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**INSPIRED BY EXPANSION:
NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES MAJOR GIFT FROM JUDITH LOWRY, NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIST AND COLLECTOR**

Judith Lowry, an accomplished Native American artist, has given her personal collection of over 125 artworks acquired during her lifetime to the Nevada Museum of Art. The gift, named the Lowry Croul Collection of Contemporary Native American Art, is a testament to her long relationship with the Museum and her trust in its commitment to Indigenous artists through its permanent collections and programmatic offerings.

Reno, NV (January, 23, 2024) – The Nevada Museum of Art announces a major gift of over 125 artworks from the personal collection of Judith Lowry, an accomplished Native American artist and enrolled member of the Pit River Tribe. Assembled over many decades by Lowry and her husband Brad Croul, *the Lowry Croul Collection of Contemporary Native American Art* includes paintings by prominent Native American contemporary artists with a West Coast and Great Basin focus. The addition of important contemporary works by Native American artists adds range and depth to the Museum’s existing and fast-growing permanent collection of regional, national, and international Indigenous artists.

“Over the past two decades, the Nevada Museum of Art has shown a true commitment to contemporary Native American artists,” said Judith Lowry. “Considering the relative youth of the organization compared to larger, more established museums, it has been impressive to witness what they have done to honor living artists and their communities. I am honored to donate my collection to this museum that is located close to my ancestral homelands.”

Over the past decade, the Museum has worked to develop grass-roots relationships with Indigenous artists, leaders, and knowledge keepers in the Great Basin and beyond. These friendships have led to numerous exhibitions, a series of book publications, cultural gatherings, educational programs, performances, and art acquisitions. The Museum anticipates the debut of the *Lowry Croul Collection of Contemporary Native American Art* in an exhibition planned for 2025.

As the Museum’s Community Advisor for the Great Basin Native Artists, Melissa Melero-Moose, an enrolled member of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, has said, “The Nevada Museum of Art is consistently moving forward to develop long-term, ongoing relationships with Indigenous artists in the region. Judith Lowry’s gift is a testament to the Museum’s long-term vision and commitment to our communities.”

Recently, the Museum established an *Indigenous Art Futures Endowment*, an ongoing fundraising priority of the institution aimed to assure that these long-term initiatives remain integral to its programmatic ethos for years to come. The Museum is known throughout the United States and around the world for its unique commitment to exploring the ways that art and environment connect. At the heart of this exploration is a deep respect and appreciation for the First Peoples of the Great Basin region and the Indigenous communities of the Greater West, a geographic super-region stretching from present-day Alaska to the tip of South America, and from America's Intermountain West to Australia and New Zealand.

"We are honored to be the long-term stewards of the *Lowry Croul Collection of Contemporary Native American Art*. Each artwork in the collection represents a unique and diverse voice within the Native American community. As we continue our efforts to expand the Museum, its permanent collection, and our education and research initiatives, Indigenous voices and artworks will always remain at the forefront of these initiatives," said Ann M. Wolfe, who holds the endowed position of *Andrea and John C. Deane Family Chief Curator and Associate Director*.

About Judith Lowry

Lowry (born 1948) is a painter and storyteller who earned her B.A. in fine art from Humboldt State University, followed by an M.A. in painting and drawing from Chico State University. A resident of both Nevada City and Susanville, CA, she is an enrolled member of the federally recognized Pit River Tribe and is of Hammawi Band Pit River/Mountain Maidu/Washoe/Scots-Irish descent. Lowry has been a leader in the Northern California arts community, having established the nonprofit organization "California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project," in 1996, as well as Nevada City's Firehouse No. 1 Museum, with an exhibition dedicated to the people of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan.

In her large scale and colorful paintings, Lowry chronicles the stories of her family and the legends, traditions, and complexities of her Indigenous ancestry. Born to a Euro-Australian mother, and a father who traced his roots to Hammawi Band Pit River/Mountain Maidu/Scots-Irish cultures, Lowry's works reflect the Maidu/Pit River creation stories told by her father. Lowry considers her own work a modern extension of storytelling and a way of recording the oral histories of her people.

Lowry's work has been exhibited widely and included in solo and group exhibitions at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento; the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the C.N. Gorman Museum in Davis, California; the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona; and the George Gustav Heye Center in New York City. Her work is in the collections of major museums including the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian; the Eiteljorg Museum; the Peabody Essex Museum; the Crocker Art Museum; and the Nevada Museum of Art.

Highlights from the *Lowry Croul Collection of Contemporary Native American Art*

The collection contains works by some of the West Coast's most noted Native American artists, including paintings by Harry Fonseca (Nisenan Maidu/Hawaiian/Portuguese), Frank LaPena (Nomtipon Wintu), and Frank Day (Konkow Maidu). Important and rare story paintings by Dalbert Castro (Maidu) are also included, along with works by Jean LaMarr (Northern Paiute/Pit River) and George Longfish (Seneca and Tuscarora). An exceptional selection of photography by Lowry's cousin Dugan Agular (Northern Paiute/Maidu/Pit River) is included, as well as many traditional beaded and woven works by Lorena Gorbet (Mountain Maidu), Shiyaya Peck (Maidu), and Tiffany Adams (Chemehuevi/Koyoomk'awi/Nisenan). Finally, the gift includes over twenty original paintings by Judith Lowry.

In addition to fine artworks, the collection includes a unique archival collection of ephemera exploring Native American stereotypes. The archive collection includes hundreds of figurines, product labels, movie posters, book covers, fruit crate labels, and costumes that articulate inaccurate and culturally insensitive representations of Native American people, while revealing how Native American imagery has been embedded in unexpected ways into the history, pop culture and identity of the United States.

Collections that Focus on The Greater West

The Nevada Museum of Art encourages cross-cultural exchange, study, and creative practice in a geographic super-region that the Museum has defined as the "Greater West." This unique focus area is grounded in the belief that Indigenous Peoples across the globe maintain ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, or from where they have been displaced. Those lands have been continually threatened by natural disaster, resource extraction, military occupation, and ongoing waves of colonization. The art and dialogue produced in and about the Greater West aspires to elucidate these

issues and to elevate the voices and aspirations of Indigenous people. In 2012, the Museum established the *Art of the Greater West Collection* with a generous gift from the Robert S. and Dorothy J. Keyser Foundation.

\$60 Million Museum Expansion Project: Expanding Horizons

Expanding educational opportunities through both physical spaces and increasing the Museum's permanent collections, have been congruent positive outcomes of the Museum's ongoing expansion project that will foster arts education in the state for younger generations well beyond the completion of the project. After all, despite a population of three million people, Nevada has only one accredited art museum to serve its citizens. As such, the Museum has both urgent and an ongoing need that must be addressed to accommodate the education and research programs that benefit the state's rapidly growing population.

To meet these needs, we have implemented a strategic plan with three goals:

- **Establish** an Education and Research Center to serve students, educators, scholars and the community.
- **Build** upon the established endowment to ensure financial stability and operating support.
- **Increase** the number of galleries dedicated to the permanent collections.

The expansion project not only increases gallery space for the Museum's permanent collections but also provides enhanced access to the vast art, archive, and library collections through a renovated and expanded Center for Art + Environment. This new space will allow visitors to delve deeper into the Museum's rich collections and discover new connections between art and the environment. The Center supports the practice, study and awareness of creative interactions between people and their natural, built and virtual environments, with many of its archives and collections from more than 1,500 artists and organizations working on all seven continents.

Image captions: Harry Fonseca (Maidu/Nisenan, Portuguese, Hawaiian). [St. Francis of the Bluebirds] Saint Francis of Assisi. Not dated. Mixed media on canvas. 47 ½ x 31 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, gift of Judith Lowry © 2016 Harry Fonseca Collection, Autry Museum of the American West. Jean LaMarr (Northern Paiute/Pit River). Lighting Up. Not dated. Mixed media. Image: 36 x 44 inches. Frame: 41 ½ x 49 ½ inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, gift of Judith Lowry © Jean LaMarr. Frank LaPena (Nomtipom-Wintu). Untitled. Not dated. Acrylic on canvas. Image: 48 x 36 inches. Framed: 49 ½ x 37 ½ inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, gift of Judith Lowry © Frank LaPena.

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The Nevada Museum of Art is the only art museum in Nevada accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). A private, nonprofit organization founded in 1931, the statewide institution is supported by its membership as well as sponsorships, gifts and grants. Through its permanent collections, original exhibitions and programming, and E.L. Cord Museum School, the Nevada Museum of Art provides meaningful opportunities for people to engage with a range of art and education experiences. The Museum's **Center for Art + Environment** is an internationally recognized research center dedicated to supporting the practice, study, and awareness of creative interactions between people and their environments. The Center houses unique archive materials from more than 1,500 artists working on all seven continents, including Cape Farewell, Michael Heizer, Walter de Maria, Lita Albuquerque, Burning Man, the Center for Land Use Interpretation, Great Basin Native Artists Archive, Ugo Rondinone's *Seven Magic Mountains*, and Trevor Paglen's *Orbital Reflector*. Learn more at nevadaart.org.

Land Acknowledgement

The Nevada Museum of Art acknowledges the traditional homelands of the *Wa She Shu* (Washoe), *Numu* (Northern Paiute), *Newe* (Western Shoshone), and *Nuwu* (Southern Paiute) people of the Great Basin. This includes the 28 tribal nations that exist as sovereign nations and continue as stewards of this land. We appreciate the opportunity to live and learn on these Indigenous homelands.