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Joint Media Release

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Arizona State Museum's
**Southwest Indian
Art Fair Benefit**

March 27 and 28, 2010
at Desert Diamond Casino
I-19 and Pima Mine Road

Saturday 10AM-5PM
Sunday 10AM-4PM

Meet 100 Native artists and shop for top-quality handmade artwork including pottery, Hopi kachina dolls, paintings, jewelry, baskets, rugs, blankets, and more.

Adult admission: \$6

[www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/
events/swiaf/](http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/events/swiaf/)

SOUTHWEST INDIAN ART FAIR RESURRECTED FROM BUDGET ASHES

(University of Arizona, Tucson) Southern Arizona's premier Indian art show and market is rescued from a 2010 hiatus by a benefit affair hosted by Desert Diamond Casino.

Arizona State Museum (ASM) announced last October that its 17th annual Southwest Indian Art Fair (SWIAF) would have to take a one-year hiatus due to budget cuts and staff lay-offs. Since then, members of the museum's advisory board and members of the community have been collaborating to devise a way to salvage this year's event while building a more stable financial base for 2011.

"We quickly realized that Native artists could not survive this year with the loss of yet another art market; several in the Southwest have already folded or faded," said Mark Bahti, museum advisory board member, Indian art trader, and owner of Bahti Indian Arts in Tucson. "And we realized that the museum could ill afford the loss of another important public program, particularly its largest and signature event."

This year, Desert Diamond Casino, an enterprise of the Tohono O'odham Nation, has stepped up to offer its facility at I-19 and Pima Mine Road.

Expert event planners from the Southern Arizona Arts and Cultural Alliance will be handling the logistical details on behalf of the museum.

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Previous fairs have been held on the grounds of Arizona State Museum and run by museum staff.

“While the event is definitely evolving, we are committed to preserving the educational components so central to our Southwest Indian Art Fair in particular, and to all ASM’s public programs in general,” said ASM Director Beth Grindell. “As always, our guests can expect to be able to chat with Native artists about their work, learn about the cultural and historical significance of the pieces they will be taking into their homes, and gaining further appreciation for Southwest American Indian traditions.”

Proceeds from the benefit will go directly to producing the 2011 Southwest Indian Art Fair. In the coming year, museum staff and advisory board members will be looking at all possibilities for strengthening the art fair’s financial base, which will include securing corporate sponsorships and more community involvement.

Call or email for images.

Appreciation Reception and Benefit Kickoff

Friday, March 26, 2010
Desert Diamond Casino
I-19 and Pima Mine Road
7:00-8:30PM

In conjunction with the Southwest Indian Art Fair Benefit, Arizona State Museum is hosting a major *Best of Show* cash award in the amount of at least \$2,500. Every artist participating in the fair is eligible to compete. The award will be given at an Appreciation Reception and Benefit Kickoff on Friday, March 26.

Funding for this singular award is provided through the efforts of ASM advisory board members who feel that the long-standing support of Native artists for the fair should be honored and continued, even at this transitional event. Arizona State Museum’s Southwest Indian Art Fair has long offered the largest total cash awards of any event of its kind in the region. Over the years, the generous cash awards have attracted some of the best Native artists.

ABOUT ARIZONA STATE MUSEUM

Established in 1893 by the Arizona Territorial Legislature, Arizona State Museum (ASM) is the oldest and largest anthropology museum in the Southwest, home of the world’s largest collection of Southwest American Indian pottery, and is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. Located on the campus of the University of Arizona, ASM is one of the oldest research and teaching units on the campus. ASM is the official permitting agency for archaeological activity on state lands, and is the state’s official archaeological repository (the largest and busiest non-federal repository in the country). Its collections and experts are among the most significant resources in the world for the study of southwestern peoples. www.statemuseum.arizona.edu

ABOUT THE SOUTHERN ARIZONA ARTS AND CULTURAL ALLIANCE

The Southern Arizona Arts and Cultural Alliance (SAACA) is a not-for-profit organization that exists to ensure that, through engagement in arts and culture, our communities produce strong, inspired citizens. SAACA enlists artists, businesses, governments, and individuals to expand artistic and cultural opportunities in their respective communities. To enhance access to the arts and to promote cultural awareness in the communities it serves, SAACA presents large-scale festivals, events, and other programs. The Alliance also promotes educational opportunities in the arts and culture for both the young and the old. www.saaca.org