

## STEAM INTO THE HISTORY OF THE WEST AT THE BRISCOE

### *February Events Feature Stories of Black Cowboys, Buffalo Soldiers and the Art of Taxidermy*

**San Antonio, TX** – (February 2023) The stories of the Western United States are as diverse and far-ranging as the landscape that inspires the cowboy in us all. To share that history, the Briscoe Western Art Museum is showcasing those stories during a day focused on the Black history of the West, including two programs to help children and families understand the roles that Black Americans played in the West. Later in the month, the museum showcases the art of taxidermy, an essential trade that helps preserve and conserve the natural beauty of the West.

And did you know that you can tip your hat to President's Day at the Briscoe? When you visit, don't miss the bronze bust of President Lincoln sculpted by Gutzon Borglum, the artist who carved Mount Rushmore, in the museum's lobby. The bust was crafted before Borglum began carving the likenesses of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln in the Black Hills of South Dakota, so stop by to wish President Lincoln happy birthday (Feb. 12) or drop in for President's Day (Feb. 20).

All programs are included with [museum admission](#). Admission is free for children 12 and under, making the museum a terrific destination for families. Active duty members of the military also receive free admission, while active duty family members and retired members of the military receive discounted admission. The museum also is proud to participate in Museums For All, Blue Star Museums and Bank of America Museums on Us.

#### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18:**

- [Full STEAM Ahead: Gather Around the Campfire](#)  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Families are invited to join the Briscoe and learn about the history of Black Cowboys in the West. After listening to a short presentation about Black Cowboys and their life on the cattle drives, families will be able to design and make their own musical instrument to play around the campfire. This family program is great for all ages.

The Briscoe's education series "Full STEAM Ahead" helps learners of all ages understand more about the American West by engaging in hands-on, STEAM learning experiences. Sharing the American West through STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics – each of the activities ties back to the Briscoe's art and artifacts, bringing the West to life in a new way. Each program explores an aspect of life in the West to engage and inspire learning and is included with museum admission. Children 12 and under receive free admission to the Briscoe.

- **Bexar County Buffalo Soldiers**

2 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Learn the history of Buffalo soldiers from the Bexar County Buffalo Soldiers Association (BCBSA) members through a short presentation at 2 p.m., followed by members sharing stories and artifacts as they interact with visitors through 4:30 p.m. The Buffalo Soldiers were members of the all-Black U.S. Army units formed by Congress in 1866 after the end of the Civil War, giving former slaves, freedmen and Black Civil War veterans an opportunity to serve.

Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Cheatom will lead the 2 p.m. presentation as Trooper Cheatom of the BCBSA. Dressed in replica blue union Army uniforms worn by the Buffalo soldiers in the late 1800s, members will share the stories of an 1800s trail driver and the only recorded female Buffalo soldier, Cathay Williams. Since women were not allowed to serve then, Williams disguised herself as a man to enlist in the army, serving from 1866–68.

#### **UPCOMING PROGRAMS:**

- **Trades of the West: The Art of Taxidermy**

Feb. 25, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join us for a totally Texas talk about the art and history of a popular Western trade, taxidermy. Hear from taxidermist Casey Delano Chacon as he discusses how the South Texas' unique environment and abundance of wild game makes the San Antonio area a draw for hunters and game conservation. Learn how hunting and conservation are intertwined and the skill involved in taxidermy through a live demonstration. The program is included with museum admission and [online pre-registration is encouraged](#).

The art of taxidermy has contributed to broader conservation goals, including the preservation of the American bison. Museums have worked with taxidermists to showcase animals in an effort to draw attention to conservation challenges. In the 1880s, William Hornaday, the chief taxidermist at the Smithsonian, preserved some bison specimens to help educate everyone about the disappearing breed. His work directly contributed to the creation of the federally protected bison range in Yellowstone and was instrumental in saving the species.

The Briscoe is open Thursday through Monday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and closed to the public on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The Briscoe is located on the south end of the River Walk, near the Arneson River Theatre and La Villita, with convenient parking at the Riverbend Garage directly adjacent to the museum or one of many downtown surface lots. Museum hours, parking and admission details are available [online](#).

**About [The Briscoe Western Art Museum](#):** *Preserving and presenting the art, history and culture of the American West through engaging exhibitions, educational programs and public events reflective of the region's rich traditions and shared heritage, the Briscoe Western Art Museum is located on the San Antonio River Walk at 210 W. Market Street in the beautifully restored 1930s former San Antonio Public Library building. Named in honor of the late Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe Jr. and his wife, Janey Slaughter Briscoe, the museum includes the three-story Jack Guenther Pavilion, used for event rentals and programs, and the outdoor McNutt Sculpture Garden. Follow the Briscoe on social media, @BriscoeMuseum.*

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