

National exhibit finds place in Duncan's CTHC

BY LINDA PROVOST
THE DUNCAN BANNER

When the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center got the opportunity to book the ExhibitsUSA national traveling exhibit "Our People, Our Land, Our Images" as part of the Mid-America Arts Alliance, Executive Director Stacy Cramer Moore and staff jumped for it.

The exhibit, which opened Jan. 11, features 26 indigenous photographers from the United States, Canada, Peru, New Zealand and the Middle East.

Mid-America Arts Alliance worked with each artist to discuss the pertinent issues in creating their art and the exhibit came to fruition to "demonstrate the longevity of Native traditions of photography."

The works range from historical photos to modern photo satire which emphasizes the past, present and future of indigenous photography.

Callie Williams, who has worked at the museum for more than eight years, said she feels more people will relate to "Our People, Our Land, Our Images," which highlights international



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Some of the additional education material was also loaned to the the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center by ExhibitsUSA.

indigenous photographers and their cultures.

"I think this exhibit will appeal to many people," said Williams. "I really like this exhibit. It is really interesting."

Each of the 26 artists, except one, submitted two photos. The earliest images are from 1907 and is by Benjamin Hal-dane.

While it is an international body of work, there are several connections to Oklahoma. Images from the Jennie Ross Cobb collection show viewers the graduating class of 1902 of

the Cherokee Female Seminary in Tahlequah. The image is courtesy of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Many of the images stand out in their own way and getting close is the only way to find each photo's hidden treasure.

One image looks like an every day parade scene, but on closer inspection you realize who is waving to you from the seat of the car - Leonard Lowry, who was one of the most decorated Native American soldiers in U.S. history.

His service awards were many, including five Purple Hearts.

PR and Marketing Coordinator Toni Hopper said she finds the exhibition fascinating for numerous reasons.

"There's so much story behind the imagery," she said. "There's a visual narrative as you view the exhibit."

Hopper said she hopes everyone who can comes to the exhibit.

"I think this exhibit needs more recognition - not just in Duncan, America but on an

international scale," she said. " ... Today, our awareness of indigenous people, I think, is stronger than it has been in years. You may be indigenous and not even realize that your background is such, because still, for years, there's been this stigma surrounding so many cultures, heritages.

There's a need to recognize and a show like this helps break down those barriers and reminds us, no matter what our heritage or culture, to be more respectful and to be proud of our own."

Jordan Santos, who is a junior at Duncan High School and a CTHC staffer, hung the exhibit.

There are educational books for all ages about the exhibit itself, some of the artists and other aspects of indigenous culture and photography.

The exhibit is part of the regular museum admission fee.

CTHC members get in free with the membership cards and visitors can sign up for membership.

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. everyday.

For more information, contact the museum at 580-252-6692 or visit onthechisholm-trail.com.