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Poetry Maps exhibit an expressive exploration of the Colorado Plateau

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Fine art and community poetry converge in an expressive exploration of the Colorado Plateau in Poetry Maps, the latest exhibit from the Museum of Northern Arizona.

The exhibit includes more than 35 works of art from the Museum of Northern Arizona collections alongside original poems from museum friends and patrons. Albert Groll, Baje Whitethorne, Dan Namingha, Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, Gunnar Widforss, Louis Akin, Mary Morez, and Peter Ray James are among the artists whose works are featured in Poetry Maps.

10-year-old Ivan King of Flagstaff contributed the following verse to accompany a painting by Santo Domingo artist Henry Aguilar titled “My Village.”



Getting My Weather Patterns Crisscrossed

Scattered bits of translucent dust
People talk about it every day
It's just supposed to be my village

Mostly fires, less lakes
More tourists, some locals
It's just supposed to be my village

The sleet doesn't stick
And the rain doesn't grow
It's just supposed to be my village

The Poetry Maps exhibit is the culmination of a two-year project to create a map that reflects the connection between people and place. Poetry Maps panels have made appearances on Flagstaff Mountain Line buses and during ARTx, public opportunities to experience the Colorado Plateau through creative expression.

“While the visual artist describes a place with color and lines, the poet plays with a palette of words,” said Kristan Hutchison, director of public engagement for the Museum of Northern Arizona. “The goals of Poetry Maps are to bring poetry and art into daily life, to connect people to places on the Colorado Plateau and celebrate the personal and universal experiences of this area.”

The museum exhibit is the first time the original artworks can be seen with select poems. The exhibit encourages visitors to further explore the Colorado Plateau by creating magnetic poetry within the gallery, and people can submit new short poems for consideration in future Poetry Maps public displays. Instructions for submitting poetry are included in the exhibit.

The Poetry Maps exhibition is on display Nov. 17 through Oct. 27 at the Museum of Northern Arizona. A museum members’ special viewing with readings from Poetry Maps contributors takes place Nov. 23 from noon-2 p.m. For more information, visit <https://musnaz.org>.

[About the Museum of Northern Arizona](#)

Nestled in a forested landscape, the Museum of Northern Arizona sits at the base of the San Francisco Peaks on the road to the Grand Canyon. For nearly 100 years, the museum has been a gateway to understanding the Colorado Plateau by engaging visitors with life-enriching knowledge and experiences centered on culture, art, and science. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on Tuesdays through Feb. 29, 2025. Learn more at <https://musnaz.org/>.