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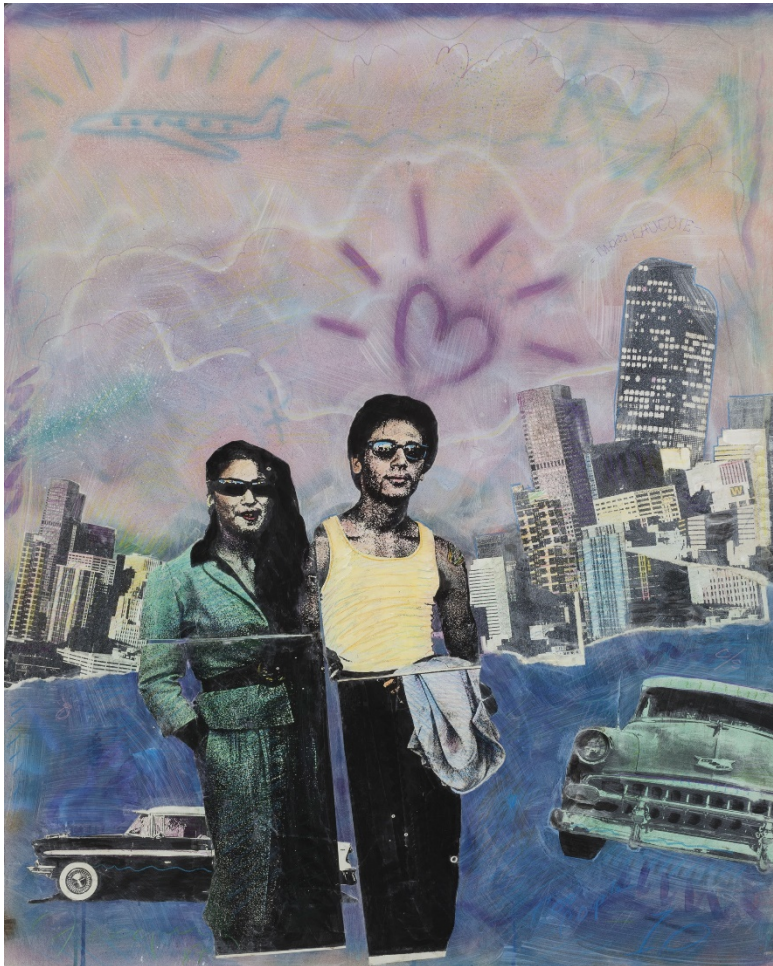
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[Images available upon request.]

***Desert Rider: Dreaming in Motion* explores lowrider and skateboard culture in the Southwestern U.S.**

Challenging stereotypes and embodying both joy and hope, artworks featured in this exhibition express artist identity, pride and a sense of community



DENVER – March 16, 2023 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) proudly welcomes *Desert Rider: Dreaming in Motion*, a new exhibition that will feature artworks exploring lowrider and skateboard culture in Denver and across the American Southwest.

Organized by Phoenix Art Museum, *Desert Rider* at the DAM will center and examine the diverse ways that artists who self-identify as Indigenous and Latinx express identity, pride and sense of community by transforming vehicles associated with the American West. These transformations challenge stereotypes and embody joy and hope. By exploring the imaginative interpretations of both automotive and skateboarding subcultures, *Desert Rider* centers Latinx and Indigenous

artists' perspectives that have defined the identity of the Southwest.

Desert Rider will kick off on Sunday, July 9, with an all-day free-admission event, featuring arts celebration at the museum; more information about this event will be

shared at a later date. On view through Sept. 24, 2023, in the Hamilton Building's Anschutz Gallery, *Desert Rider* will be included with general admission, which is free for members and all visitors 18 and under.



"We are grateful for this fruitful collaboration with our colleagues at Phoenix Art Museum, highlighting the inventive and energetic Southwest," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "We hope visitors will feel joy and inspiration as they experience this powerful presentation, which has been expanded to engage Colorado artists and showcase their work."

Created and curated by Gilbert Vicario, former curator of contemporary art at Phoenix Art Museum, *Desert Rider* features works presented against the backdrop of civil unrest at the time and tie together ideas of history, place, resistance and empowerment. Images of customized vehicles racing through the wide-open landscapes of the U.S. Southwest became symbols not only of freedom and power, but also rebellion and nonconformity. Curated at the DAM by Victoria I. Lyall, Jan and Frederick Mayer Curator of Arts of the Ancient Americas, the Denver presentation of *Desert Rider* adds works by Colorado artists representing their communities in Colorado and the American Southwest.

"The themes and ideas explored in *Desert Rider* are universal, but uniquely presented through the viewpoints and experiences of Latinx and Indigenous artists, communities deeply connected to and impacted by the region's complicated past and their experiences," said Victoria I. Lyall.

"Counterculture, customization, queerness, community, survival, pride and reclamation are concepts that create powerful connections for artists and visitors alike. We are thrilled to present diverse works including several by Colorado artists including Carlos Frésquez,



Juan Fuentes and Tony Ortega and Daniel Salazar."

Desert Rider showcases large-scale installations, prints, sculptures and more by artists including Margarita Cabrera, Nanibah Chacon, Liz Cohen, Justin Favela, Douglas Miles and Cara Romero. Cruising just a few inches above the pavement, a lowrider's candy paint, chrome rims and tuck and roll upholstery reflect its owner's style and identity.

"These vehicles also evoke a history of community empowerment and have become symbolic of these artists' identities. It's about pride in the ride," said Lyaal.



Desert Rider begins by centering the "Lowrider" section on Denver artists, including a commission by photographer Juan Fuentes that celebrates the city's four-decade history of cruising low and slow. Like other lowrider makers, Justin Favela's large-scale car sculpture celebrates its owner's identity as a queer Chicanx artist. Using materials associated with Mexican piñata—tissue paper and cardboard—Favela's lowrider celebrates queer icons and pays homage to the recent shooting in Colorado Springs' Club Q victims.

A section highlighting women and cars features women artists whose work challenges the perception that customized automobiles are a male-dominated pastime. With *Stories Better Told by Others* (Cindy Corrales) [*Historias mejor contadas por otras* (Cindy Corrales)], a series of color inkjet prints with hand-

printed lettering and lithographs, Liz Cohen celebrates the *Lowrider Magazine* cover models whose labor, personas and contributions to popularizing lowriding globally have been ignored.

In "Skating on Native Land," artists Dustin Craig, Gregg Deal and Douglas Miles use skateboards as moving canvases to reassert control over their own histories and landscapes. "Horsepower" plays on the idea of the horse in the American west. Artists Laurie Steelink and José Villalobos consider the horse from a personal perspective.



Villalobos' customized saddles evoke the gleam of lowriders while reframing the flash and flamboyance as a celebration of queerness. Steelink's car hood altar connects her to her Indigenous identity in a patriarchal society.

Artists featured in "La Frontera" (the borderlands), use automobile imagery and irreverent humor to highlight issues of migration and femicide. Margarita Cabrera's *Agua que no has de beber dejala correr* (*Water That You Should Not Drink, Let It Run*) calls out the devastating impact of U.S. automotive "maquiladoras," factories based on the Mexican side of the border, where mostly female employees perform low-wage assembly work and are exposed to harmful chemicals and hazardous work conditions.



In addition to engaging with such important issues, visitors of all ages will have a chance to have fun with hands-on activities including “skating” with miniature finger skateboards in a scaled-down skatepark, modeled after the Downtown Denver Skatepark; making customizable miniature paper lowriders that can be posed and “driven” around a model of significant lowrider spots in Denver; and exploring an interactive map of the Denver metro area highlighting points of significance specific to skateboarding and lowriders, to which visitors can add their own reactions and stories.



The intention of this interpretive space is to inspire intergenerational creativity and sharing. Furthermore, the map will aid guests in making connections between personal and community histories and experiences in Denver.

Desert Rider: Dreaming in Motion is organized by Phoenix Art Museum. It is presented with generous support from the Adolph Coors Exhibition Endowment Fund, U.S. Bank, the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS Colorado.

Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options, and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under, regardless of residency, receive free general

admission everyday thanks to the museum's Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

COVID-19 Protocols

The safety of visitors and staff remains a top priority, and the museum is continually updating its COVID-19 safety and security protocols based on advice from the CDC and federal and local guidelines. Current protocols can be found in the "Visit" section of the museum's website: denverartmuseum.org/visit

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations.

For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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Image Highlights:

Image 1: Carlos Frésquez, *Cool Couple; Series #10*, 1985. Mixed media on paper; 54 x 48 in. Collection of the artist. © and courtesy of the artist.

Image 2: Carlotta Boettcher, *Cars in the New Mexico Landscape Collection*, 1996–97. Digital print on cotton rag paper, mounted on Diebond aluminum support; 15½ x 23½ in. Collection of the artist. © Carlotta Boettcher

Image 3: Douglas Miles, (San Carlos Apache-Akimel O'odham), *Apache 59*, 2018. Ink on canvas; 64 x 42 in. Courtesy of the artist. © Douglas Miles. Photo by Douglas Miles.

Image 4: Liz Cohen, *Stories Better Told by Others (Cindy Corales) [Historias mejor contadas por otras (Cindy Corales)]*, 2018. Color inkjet print with hand painted enamel; 33 x 24 in. Collection of the artist. © and courtesy of the artist.

Image 5: Cara Romero (Chemehuevi), *Liquid Sunshine (Sol Liquid)*, 2021. Digital chromogenic print; 24 x 32 in. © Cara Romero, courtesy of Cara Romero.

Image 6: Nanibah Chacon, *What Dreams Are Made Of*, 2018. Acrylic paint on Polytab; 6 x 17 ft. Collection of the artist. © and courtesy of Nanibah Chacon. Photo provided by artist Nani Chacon.

Image 7: Gregg Deal, (Pyramid Lake Paiute), *The Punchline (Minutemen)*, 2022. Painted wood. © and courtesy of Gregg Deal. Photo by Gregg Deal.