

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Autry Museum of the American West Presents
Miss Velma in the City of Angels

March 21st, 2026 – Ongoing



Dress made for Miss Velma of the Universal World Church, Los Angeles, 1970s, Acetate, polyester, and sequins, Gift of Jodi Wille, Autry Museum; 2021.13.6.

(March 9th, 2026 Los Angeles, CA) - From the twentieth century to today, Los Angeles has been a center of religion, where traditional faiths and new spiritual communities flourish side by side.

The Autry's jewel box gallery—situated within the religion and ritual section of the Art of the West exhibit located in the Irene Helen Jones Parks Gallery—offers an opportunity to feature Velma Jagers, known as Miss Velma, who was co-leader of the Universal World Church founded in Los Angeles in 1951 and celebrate LA's enduring love affair with new religions and charismatic preachers.

The exhibit will feature one of the dresses worn by Miss Velma during her sermons for the Universal World Church in the 1970s that are now part of the Autry Museum's collection. These ornate and custom-made dresses were created to complement the theme of each week's

sermon. The exhibition was created in collaboration with Jodi Wille, storyteller and director of *God Bless America: The Miss Velma Christmas Special* (2001), the show also includes Media and graphics from the Universal World Church.

About the Autry Museum of the American West:

The Autry Museum of the American West 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—in addition to scholarship, research, and educational outreach. The Autry’s holdings comprise more than 600,000 artworks and cultural objects, including one of the largest and most significant collections of Native American materials in the United States. For more information, please visit <https://theautry.org>.

The Autry Museum of the American West acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles Basin and So. Channel Islands). We recognize that the Autry Museum and its campuses are located on the traditional lands of Gabrielino/Tongva peoples, and we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), ‘Ahihirom (Elders) and ‘Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present, and emerging.

Autry Museum of the American West 4700 Western Heritage Way Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462

Museum and Store Hours:

Tuesday–Friday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Closed Mondays

Press Contact:

Brendan Whitt (bwhitt@theautry.org)