

“GOING TO TEXAS” MAPS 500 YEARS OF LONE STAR HISTORY AT THE BRISCOE

Rare and Remarkable Map Collection Showcases the Power of Place in Shaping Texas’ Past

Exhibition Open Oct. 3, 2025 – Jan. 19, 2026

San Antonio, TX – (August 2025) This fall, the Briscoe Western Art Museum presents a rare opportunity to experience one of the most significant private map collections in the country with the exclusive exhibition, [*Going to Texas: Five Centuries of Texas Maps*](#), on view Oct. 3, 2025 – Jan. 19, 2026. Featuring 64 original maps from the extraordinary Yana and Marty Davis Map Collection, the exhibition offers a one-of-a-kind journey through the evolving landscape, identity and history of Texas.

Spanning nearly 500 years, from 1548 to 2006, the maps in this prestigious collection – on loan from the Museum of the Big Bend at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas – trace Texas’ remarkable transformation from the days of New Spain to the modern era. This landmark exhibition marks a rare public showing of the collection, offering unparalleled insight into the cultural, political and geographic forces that shaped the Lone Star State. Widely regarded as one of the most important Texas cartography collections in existence, the Davis Collection stands out not only for its historical depth, but also for its cartographic artistry and storytelling power.

Painstakingly assembled by Texas businessman and philanthropist Marty Davis and his wife Yana, the collection includes works by prominent European, Mexican and American mapmakers. These maps reveal how Texas was perceived, claimed and defined across centuries – serving as tools of exploration, instruments of empire and later, records of ambition and expansion. Whether charting transport routes, outlining battle lines or portraying uncharted frontiers, each map captures a vivid moment in Texas history.

“This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a collection of this caliber,” said Liz Jackson, President and CEO of the Briscoe Western Art Museum. “Maps are more than coordinates and boundaries – they are windows into the people, politics and possibilities of a place. This exhibition shows how cartography helped shape Texas and how Texas shaped the world’s imagination in return.”

The exhibition’s title is a nod to “GTT” – Gone to Texas – a standard farewell given by those who set out on the long, arduous and often dangerous journey to the Lone Star State during the second half of the nineteenth century. Alongside the Davis Collection, the Briscoe will display complementary pieces from its own holdings and additional historical

loans, enhancing the experience with artifacts and artworks that reflect key periods in Texas' evolution, including Spanish Texas, Mexican Texas, the Republic of Texas and statehood. The result is a sweeping, immersive exhibition that fuses art, history and geography into a compelling narrative of place and identity.

The exhibition also celebrates two enduring pillars of Western art, its majestic landscape and the profound influence of Spanish and Mexican culture. Through vivid and often imaginative cartography, historic maps bring the American West to life, revealing how early explorers, settlers and mapmakers perceived, recorded and shaped a region that would become Texas and beyond. Many of these maps – drawn long before the land was fully known – trace rivers, mountains and plains with a blend of artistry and precision, offering both practical information and poetic interpretation. They not only charted geography but guided migration, fueled settlement and helped forge a lasting Western identity rooted in the land itself.

Equally powerful is the exhibition's exploration of Mexico's enduring imprint on the West. Long before Texas became part of the United States, it was home to Spanish and Mexican communities whose cultural, political and geographic legacies are vividly inscribed in these maps. The Spanish place names still in use today – etched into rivers, towns, and territories – showcase this living heritage. The exhibition illuminates the pivotal role of Tejanos as they navigated shifting borders and cultural frontiers, blending resilience with adaptation. Their lasting contributions – seen in language, land stewardship and enduring traditions – continue to shape the essence of the West.

Whether you're a historian, educator, student or simply curious about Texas' legacy, ***Going to Texas*** promises to captivate and enlighten. Each map serves as a primary document, offering a unique lens into the past and a deeper appreciation for the dynamic forces that forged Texas' path.

Going to Texas: Five Centuries of Texas Maps was organized by the Museum of the Big Bend at Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas. The exhibition is sponsored in part by the Betty Stieren Kelso Foundation, Missie and McLean Bowman, H-E-B, Klesse Foundation | Margie & Bill Klesse, Jan McCaleb Elliott, Jessica Elliot Middleton, the City of San Antonio, Jan McCaleb Elliott, Jessica Elliott Middleton, PNC Bank, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Williams-Chadwick Family Charitable Fund of the San Antonio Area Foundation and in-kind support from Tale to Tell Communications.

See the West All Year Long at the Briscoe

Located along the historic San Antonio River Walk, the Briscoe is open Thursday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., Friday through Monday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and closed to the public on Tuesday and Wednesday. Admission is free for children 12 and under and for active duty military. The museum grounds feature 35 sculptures portraying various aspects of Western life. The museum's beautifully restored historic home inside the former San Antonio Public Library building includes 14 galleries, with special exhibitions, events and the Hendler Family Museum Store, providing art, culture, history and entertainment. Museum hours, parking and admission details are available [online](#).

About [The Briscoe Western Art Museum](#): Preserving and presenting the art, history and culture of the American West through engaging exhibitions, educational programs and public events reflective of the region's rich traditions and shared heritage, the Briscoe Western Art Museum is located on the San Antonio River Walk at 210 W. Market Street in the beautifully restored 1930s former San Antonio Public Library building. Named in honor of the late Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe Jr. and his wife, Janey Slaughter Briscoe, the museum includes the three-story Jack Guenther Pavilion, used for event rentals and programs, and the outdoor McNutt Sculpture Garden. Follow the Briscoe on social media, [@BriscoeMuseum](#).