



Museum exhibit to feature Mexican equestrian culture

Posted: 06/23/2011

An exhibition illustrating one of the richest on-going traditions of Mexico through art objects and costume is set for The Hubbard Museum of the American West in Ruidoso Downs.

"Arte en la Charrería: The Artisanry of Mexican Equestrian Culture," opens at the Hubbard Museum with a special VIP and member reception on July 1 and will run the entire summer through Sept. 23.

The more than 240 spectacular objects in Arte en la Charrería, many dating from the late 1800's, offer a window through which to view the unique culture surrounding the charro, or Mexican cowboy. Leather work, costumes, textiles, silver and iron work, although crafted to serve a utilitarian purpose, merit consideration as art objects due to the exceptional craftsmanship of the charrería artisan.

The culture of charrería is rooted in a nearly 500-year-old heritage dating back to the introduction of horses and cattle to the New World. During the 19th century, charros began to organize celebrations to showcase their skills and compete against one another. After the Mexican Revolution, in an effort to preserve the tradition, these competitions were formalized by charrería associations. Charrería thrives today as the national sport of Mexico.

The objects in the exhibition are part of a collection started in the 19th century by Gumaro González, a landowner in Nuevo Leon, Mexico; collecting charrería artifacts remains a González family passion. The family built upon the original collection and through their devotion has formed one of the most complete collections of charro artifacts, and the most important collection of charro saddles in Mexico. The artifacts and costumes on display are more than simple vestiges of a nation's folk tradition; they are reminders of a rich heritage that continues to this day.

"Arte en la Charrería: The Artisanry of Mexican Equestrian Culture" and its international tour are organized by International Arts & Artists in collaboration with Luis González, Marisú González and Gabriel Cabello. International Arts & Artists is a Washington, DC-based non-profit arts service organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally, through exhibitions, programs and services to artists, arts institutions and the public.

The Hubbard Museum of the American West is located at 26301 U.S. 70 in Ruidoso Downs and is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission to the Museum is \$6 for adults, and reduced admission is available for senior citizens, military personnel, and youth.

Visit www.hubbardmuseum.org, or call 575-378-4142 for information about other events, exhibits, and activities at the Museum. The Hubbard Museum of the American West is owned and operated by the City of Ruidoso Downs.