection to various institutions and art museums, including Princeton University, the Museum of International Folk Art, and the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. Since his passing in 2017, nearly 15,000 objects from his collection have been donated to museums across the country including the George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum, the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, and the Princeton University Art Museum.

“During his lifetime Lloyd was a strong supporter of museums, and he and I shared a deep commitment to collecting, scholarship, and educational stewardship,” said Margit Sperling Cotsen, his wife. “The Autry Museum is the epitome of excellent museum practice, and I am delighted that the Cotsen Native

American Collection will be cared for by this very special organization. Therefore, I am most pleased and proud to represent the Cotsen Foundation for Academic Research in donating both the objects and the financial exhibition support. Generations of future audiences will benefit greatly from the Autry leadership and its superb professional staff.”

### **About the Autry Museum of the American West**

The Autry is 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. Visit [TheAutry.org](https://www.theautry.org) to learn about programs, exhibitions, and other online content.