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World Premiere Museum Art Exhibition in Atlanta Area

“You don’t have to leave the South to visit the West.”

Artist Ken Freeman always called himself a “Jewish Cowboy.” The world premiere of the Kenneth M. Freeman – Artist at Work opens at the Booth Western Art Museum in January 2010. The exhibition consists of fifty (50) oil paintings and sculptures that feature working cowboys and cowgirls, rodeo heroes, Native American elders & children, mountain men, Western landscapes, and Buffalo Soldiers. Keywords: art, exhibition, museum, western+art, cowboy, rodeo, fine+art, Booth+Museum, Smithsonian

(Scottsdale, AZ) – For artist [Kenneth M. Freeman](#), the cowboy hat and boots was not a gimmick or shtick. Neither was his Arizona attitude. Ken Freeman may have grown up in a traditional Jewish home in Chicago, Illinois but make no mistake ... he was a cowboy.

[The Booth Western Art Museum](#), an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, hosts the world premiere of the Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy Exhibition – *Artist at Work* opening on January 16, 2010 and continuing through May 2, 2010 in the newly created Special Exhibition Gallery. This collection is a traveling retrospective of the late Kenneth M. Freeman (1935 - 2008) who had a prolific career as both an illustrator and fine artist, primarily portraying the American West. *Artist at Work* presents a cross-section of Freeman’s lifetime body of work and range of mediums.



The Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy Exhibition – *Artist at Work* scheduled opening on the Martin Luther King weekend holds special significance because of Freeman’s paintings, sculpture and artifacts portraying **Buffalo Soldiers**.

“During the late 1800’s and early 1900s, the Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to the harshest and most desolate posts. The Buffalo Soldiers fought the Indian Wars of the American West and established frontier outposts which have since become towns,” explains Bonnie Adams, curator of the Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy. “Ken Freeman was a Captain in the [9th Calvary Memorial Buffalo Soldiers](#).”

A re-creation of Freeman’s studio is the centerpiece of this exhibition, defining the artist’s creative process. Earning scholarships to study at the American Academy of Art, Freeman studied techniques of the European old masters. Capturing the rich heritage of the many varied peoples he encountered in photographs, Freeman brought the personalities of these models to life.



“Ken’s *old masters’ technique* was very time consuming but the outcome is extraordinary. It is the only way to achieve the depth of colors and warm layers of content that will pass the test of time. This painting technique will last for hundreds of years,” said Edward Holmes, president of [Western Artists of America](#) whose organization is presenting Adams with Freeman’s Lifetime Achievement Award on January 16.

Freeman was a graduate of the American Academy of Art in Chicago (www.aaart.edu). At the age of 15, he began taking classes at the Academy in the summer of 1950. He studied with renowned artist Haddon Sundblom.

“He was a man you could never forget. His enthusiasm for life and art was contagious. Of all the artists from the Academy I’ve met over the years, Ken really stood out as one of a kind,” said Aron Gagliardo, historian and archivist of the American Academy of Art.

“The Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy Exhibition represents a true working artist,” said Seth Hopkins, executive director of the [Booth Western Art Museum](#). “The exhibition shows the artist at work ... as an illustrator, sculptor, and painter.”

“This will also be the first temporary exhibition at the Booth Museum since the opening of our new 40,000 square foot expansion, completed in October, 2009,” added Hopkins. “We now house the largest permanent exhibition space for Western art in the country. We say: You don’t have to leave the South to visit the West.”

As this exhibition travels around the country, Ken Freeman’s legacy will be confirmed.

Kenneth M. Freeman

Works of Kenneth M. Freeman are in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Museum, Library of Congress, American Art Academy, and Booth Museum as well as distinguished private collections. Accolades include winning competitions at the San Diego Museum of Art, the Hubbard Museum of Art, the Illinois State Fair, the *Salmagundi Show* in New York City, the Union League Club of Chicago, being chosen five times as artist for the Parada Del Sol Rodeo in Scottsdale, AZ and having a painting selected for the 1988 Prescott Centennial Rodeo. He was an illustrator for authors like Louis L’Amour.

Ken was known affectionately as “*Rembrandt of the Rodeo*” by members of the press. First Lady Barbara Bush, impressed with Ken Freeman’s southwestern art, invited him to show at the Smithsonian Institute in conjunction with the *Native American Museum Extravaganza*. Ken also had a one man show in 2007 in Milan, Italy at Fondazione Metropolitan. www.KennethMFreeman.com

Booth Western Art Museum

501 Museum Drive – Cartersville, GA

The Booth Museum is where guests are invited to explore the American West through contemporary Western artwork. The Museum also houses a Presidential Gallery, Civil War art gallery, and Sagebrush Ranch children’s gallery. www.boothmuseum.org

HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES:

1. Booth Museum Installation of *Artist at Work* (TIF 5.5MB)
<http://www.KennethMFreeman.com/press/boothinstallation.tif>
2. *Impending Decision* – Freeman’s most famous painting (JPG 3.8 MB)
<http://www.KennethMFreeman.com/press/ImpendingDecision.jpg>
3. *Tough Draw* – the official image of the exhibition (JPG 2.7 MB)
<http://www.KennethMFreeman.com/press/ToughDraw.jpg>



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