



# Fine Arts Center

COLORADO SPRINGS

Taylor Museum  
Bemis School of Art  
Performing Arts

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## ALLEN TRUE'S WEST

### Colorado Springs native captures the beauty of the Rocky Mountain West

**COLORADO SPRINGS** (Sept. 15, 2010) – The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center will present an exhibition by a Colorado Springs native, *Allen True's West*, which will be on display from November 12 - January 9 in the El Pomar Gallery.

#### **Opening Celebration: Allen True's West**

Thursday, Nov. 11 | 5-7 p.m.

Admission: \$5 for FAC Members; \$15 for non-members.

Featuring a lecture/book signing by Allen True's granddaughter Victoria Tupper Kirby, co-author of *Allen Tupper True: An American Artist*

"Allen Tupper True is one of the most important artists to emerge from Colorado – born just a stone's throw from the Fine Arts Center in Colorado Springs – who became a true visionary of Western art in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," said FAC Museum Director Blake Milteer.

"This exhibition will follow True's career as he moved from graphic illustration to easel painting to mural painting – all the while exploring and chronicling the spirit of the Rocky Mountain region."

*Allen True's West* is a regionally touring exhibition organized by the Denver Art Museum consisting of 42 works ranging from original oil paintings to periodical reproductions. The Fine Arts Center will supplement its exhibition with additional works borrowed from local collectors.

True was born in Colorado Springs in 1881 and was raised primarily in Denver. He attended the University of Denver for two years before advancing to the prestigious Howard Pyle School in Delaware and Pennsylvania, where he studied illustration along with renowned artist N.C. Wyeth, who became a lifelong friend. Although he was a talented easel painter and illustrator, working for publications such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's Weekly*, True is perhaps most regarded as a muralist who devoted most of his career to depicting the American West and capturing the natural beauty of Colorado.

During the last 40 years of his life, True received numerous public and private mural commissions, including those from the Colorado, Wyoming, and Missouri state capitols. Many of his murals still decorate the walls of public buildings throughout Colorado, like the Denver Telephone Building and the Colorado National Bank. This exhibition contains 16 mural studies, highlighting this essential aspect of True's luminous body of work.

*Allen True's West* is sponsored by El Pomar Foundation, UMB Bank Colorado Springs, KKTU and *The Gazette*.

## Also Opening in November

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### ***Edward S. Curtis from the Collection of Barbara Sparks***

Nov. 20, 2010 – Feb. 27, 2011

Steiner Family Gallery

Edward S. Curtis (1868-1952) sought to create a photographic document of American Indians. The photographs depicted, as Curtis wrote, "all features of Indian life and environment - the young and the old, with their habitations, industries, ceremonies, games, and everyday customs."

This exhibition features 26 photogravures from the private collection of local photographer Barbara Sparks. All of the works are part of Curtis' *The North American Indian*, a series commissioned by J.P. Morgan in 1906. The goal of the project was to photograph and document Native American life, as many believed that the cultures were vanishing and that their traditions would soon be lost forever. When Curtis completed the project, he had taken over 40,000 photographs of 80 tribes and made over 10,000 sound recordings.

Curtis devoted his life to photography, and although he ended his formal education at sixth grade, he soon built his own camera and began working as an apprentice to a St. Paul, Minn., photographer. In 1898 he had a chance meeting with a group of conservationists who specialized in American Indian ethnography. Curtis accompanied the group on two photographic expeditions, after which he began his own research on Native American life and lore, including customs, language, dwellings, dress, food, and political and social structure.

Curtis's work has been the center of controversy since its creation, as many of his images were staged and manipulated. Critics state that the work is not authentic and presents a stereotypical assumption of Native peoples. In spite of such condemnations, Curtis is widely praised as a gifted photographer, and his images as exquisite representations of history and humanity.

*Edward S. Curtis from the Collection of Barbara Sparks* is sponsored by El Pomar Foundation and *The Gazette*.

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The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, established in 1936, is a privately funded, non-profit art museum, performing arts theatre and arts education school. Built on the foundation of the prestigious Broadmoor Art Academy, the FAC carries the legacy of Colorado's arts and cultural heritage. One of 16 charter members of the American Association of Museums, the FAC offers the best in the world of visual arts via its permanent collection and travelling exhibitions, performing arts through the FAC Theatre Company, and arts education with the Bemis School of Art. The FAC building is considered an architectural landmark in the Rocky Mountain region, designed by John Gaw Meem, and is listed on the National Register for Historical Places. In 2007, the FAC unveiled a \$28.6 million renovation and expansion. Visit [csfineartscenter.org](http://csfineartscenter.org).

### **What is a photogravure?**

It's a combination of photography and intaglio printmaking, where the photographic image is etched onto a copper plate. The plate can then be inked and printed to produce the image, rather than developing it on photographic paper with chemicals.

A photogravure can be made on a standard printing press and produces an image with a wide range of blacks and grays, so they often have more warmth and depth than a standard photographic print and they don't fade as quickly. Curtis' works were among the last major body of work to be produced in this way before gelatin silver photo paper revolutionized photography with its relative simplicity.