



MUSEUM of
NORTHERN
ARIZONA

Celebrating the Colorado Plateau

PRESS RELEASE

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MNA Announces Acquisition of New Work by Renowned Arizona Artist Curt Walters

(Flagstaff, Ariz.) November 9, 2016 – The Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) is pleased to announce the acquisition of a major new work for its fine arts collection by renowned artist Curt Walters. The painting, entitled *The Mittens*, is currently on display in the Museum’s Sara Lee Branigar Reception room and was one of the highlights of the Museum’s most recent exhibition, *Curt Walters: A Retrospective*, which closed November 1. The work was gifted to the Museum by Christine Mollring and will remain on display through the spring.

The oil painting, measuring 30” x 50” inches and painted in 2003, depicts Monument Valley at sunset, the sandstone buttes bathed in rose-colored light. The Valley’s landscape is a recurring subject in the artist’s oeuvre.

Mollring, and her late husband Ted, were long-time supporters and patrons of Walters. As owners of Trailside Galleries, they were instrumental in the development of Walters’s career and represented the artist for many years. They asked Walters to please contact them if he ever completed a painting of Monument Valley that he thought they might like. A few years later, Walters did and they instantly fell in love with the work.

Mollring agreed to lend the work to MNA for the exhibition and the Museum selected the painting as the exhibition’s signature image.

“*The Mittens* has always been one of our favorites so I was very honored when Curt asked if I would lend it to his retrospective exhibition at MNA,” said Mollring. “It seemed only natural then to me and to my daughter, Jennifer Sands, that I donate *The Mittens* to the Museum’s permanent collection in honor of Curt and his many achievements as a fine artist and as a great supporter of causes that help to protect the iconic landscapes of the American West.”

“We are so grateful to Christine, her daughter Jennifer Sands, and their entire family for this generous gift,” said Carrie M. Heinonen, MNA director and CEO. “The work is an incredible addition to our permanent collection.”

Walters was born in New Mexico and raised in the Four Corners area of the state, where he acquired and developed his eye for dramatic landscapes. He attended Farmington High School and the San Juan Campus of New Mexico State University. In 1974, Walters moved to Taos,

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NM, and began working and studying with artists of the central valley, including noted landscape painter Wilson Hurley. In 1977, he won the prestigious *John F. and Anna Lee Stacey Scholarship Award* through the National Cowboy & Western Museum furthering his artistic studies in the classical tradition of western culture. As a result, he was contacted by the Mollrings who began exhibiting his work in their gallery.

Over the next decade, Walters came into maturity as a landscape artist, transitioning into a plein air focused approach. He has received numerous national accolades from *Prix de West*, *West Select*, *Quest for the West*, and *Masters of the American West*. In 2011, he was named one of the "Forty Prominent People in the Western Art World" by *Southwest Art*, and in 2014, Walters received a *Lifetime Achievement Award* from the Desert Caballeros Museum in Wickenburg. He currently resides in Sedona.

The artist was honored at the Museum's 10th Annual Gala & Fine Art Auction on June 26 which also debuted *Curt Walters: A Retrospective*, ending November 1. The exhibition featured more than 30 paintings, tracing Walters' evolution as a landscape artist over the last 35 years and included never before exhibited works, on loan from collectors nation-wide.

The **Museum of Northern Arizona** inspires a sense of love and responsibility for the beauty and diversity of the Colorado Plateau. Founded in 1928, the 200-acre campus includes an historic exhibit building with nine galleries showcasing the geology, anthropology and art of the region; research and collections facilities; a museum shop and bookstore; and more than 450 public programs annually. To learn more, visit musnaz.org or call (928) 774-5213.