

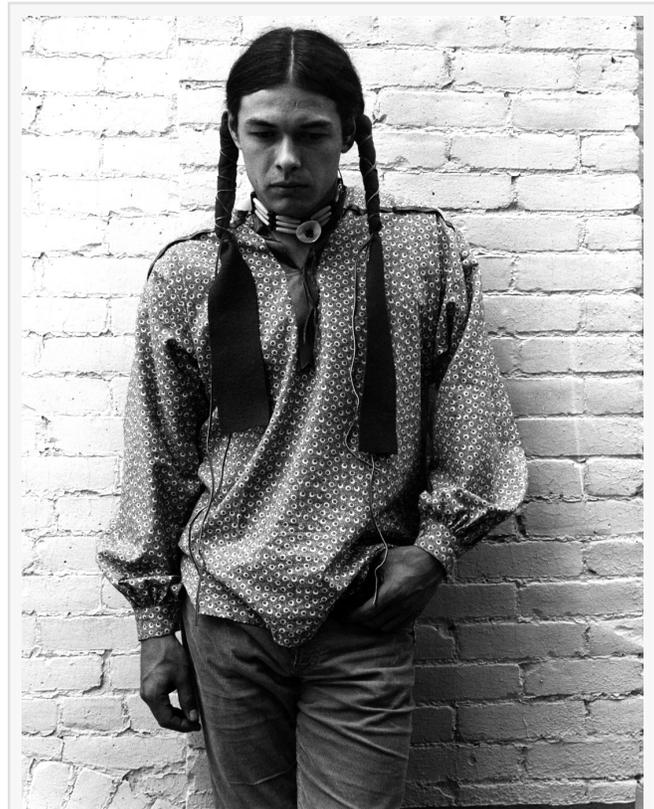
James Bama's Photographs: Portraits of the West Debuts at Buffalo Bill Center of the West and American Heritage Center

This exhibition offers a detailed perspective on the American West, as portrayed by James Bama in his portraits.

CODY, WY, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Buffalo Bill Center of the West](#) and the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming are thrilled to announce the highly anticipated exhibition, "James Bama's Photographs: Portraits of the West," set to premiere this fall. This extraordinary exhibition, opening to the public in Cody, Wyoming, on October 21, 2023, and in Laramie, Wyoming, on November 13, 2023, showcases more than 150 captivating photographs by renowned American artist James Bama (1926 – 2022). The collection, primarily captured during the 1970s and '80s, provides an intricate view of western America through diverse and fascinating portraits, offering fresh perspectives on western identities. Center of the West members get a sneak-preview on October 20 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., with an opportunity to meet some of the models Bama used in his photographs and paintings.

Are Westerners different from people on the East Coast? What are their defining stories? How do they express their identities through dress, performance, and work? What are some of the ways they perpetuate the myths and realities of the West? When Bama moved from New York to Wyoming in 1968, he began exploring these complexities of western identities through the photographs and paintings he made of his new friends and neighbors.

While Bama is most celebrated as an illustrator and painter, this exhibition underscores the



James Bama (1926 – 2022), Rick Williams, n.d. Black and white photograph, 14 x 11 inches. Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, WY. Gift of James Bama, 2007. MS 243 James Bama Collection, McCracken Research Library. P.243.00096

foundation of his art in photography. Bama's sharp eye for composition, detail, and context is evident in his photographic portraits, which capture the complexities of western histories and identities. Through these images, viewers gain insights into the humor, drama, beauty, strength, contradictions, and even loneliness of his subjects.



Buffalo Bill Center of the West Façade

"Portraits of the West" also reveals the connection between Bama's photography and his artistic process.

Photography allowed him to experiment with poses, clothing, props, and compositions. Each photograph served as a stepping stone toward his renowned paintings, which meticulously depicted western individuals and their stories.

“

Jim's skillfully composed photos capture a sense of his models' identities and provide a window into the contemporary West.”

Susan Barnett, Margaret and Dick Scarlett Curator of Western Art

Bama's photographs not only convey the richness of western culture but also offer a unique blend of history and contemporaneity. They showcase dramatic moments in the lives of ordinary people, reflecting the artist's deep connection to the American West. Bama used the West as a canvas to explore broader themes about life, heroism, and the enduring virtues of the region.

The exhibition is a testament to Bama's enduring impact on the art world, showcasing his transition from an illustrator to a celebrated artist known for his hyper-

realistic paintings and iconic western imagery. Although he viewed his photographs as studies, they have emerged as compelling works of art in their own right. Susan Barnett, the Margaret and Dick Scarlett Curator of Western Art at the Center of the West's Whitney Western Art Museum, says she is "excited to share with the public a large selection of Bama's portraits. Jim's skillfully composed photos capture a sense of his models' identities and provide a window into the contemporary West.”

This remarkable collection of Bama's photographs was generously donated to the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, consisting of thousands of negatives, contact sheets, photographic prints, drawings, paintings, and archival records. Researchers and art enthusiasts can [access this invaluable archive through the McCracken Research Library](#).

Exhibition Details:

Buffalo Bill Center of the West: October 21, 2023, to August 4, 2024

American Heritage Center (AHC) at the University of Wyoming: November 13, 2023, to April 10, 2024

For more information about the exhibition and James Bama's work, please visit

<https://centerofthewest.org/james-bamas-photographs/>.

About Buffalo Bill Center of the West:

The Buffalo Bill Center of the West, located in Cody, Wyoming, is a world-renowned Smithsonian Affiliate institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage and history of the American West. With five distinct museums under one roof, the Center offers visitors an immersive experience that explores the Greater Yellowstone Area's wildlife and ecosystems, lives of Plains Indian Peoples, western artwork, history of firearms, and the legacy of Buffalo Bill Cody. Through exhibitions, educational programs, customized exclusive tours, and research initiatives, the Center fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the American West's enduring impact on our nation's culture and identity. For more information, please visit

www.centerofthewest.org.

About American Heritage Center (AHC) at the University of Wyoming:

The American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming is a leading research center that collects, preserves, and provides access to a vast range of materials related to the history of the American West, among other subjects. For more information, please visit

<https://www.uwyo.edu/ahc/index.html>.

Ken Straniere

Buffalo Bill Center of the West

+1 307-578-4137

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

[TikTok](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/660188668>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.