

AVP 3-21-12 Museum of Art and History set to make opening debut

LANCASTER - The Museum of Art and History will make its debut to the public May 5, city officials said this week.

Free opening day festivities will include a ribbon cutting at 11 a.m., docent-led tours of the museum, musical performances and hands-on art-making activities designed for all ages.

Three main exhibitions will celebrate Lancaster and the rest of the Antelope Valley: "Smooth

Operations: Substance and Surface in Southern California Art," "Indians, Gold Miners and Gunslingers: A Look Back at Lancaster in the Old West" and "The Painted Desert."

A side exhibit will showcase the work of local artist Stevie Love in the ground floor Vault Gallery.

Co-curated by Andi Campognone and Peter Frank, "Smooth Operations: Substance and Surface in Southern California Art" looks at the use of new and nontraditional materials in the fabrication of art objects, many of which came directly from the aerospace industry.

"Smooth Operations" will concentrate on the postwar years in and around Los Angeles, when experimentation with unorthodox - even radical - materials and qualities led to the emergence of movements such as "finish/fetish" and "light-and-space."

Among the artists featured are Larry Bell, DeWain Valentine, Ronald Davis, Craig Kauffman, Judy Chicago, Roland Reiss, Norman Zammitt, Fred Eversley and Jerome Mahoney.

The work of younger artists who investigate the qualities of synthetic materials, including Eric Johnson, Lisa Bartleson, Andy Moses and Eric Zammitt, will augment the main portion of the

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exhibition, gifted to the Museum by collectors Steve Eglash and Gisela Colon.

"Indians, Gold Miners and Gunslingers: A Look Back at Lancaster in the Old West," curated by museum staff member Dr. Laurie Solis, is a visual timeline of the history of Lancaster utilizing artifacts and historic photographs from the museum's permanent collection. This exhibition marks the first in a series of historical exhibitions that will highlight the Antelope Valley.

"The Painted Desert" will include paintings from the museum's permanent collection and works by artists from Southern California celebrating the local landscape in traditional and nontraditional styles.

"The MOAH opening has been anticipated with great excitement," Mayor R. Rex Parris said. "It marks a new era for the city of Lancaster, providing the public with another spectacular venue where they can enjoy the arts. It also offers area artists a much-needed space in which to display their works."

Founded in 1986 as the Lancaster Museum/Art Gallery, the Lancaster Museum of Art and History is dedicated to advancing an appreciation of art and history in the Antelope Valley. Operating two sites, the Museum of Art and History and the Western Hotel Museum, the museum is not only a repository for historical artifacts important to preserving the unique character of the Antelope Valley, but also a place where residents and visitors alike can experience exhibitions of fine art and participate in a

variety of art and history-based programs, city officials said.

For details on the grand opening, contact museum staff at (661) 723-6250 or moah@cityoflancafterca.org.