

Buffalo Bill Center of the West appoints new Scarlett Curator of Western American Art

The Whitney Western Art Museum at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West appoints Susan Barnett new Scarlett Curator of Western American Art

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Susan Barnett has been selected as the next Scarlett Curator of Western American Art for the [Whitney Western Art Museum](#), following Karen Brooks McWhorter's seven-year tenure. With McWhorter's promotion to Collier-Read Director of Curatorial, Education, and Museum Services, the [Center of the West](#) sought a new full-time leader for its renowned western American art program.

Barnett joins curatorial assistant Ashlea Espinal, PhD, who was tapped for the Whitney team in fall 2021 after graduating with a doctorate in Native American Art History from the University of Oklahoma. "Together, these two are going to be a very dynamic duo!" says McWhorter. "We're thrilled to welcome Susan to the Center of the West, and we're excited to witness the energy and creativity she brings to the Whitney. Her passion for art and artists is palpable, and her desire to serve communities is sincere."

Barnett is excited to "work with the Whitney's excellent western art collection, collaborate with a brilliant and supportive team, and work across disciplines to bring multiple perspectives to exhibitions and programming."

Barnett has broad museum experience, having been Executive Director twice. She has held the positions of senior curator and collections manager, and has also worked as a consultant specializing in exhibition curation, collections stewardship, nonprofit board development, marketing and design, and strategic planning.

She knows and loves the American West and the art the region inspires, a connection forged



Susan Barnett, new Scarlett Curator of Western American Art at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West's Whitney Western Art Museum



I anticipate Susan breathing new life into the Whitney and its offerings.”

Karen McWhorter

through 25 years of living in Montana. She studied art at Montana State University in Bozeman, lived on working cattle ranches in Huson and Jackson, directed a museum in Anaconda, and owned a gallery in Butte. Barnett recently served as curator for the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings. She states that she is “excited by this opportunity to return to the Rocky Mountain West and re-engage with

the region’s artists and audiences.”

Barnett’s career focus has been contemporary art, including contemporary art of the West, and her recent work has celebrated regional artists such as Will James, Tracy Linder, and Bill Stockton. Her research also includes Indigenous arts and cultures, studio craft, photography, and printmaking. With a background in studio art, Barnett has a strong understanding of materials and artistic processes. An amateur cellist, she also looks forward to meeting other musicians in the community.

“The Whitney’s collection includes more than 10,000 objects dating from the 1830s to the present,” commented McWhorter. “We have particularly strong holdings in contemporary art and Native art between the Whitney and the Plains Indian Museum, and thus Susan’s familiarity with art created in and of this region in more recent decades will be a real asset to our curatorial program.”

“I anticipate Susan breathing new life into the Whitney and its offerings, and believe our visitors and community can expect to see art of the West in new and different ways through Susan’s perspective.”

Barnett starts at the Center’s Whitney Western Art Museum on or before August 1.

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