



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Museum and
Art Gallery

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MUSEUM OPENS FOR SEASON WITH SPECIAL EVENTS

The Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery is pleased to announce that it will begin its regular summer season hours on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. The official opening will begin with the organization hosting three special events at the museum on 218 East 8th Street, in Cozad, Nebraska.

The first will be the presentation of the Heritage Hero award to Marlene Geiger by the History Nebraska Board of Trustees. The award recognizes volunteers of cultural organizations across the state. Passionate about Robert Henri and the museum, Marlene has been the president of the board of directors for many years.

Marlene has been a steady hand in leading the organization through various periods of development and has led or been a part of guiding the museum to aspire to even better things including the construction of a new art gallery building and promoting the museum and gallery as a significant Robert Henri site.

The program will then turn to the dedication of a new hanging system in the museum's Art Spirit Gallery. The purchase of the system, which makes art exhibit installations simpler and more efficient, was made possible by donations to honor the lives of two late members of the museum – Betty McKeone and Earl Pharris. Betty was involved with the museum for more than thirty years and served as the Artist of the Month on several occasions. Earl was president of the board of directors and was active in the affairs of the museum.

The museum will also formally open its new exhibit *From the 100th Meridian to International Fame*. The exhibit provides visitors with an overview of the Cozad and Henri story from their arrival from Ohio to their departure after the shooting of Alf Pearson. It includes the results of research that the museum's director has been undertaking for the last two years. There have been many interesting discoveries which allow for a more complete interpretation of the Cozad family's time in Nebraska.

Major contributions that made the exhibit possible have come from Humanities Nebraska, Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the Ervin and Grace Burkholder Foundation, the Bridge Marathon, Gwenn Spiess, Marilyn Peterson, Scott Schmunk, Sonny's Super Foods, Paulsen Inc., and the membership and friends of the Robert Henri Museum.

In addition, the museum's art gallery has also undergone several changes this year as *Portrait of Queen Mariana*, the museum's jewel, is presently on a national tour being shown at the Chrysler Art Museum and Milwaukee Art Museum. The museum has been loaned two significant Henri paintings – *Far Rockaway* and *Normandie Farm House*. *Far Rockaway*, painted in 1902, is one of the most important landscape paintings of the early twentieth century and comes from the collection of Paulsen, Inc. in Cozad. *Normandie Farm House*, also painted in 1902, may be the exterior view of another painting the museum has had on display called *Normandie Interior*. *Normandie Farm House* is on loan from the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA) in Kearney. This loan is part of MONA's efforts to promote the work of Nebraska artists and to collaborate with other art institutions in the state. It comes from the collection of Jane Rohman, a long time Cozad area resident and museum supporter.

Finally, the museum is pleased to announce that it will be hosting its first 2021 Artist of the Month in May. This month's artist, Hana Brock, is originally from Lexington, Nebraska. Hana is a fine arts student at the University of Nebraska in Omaha and will receive her Bachelor of Fine Arts in May 2022. She plans to continue her education at an art institute to earn her Masters. Her plan is to become a professional artist. Hana's work will be on display at the museum and available for viewing until May 30.

She is the recipient of numerous awards including "Judges Choice Award" (2016), "Best of Show" (2017), and "1st Place" in Painting (2018) at the *McCook Paint In* in McCook, Nebraska. She was also presented the "People's Choice" and "1st Place" (2018) at *Nebraska Land Days* in North Platte, Nebraska. She was awarded "Second Place" and "Judges Choice" (2019) at *Art on the Oasis* in Colby, Kansas. She is a well-known area artist whose paintings are much sought after.

The Artist of the Month program, in its seventh year, was established to encourage understanding and appreciation of the arts in central Nebraska and to promote the legacy of Robert Henri, one of America's greatest art instructors. He taught hundreds of students over his long career including Edward Hopper, Rockwell Kent, Marjorie Ryerson and Elizabeth Grandin.

Artists can apply to the museum for consideration for entry into the program by going to its web page and printing off the application and submitting it. Applications are currently being accepted for the 2022 program.

The Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery is a national treasure that is the result of the work of many volunteers, board members and professional staff who have toiled for more than thirty years. The effort to preserve Robert Henri's legacy in Cozad started with a small group of people who saw the opportunity to bring recognition to the town that was once home to the acclaimed artist and native son, Robert Henri. This group, led by Shirley Paulsen, bought and restored the former Hendee Hotel, Henri's boyhood home. The committee also established the Historical Walkway which included an original Pony Express Station, the New Hope Evangelical Country Church, and the Country District Schoolhouse No. 86, a one-room school.

With local support and generous donations from Cozad and Henri family members, local and area donors from across the United States, the Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery's collection continues to grow. The first Henri painting donated to the museum in 1988 was *Portrait of Queen Mariana*. Since then, numerous donations and loans of Henri works have been made. In 2014, a climate-controlled art gallery was built to house the collection. Today the Art Gallery houses the largest display of Robert Henri works in the

world, including fourteen paintings and forty-three sketches. In addition, there are works by several of his students including Marjory Ryerson, John Sloan and Ernest Fiene.

The museum and art gallery are located at 218 East 8th Street in Cozad and will be open from May 1 to October 30 on Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information about the May 1 program call 308-784-4154 or visit the museum's web page at www.roberthenrimuseum.org.

Captions

Courtesy of the Robert Henri Museum and Art Gallery

Marlene Geiger, the museum's president, pictured in the museum's art gallery with a recent acquisition, Macnamara. She is the recipient of the Heritage Hero Award for 2021.

Courtesy Chuck Birgen

The Robert Henri Museum is located in the boyhood home of Robert Henri and was built in 1879 as a hotel for the early settlers and homesteaders who were moving into the area.