

PRESS RELEASE

The Heard Museum Announces 2029 Centennial Campaign at Groundbreaking for Multi-Million-Dollar Capital Projects

Images available at heard.org/press

PHOENIX, AZ - The Heard Museum announced plans today for its centennial. The year 2029 marks 100 years of the Heard Museum presenting the voice and vision of American Indian artists to the public. Established by Maie Bartlett Heard in 1929, the Heard has evolved into a major cultural destination in the heart of Phoenix. With the world's largest private collection of American Indian art, a rich calendar of original exhibitions and programs, and a world-class library and archive for scholars, artists, writers, and more, the Heard's multifaceted work reaches more than 150,000 visitors on-site and 1 million online annually.

Centennial Campaign
In honor of this remarkable milestone, the Heard has launched its Centennial Campaign, which will celebrate the museum's accomplishments in the last century and look ahead to the next one hundred years. Titled *Walk In Beauty*, which refers to a Navajo prayer that emphasizes harmony and balance, the $36 million campaign will raise funds to support the long-term financial health of the institution, address critical facilities needs, and enrich exhibitions and programs. "In addition to the financial campaign, the Heard's centennial is an opportunity for us to build the collection, deepen relationships with Indigenous communities, and encourage even greater engagement with all the communities the Heard Museum serves," said campaign co-chairs Nadine Basha and Wick Pilcher.

Of the campaign funds, $23 million will be allocated towards new campus features and infrastructure and accessibility improvements, $10 million will be added to the endowment, and $3 million will be set aside for operating and capital reserves. David and "Weezie" Reese, longtime supporters of the Heard Museum, have made a generous lead gift of $5 million to support the creation of a new, bespoke venue for the museum's nationally recognized restaurant. Additional major support for the restaurant came from Heard Museum Trustees Sharron Lewis and Mary Ellen McKee.

With a major funding commitment from E.A. Michelson Philanthropy, the Heard will also create a new center for lifelong learning called the Creativity Hub. Designed specifically with older adults in mind while welcoming learners of all ages, this accessible, intergenerational learning space will build on the Heard's leadership in Creative Aging – including Vitality Arts® workshops for adults "55 and better" – while expanding opportunities for individuals with a range of accessibility needs. The Creativity Hub will offer daily and weekly programs and activities for museum visitors and will include an accessible Living Room designed as an informal gathering place for older adults.

Accessibility and universal design are central to planning campus improvements. A $1 million grant from The Steele Foundation in honor of John and Ellen Stiteler will enable a new entry experience that will further enhance accessibility features and create a new arrival experience for museum visitors featuring new signage, seating and areas of respite, landscaping, lighting, and outdoor sculptures. The Heard will partner with PHX Architecture and Symmetry Construction on these three projects, which are fully capitalized and anticipated to be finished and open to the public in January 2028.

Seventy-eight percent, or $28 million, of the campaign goal has been achieved as the campaign moves into its public phase on Oct. 1, 2026. Donors include 50 local and national foundations and individuals. “We are grateful for the outstanding support we have received so far in support of our *Walk In Beauty Centennial Campaign*,” said David M. Roche, Heard Museum Dickey Family Director and CEO. “The generosity of so many affirms the special place that the Heard Museum holds in the heart of the Arizona community and the strong desire to see the museum thrive in its next century.”

Centennial-Year Exhibition

Plans for the Heard’s centennial also include opening a new 12,000-square-foot exhibition in December 2029 featuring highlights from the museum’s renowned permanent collection. The exhibition, titled *ORIGINAL PEOPLE: Indigenous Creativity in the American Southwest*, will showcase 400 years of Indigenous creative expression through the presentation of work representing 40 tribal nations from California to Oklahoma. The Heard has already received planning grants from several sources, including the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, the Terra Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. An additional $6 million in contributions to the *Walk In Beauty Centennial Campaign* is needed to complete this project and is expected to be raised during the public phase.

Digital Initiative

On Oct. 1, 2026, the Heard will launch a new webpage dedicated to the *Walk In Beauty Centennial Campaign*. Information on how to support the campaign and updates on the capital projects can be found at heard.org/walkinbeauty.

Notes to Editors:

The Heard Museum and Museum Shop are open daily, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The museum is closed on Easter, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. From June 1 to Aug. 31, the Museum and Shop are open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Ticket prices for the museum are as follows: adults are $26; seniors (65+) are $21; military members are $21 (with valid ID); university/college students with a valid ID are $10; children (6-17) are $10; and all children 5 years and under, American Indians (with Tribal ID or CIB), and Heard Museum members are free.

Photography of any kind may not be used for publication without written permission from the museum and/or artists.

Credentialed members of the media may contact a member of the marketing staff for more information concerning photography of public events or museum galleries

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About the Heard Museum:

Since its founding in 1929, the Heard Museum has grown to become nationally and internationally recognized for its world-class exhibitions, award-winning publications, unparalleled festivals, and innovative educational programs. Dedicated to connecting Indigenous creativity to the world, the Heard showcases the beauty and vitality of Indigenous creative expression by presenting the voice and vision of American Indian artists. A welcoming destination for children and families, the Heard offers engaging experiences that inspire curiosity and foster appreciation for American Indian art and culture. The Heard Museum is supported by the generosity of Heard Museum members and donors, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the City of Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture.

For more information, please visit heard.org.

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