

# HIGH DESERT MUSEUM

W I L D L I F E *and* L I V I N G H I S T O R Y

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## High Desert Museum to Showcase 'Blake Little: Photographs of the Gay Rodeo'

Exhibition explores the diverse and complex nature of individual and community identity in the West

Bend, OR – Photographer Blake Little captures the grit and determination of the gay rodeo circuit through images that explore a time-honored American tradition. Revealing the story in classic black-and-white imagery, Little's photographs reveal scenes of camaraderie, identity and sport in an expansive redefinition of what a cowboy can be. *Blake Little: Photographs from the Gay Rodeo* opens December 15, 2017 at the High Desert Museum.

"The High Desert Museum is committed to presenting exhibitions that engage visitors and examine diverse stories from the Western landscape. Blake Little's work is an excellent example of the nuanced history that we don't always see in the Intermountain West," said the Museum's Executive Director Dana Whitelaw, Ph.D.



The exhibition consists of 41 black-and-white photographs taken by Little between 1988 and 1992. The images document the gay rodeo circuit and the lives of many of its participants during those years. The collected body of work not only serves as a stunning example of black-and-white portraiture and of rodeo photography, it also explores the diverse and complex

nature of individual and community identity in the West.

*Blake Little: Photographs from the Gay Rodeo* is drawn from an exhibition curated by Johanna Blume, assistant curator of Western art at the Eiteljorg Museum, and offered through the courtesy of the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, IN.

*Blake Little: Photographs from the Gay Rodeo* is made possible by Cascade A&E and Oregon the Oregon Cultural Trust, and with support from Zolo Media and the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation. This project has been funded in part by the Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

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Cutline: Blake Little, Bareback Bronc Riding, San Diego, California, 1992, Archival pigment printed on Epson exhibition fiber paper, 15 x 15 inches. © Blake Little

## About ExhibitsUSA

This exhibition is toured by ExhibitsUSA, a national program of Mid-America Arts Alliance. ExhibitsUSA sends more than 25 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](mailto:MoreArt@maaa.org) or visit [www.eusa.org](http://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. We achieve this primarily through our national traveling exhibition programs, innovative leadership development, and strategic grant making. We are especially committed to enriching the cultural life of historically underserved communities by providing high quality, meaningful, and accessible arts and culture programs and services. Each year M-AAA's programs, on average, reach one million people. We believe in more art for more people. Additional information about M-AAA is available at [www.maaa.org](http://www.maaa.org).

## ABOUT THE MUSEUM:

THE HIGH DESERT MUSEUM opened in 1982 and brings regional wildlife, culture, art and natural resources together to promote an understanding of the natural and cultural heritage of North America's high desert country. The Museum uses indoor and outdoor exhibits, wildlife in natural habitats, and living history demonstrations to help people discover and appreciate the high desert environment. The Museum is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is a Smithsonian Affiliate.

<http://www.highdesertmuseum.org>

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