

BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM OPENS LANDMARK *TEJANO LEGACY* EXHIBITION EXPLORING NEARLY 400 YEARS OF HISTORY, ART AND IDENTITY

**Opening July 24, the Briscoe's Largest and Most Ambitious Exhibition Showcases
More Than 100 Rare Works of Art and Artifacts, a Landmark Bilingual Catalog, Immersive Educational
Experiences and a Slate of Programs Celebrating the Enduring Legacy of Tejanos**

San Antonio, TX – (July 2026) The story of the American West did not begin with the cowboy. It began centuries earlier through the people, cultures and traditions that shaped the region long before the United States was established. Beginning July 24, the Briscoe Western Art Museum invites visitors to experience that story through [*Tejano Legacy: Another American Origin Story*](#), a landmark bilingual exhibition exploring nearly 400 years of Tejano history, culture and identity through exceptional works of art and rare artifacts. The exhibition will remain on view through Jan. 18, 2027.

The largest and most expansive exhibition ever developed by the Briscoe, *Tejano Legacy* brings together more than 100 paintings, sculpture, saddles, maps, weapons and historical objects from private collectors and museums throughout the United States and Mexico. Complementing the exhibition are immersive educational experiences, an original documentary by *National Geographic* filmmaker Jeremy Zipple and a landmark bilingual exhibition catalog that together invite visitors to explore Tejano history through multiple perspectives. Several works considered part of Mexico's cultural heritage are being displayed in the United States for the first time, offering visitors an unprecedented opportunity to experience extraordinary pieces rarely accessible to the American public.

Developed by the Briscoe in collaboration with scholars, collectors and lending institutions across the United States and Mexico, the exhibition expands the traditional narrative of the American West by exploring the generations of Tejanos whose influence can still be found in ranching, horsemanship, language, music, food and everyday life throughout Texas and beyond. The exhibition represents the museum's most ambitious curatorial project since its opening in 2013.

Created in celebration of America's 250th anniversary, *Tejano Legacy* invites visitors to reconsider whose stories shaped the American West – and how those stories continue to influence life in Texas today.

"*Tejano Legacy* is more than an exhibition. It is an invitation to experience a richer, more complete understanding of the American West," said Liz Jackson, President and CEO of the Briscoe Western Art Museum. "For generations, the contributions of Tejanos have been woven into the fabric of Texas and our nation, yet many of those stories are not widely known. Through extraordinary works of art, remarkable artifacts, an original documentary and meaningful educational experiences, this exhibition honors and celebrates those contributions while inspiring new conversations about the people, cultures and traditions that continue to shape our shared history."

Signature Works Bring Four Centuries of History to Life

Visitors will encounter works spanning the Spanish colonial period through the present day, each helping illuminate the evolution of Tejano identity across nearly four centuries.

Among the exhibition's highlights is the Briscoe's magnificent eighteenth-century Viceroy saddle, an extraordinary example of Spanish colonial craftsmanship whose design influenced generations of vaqueros and, ultimately, the American cowboy. Visitors will also discover rarely exhibited casta paintings documenting

the diverse cultural landscape of New Spain, portraits of Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota, historical maps tracing the settlement of Texas, religious art reflecting the role of the Spanish missions and significant works depicting ranching life, military history and everyday life along the Texas-Mexico border.

Additional exhibition highlights include numerous paintings and artifacts documenting the lives of Tejanos, Indigenous peoples, vaqueros and settlers whose stories collectively redefine how audiences understand the American West. Together, these works reveal the artistic, cultural and historical exchanges that shaped Texas while demonstrating that the history of the West is far more diverse, interconnected and enduring than many traditional narratives suggest.

New Scholarship for a Greater Understanding of the American West: Exhibition Catalog

Complementing the exhibition is a richly illustrated bilingual catalog documenting the artworks and artifacts featured in *Tejano Legacy*. Featuring full-color photography and original essays, the 207-page book available in both hard and soft copy explores the history, art and cultural legacy of Tejanos through the perspectives of leading scholars and historians. Contributors include historian William Kiser, Ph.D., historian Gerald E. Poyo, Ph.D., Amy Porter, Ph.D., acclaimed author John Phillip Santos, archaeologist and historian Jorge Luis García Ruiz, exhibition guest curator Gabriela Gámez, Briscoe President and CEO Liz Jackson and additional scholars whose research helps place Tejano history within the broader story of the American West.

Documenting the artwork and artifact featured in the exhibition, the catalog ensures *Tejano Legacy* will continue serving as an educational and scholarly resource long after the exhibition concludes. “The exhibition is only part of the story,” Jackson said. “This catalog preserves the scholarship, the artwork and the conversations that make Tejano Legacy so important. It ensures these stories remain accessible for future generations and extends the exhibition’s impact well beyond our gallery walls.”

Connecting History with Living Tradition: Original Documentary

Further enriching the exhibition experience, *Tejano Legacy* features an original documentary created exclusively for the Briscoe that explores how Tejano identity continues to thrive across generations. Directed by acclaimed National Geographic documentary filmmaker and former executive editor of *America* and *The Jesuit Review*, Jeremy Zipple, *Tejano Legacy: Generations in Step* pairs contemporary voices with the exhibition's historical narrative, illustrating how the traditions celebrated throughout the galleries continue to shape families and communities today.

The bilingual film follows artists, musicians, ranchers, historians, dancers and community leaders whose lives reflect the enduring influence of Tejano culture. Through music, dance, faith, food, charrería and family traditions, the documentary demonstrates how heritage is preserved not only through artifacts, but through the people who continue to live it every day.

Featured participants include renowned conjunto accordionist Juan Longoria Jr. and three generations of his musical family; members of San Antonio's escaramuza community whose elegant side-saddle performances celebrate the traditions of charrería; twelfth-generation Tejano rancher and collector José "Che" Guerra; educator and folklórico director Marisol Millican and her daughter Alana; Mission San José descendant and artist Ralph Anthony Pacheco; historian Edna Campos Gravenhorst; Texas asado tradition bearer Rogerio Estrada Jr.; and Isaac Alvarez Cárdenas, a member of the Tapilam Coahuiltecan Nation who preserves the sacred matachín dance tradition. The documentary was filmed this year and includes footage from San Antonio and South Texas, including San Antonio's beloved annual “A Day in Old Mexico” Fiesta celebration.

“The documentary reminds us that Tejano history isn’t confined to the past,” Jackson said. “It lives through families, traditions and communities who continue to carry these stories forward. Together, the exhibition and film offer visitors a powerful opportunity to experience both the history and the living legacy of Tejano culture.”

Interactive Experiences for Every Generation: Hands-on Exhibition Elements

Designed to engage visitors of every age, *Tejano Legacy* includes interactive educational experiences that encourage exploration and discovery.

Upon entering the exhibition, visitors will encounter a large interactive digital timeline tracing centuries of Tejano history through original period maps documenting the journey of one Tejano family from Spain to Mexico and to South Texas. Guests can zoom through different eras while exploring how people, borders and cultures evolved over time.

Everyone can explore the exhibition through a custom lotería activity, encouraging children and adults alike to search for important works and artifacts as they move through the galleries. Interactive touch stations allow visitors to feel materials connected to everyday life in the exhibition, including leather, buckskin and bison hides, traditional lassos, native plants, cochineal and additional objects representing the natural resources and craftsmanship that shaped life in early Texas.

Visitors can also create their own Western scenes using magnetic reproductions inspired by works from the Briscoe's permanent collection before concluding their journey by adding their hometown to a large visitor map, illustrating how people from across Texas, the United States and beyond continue to connect through the stories shared in *Tejano Legacy*.

Experience Tejano Legacy Beyond the Gallery: Programs and Events

Adding another element to the exhibition, the Briscoe will offer a full schedule of programs, tours, lectures, films and family activities that invite visitors to experience Tejano history through art, scholarship, music and hands-on learning. A complete calendar of events, registration information and program details are available [online](#). Programs are included with museum admission unless otherwise noted.

- **Celebrate the Opening: [Exhibition Preview Party](#)**
Thursday, July 23, 6 – 8 p.m., \$35 for members, \$55 for nonmembers
Enjoy light bites, drinks and an exclusive experience to see *Tejano Legacy: Another American Origin Story* before it opens to the public. Exhibition guest curator Gabriela Gamez will join the Briscoe's President and CEO, Liz Jackson, to kick off the exhibition. The party also celebrates acclaimed photographer John Dyer and [Selena Forever / Siempre Selena](#), a companion exhibition to *Tejano Legacy*. [Museum members](#) at the \$125 Supporter level and above receive two free tickets to the preview.
- **A Celebration of the Original Cowboy: National Day of the Cowboy Honors the Vaquero**
Saturday, July 25, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., free admission
The Briscoe's free annual [National Day of the Cowboy](#) celebration returns as Día Nacional del Vaquero Saturday, July 25, serving as one of the exhibition's signature opening weekend events and bringing the stories of *Tejano Legacy* to life. Dedicated this year to the legacy of the vaquero, the free family-friendly celebration explores how Spanish and Mexican horsemen established the ranching traditions, horsemanship, cattle-handling techniques and even much of the vocabulary that became synonymous with the American cowboy.

Visitors can enjoy *Tejano Legacy* and an exciting day of demonstrations, performances and interactive activities throughout the museum campus, including live charro demonstrations by the San Antonio Charro Association, Folklórico performances by Danzavida de San Antonio, historical reenactors, chuck wagon cooking demonstrations with complimentary samples of authentic cowboy grub, Western artists and traditional craft demonstrations and screen printing and additional hands-on family art activities. [Online pre-registration](#) for the free community event is recommended.

- **Explore the Exhibition with the Curator**

Thursdays, July 30, Aug. 27, Sept. 24, 2 p.m., free with museum admission

Guest curator Gabriela Gámez will lead public gallery tours, providing visitors with behind-the-scenes insight into the exhibition's development, featured works and the stories behind the collection.

- **Thursday Evenings at the Briscoe**

Continue the conversation as the Briscoe brings *Tejano Legacy* to life through engaging programs exploring genealogy, history, culture and music. Designed to complement the exhibition, these evening events invite visitors to connect more deeply with the stories, traditions and people that have shaped Tejano identity.

- **Thursday, July 30 | Tracing Your Roots | 6–8 p.m., free with admission**

Discover the stories hidden within your own family tree during an interactive genealogy program presented in partnership with the San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society. Learn practical research techniques, explore historical records and gain valuable resources for tracing your family's history and preserving it for future generations.

- **Thursday, Aug. 6 | Exploring Tejano Heritage | 6–8 p.m., free with admission**

Delve into the rich history and enduring legacy of Tejanos and explore the importance of preserving family histories and cultural traditions during an evening with two respected historians dedicated to preserving South Texas history. Edna Campos Gravenhorst, an author, researcher and local historian, shares her work documenting the neighborhoods, businesses and everyday stories that define Texas communities. She is joined by eighth-generation Tejano Homero Salinas Vera, a historian, publisher and descendant of early Spanish settlers in Nuevo Santander, who offers a personal perspective on his family's ranching heritage and the generations of Tejanos who helped shape South Texas.

- **Thursday, Aug. 27 | Celebrating Selena | 6–8 p.m., free concert**

Celebrate the enduring legacy of the Queen of Tejano Music with an evening inspired by the Briscoe's *Selena Forever / Siempre Selena* exhibition. The popular 512 Degrees Band will perform Selena's biggest hits along with beloved Tejano classics, creating an energetic tribute to the music and cultural impact that continues to inspire generations. Explore the exhibition before the performance for an unforgettable evening celebrating one of Texas' most iconic artists. Museum admission required for the exhibition. The garden concert is free to attend.

- **Go Beyond the Gallery with a Masterclass: [Painting Masterclass with Gladys Roldán-de-Moras](#)
Saturday, August 22 | 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. | \$100 for members, \$135 for nonmembers**

International award-winning artist Gladys Roldán-de-Moras will lead an immersive, hands-on masterclass, offering participants the rare opportunity to learn from one of the country's most accomplished painters. Featured in the Briscoe's permanent collection and renowned for her luminous portrayals of Spanish traditions, Roldán-de-Moras is celebrated for capturing the elegance and movement of Mexican escaramuzas, the passion of flamenco dancers and the enduring beauty of Hispanic heritage. She draws inspiration from the Spanish heritage passed down by her maternal grandfather, a lifelong charro who helped establish charrería as Mexico's national sport. That personal connection to the traditions celebrated throughout *Tejano Legacy* has become a defining influence in her work, making this masterclass a natural extension of the exhibition.

Participants will gain insight into Roldán-de-Moras' creative process, artistic techniques and the cultural narratives that inspire her award-winning paintings while creating their own work under her guidance. A Master Signature Member of both the American Impressionist Society and American Women Artists, Roldán-de-Moras was inducted into the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in 2023. All supplies and lunch are included. Space is limited, and advanced registration is required.

Family Adventures Inspired by Tejano Legacy

Families can continue exploring *Tejano Legacy* during the Briscoe's Locals Days, offering free admission for San Antonio and Bexar County residents on the first Sunday of each month. Along with free access to the museum and its special exhibitions, visitors can enjoy hands-on activities that encourage children and adults to discover the history, art and cultures of the American West together.

- **Sunday, Aug. 2 | Locals Day**
 - **Full STEAM Ahead: Talavera Tiles (1 – 3 p.m.)**

Families will discover the colorful history and artistry of Talavera pottery while creating tile-inspired masterpieces to take home, exploring the connections between Spanish, Mexican and Tejano artistic traditions.
 - **Scout the Briscoe (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)**

Pick up a family-friendly gallery guide, embark on an interactive museum adventure, and discover fascinating stories hidden throughout *Tejano Legacy* and the Briscoe's galleries.
- **Sunday, Sept. 6 | Locals Day**
 - **Full STEAM Ahead: Spanish Missions (1 – 3 p.m.)**

Learn how the Spanish missions influenced the development of Texas through creative, hands-on activities inspired by the architecture, engineering and communities that shaped the region's early history.
 - **Scout the Briscoe (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)**

Continue the adventure with a new gallery exploration featuring objects and stories from *Tejano Legacy* to connect with history through observation, discovery and play.

Selena Forever Celebrates an Enduring Legacy: Companion Exhibition

Illustrating the enduring impact of Tejanos – and Tejanas – [*Selena Forever / Siempre Selena*](#), celebrates one of the most influential figures in Tejano music and culture. Presented as a companion exhibition to *Tejano Legacy*, the exhibition features monumental photographs by acclaimed San Antonio photographer John Dyer, capturing Selena Quintanilla-Pérez during her rise to international stardom between 1992 and 1994. Bringing together iconic portraits, never-before-seen boutique photographs, magazine covers and ephemera, the exhibition is the most complete and comprehensive presentation of Dyer's large-scale Selena photographs ever assembled. Together, *Selena Forever* and *Tejano Legacy* illustrate the lasting influence of Tejanos on Texas and American culture, from the earliest Spanish settlements to the global impact of Tejano music.

Complementing the exhibition, the Briscoe's annual Summer Film Series presents *Siempre Tejano*, celebrating Selena, Tejano music and the cultural legacy that continues to shape Texas and the American West. Included with general admission, films are shown on the third Sunday of July and August at the museum. Tickets can be purchased in advance online and include complimentary beer provided by Ranger Creek and movie snacks.

- **Sunday, July 19 | 2 p.m.**

[Selena \(1997\)](#)

The beloved feature film starring Jennifer Lopez chronicles Selena Quintanilla-Pérez's extraordinary journey from performing with her family band to becoming one of the most celebrated and influential Latin artists of all time. Included in the Library of Congress United States National Film Registry, the film highlights Selena's determination, family bonds and lasting impact on music and culture, while famously including San Antonio's beloved River Walk.

- **Sunday, Aug. 16 | 2 p.m.**

[Take It Away: The Rise and Fall of Tejano Hollywood \(2025\)](#)

This acclaimed documentary explores the groundbreaking influence of legendary television host Johnny Canales, whose variety show helped launch the careers of countless Tejano artists, including Selena. Featuring archival footage and interviews, the film captures the rise of Tejano music and its cultural impact throughout Texas and beyond.

An Exhibition with National Reach: *Tejano Legacy Beyond San Antonio*

Tejano Legacy: Another American Origin Story was made possible in part by a highly competitive Museums for America grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. In 2025, the Briscoe received the fourth-largest Museums for America grant awarded to any museum in the United States and was one of only two museums in Texas selected for funding.

Additional support has been provided by the Henry Luce Foundation, the City of San Antonio Department of Arts & Culture, the Betty Stieren Kelso Foundation, the Elizabeth Huth Coates Charitable Foundation, Humanities Texas, the Kate Marmion Charitable Foundation, the Summerlee Foundation, the Texas Commission on the Arts and the Williams-Chadwick Family Charitable Fund. Private supporters include Becky and Che Guerra, the Lydia & Enrique Guerra Family, Mr. and Mrs. McLean Bowman, Jan McCaleb Elliott, Jessica Elliott Middleton, Debbie & John T. Montford | Plum Foundation in Memory of Valerie Guenther.

Following its presentation in San Antonio, *Tejano Legacy* will travel to Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West in Scottsdale, Arizona, before concluding its national tour at the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, introducing audiences to a broader understanding of the American West.

Explore the American West in the Heart of Downtown San Antonio

Located on the River Walk near La Villita in downtown San Antonio, the Briscoe preserves and presents the art, history and culture of the American West through exhibitions and programming exploring Wildlife and the Land; Native People of the Americas; Tejanos, Vaqueros and Spanish heritage; and Cowboys and the American Frontier. The museum is open Thursday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., Friday through Monday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and closed to the public on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The Briscoe is located on the south end of the River Walk, near the Arneson River Theatre and La Villita, with convenient parking at the Riverbend Garage directly adjacent to the museum or one of many downtown surface lots. 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.*

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