



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Aliento a Tequila Open at The Cowboy

The *Aliento a Tequila* (or *The Spirit of Tequila*) exhibition explores and celebrates the landscape, culture and traditions that gave birth to tequila, Mexico's national drink. In this series, photographer Joel Salcido includes the original distilleries that literally founded the industry, as well as several artisanal *tequileras* committed to the ancestral ways of making tequila from harvest to bottle. *Aliento a Tequila* will be on exhibit now through October 23, 2022, at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

Agave dates back to the Aztec civilization as an important crop in Mexico. Since the 1600s, the people of western Mexico have cultivated blue agave from the red volcanic soil that blankets the region, to make what we know as tequila. Salcido traveled across Mexico's state of Jalisco capturing images of distilleries and artisanal *tequileras*; blue agave fields at sunset; the agave's pineapple-like centers, called *piñas*; elegantly shadowed barrel rooms, called *añejos*; and the agave farmers themselves.

Salcido's photographs, together with the bilingual Spanish/English texts, reveal not only the tequila making process but also the region's traditions of culture and religion. *Aliento a Tequila* celebrates a craft that is rooted deep in the culture of Mexico and connects viewers with the labor and place that produces this popular spirit.

The exhibition was curated by Roy L. Flukinger, Independent Curator Emeritus and Past Senior Curator of Photography of the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin. *Aliento a Tequila* is organized by ExhibitsUSA, a program of Mid-America Arts Alliance.

Exhibition: *Aliento a Tequila*

Host Organization: National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum

Runs: September 1 – October 23, 2022

Gallery Hours: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Mon. – Sat., 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sun.

Location: 1700 Northeast 63rd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Admission: Adults: \$15, Students: \$10, Children 6-12: \$5, 5 and under: Free

Contact: 405-478-2250 or visit nationalcowboymuseum.org

About ExhibitsUSA

This exhibition is toured by ExhibitsUSA, a national program of Mid-America Arts Alliance. ExhibitsUSA sends more than twenty-five exhibitions on tour to over 100 small- and mid-sized communities every year. These exhibitions create access to an array of arts and humanities experiences, nurture the understanding of diverse cultures and art forms, and encourage the expanding depth and breadth of cultural life in local communities. For more about ExhibitsUSA, email MoreArt@maaa.org or visit www.eusa.org.

About Mid-America Arts Alliance

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) strengthens and supports artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout our region and beyond. Additional information about M-AAA is available at www.maaa.org.

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About the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

The National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City is America's premier institution of Western history, art and culture. Founded in 1955, the Museum collects, preserves and exhibits an internationally renowned collection of Western art and artifacts while sponsoring dynamic educational programs to stimulate interest in the enduring legacy of the American West. The Museum is located only six miles northeast of downtown Oklahoma City at 1700 Northeast 63rd Street. For more information, visit nationalcowboymuseum.org.