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TAMÁSTSLIKT CULTURAL INSTITUTE



Jim Murphy

Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition on American Indian Skateboarding Culture comes to Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute

For immediate release - Pendleton, OR

“Ramp It Up: Skateboard Culture in Native America” will open next Saturday, March 14, at [Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute](#). The exhibit features 20 skate decks, including examples from Native companies and contemporary artists, rare images and video of Native skaters. Opening Day is free to the public. The exhibition will be on view through May 25, before continuing on its 12-city national tour. “Ramp It Up” was previously on view at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in New York, as well as at the National Museum of American Indian in Washington, D.C.

Skateboarding is one of the most popular sports on Indian reservations, and has

inspired and influenced American Indian and Native Hawaiian communities since the 1960s. This new exhibition from the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, together with the National Museum of the American Indian, is designed to celebrate the vibrancy, creativity and history of American Indian skateboarding culture.

Exhibition highlights include a never-before-exhibited 1969 image taken by skateboarding icon C.R. Stecyk III, of a skate deck depicting traditional Native imagery and 1973 home-movie footage of Zephyr surf team members Ricky and Jimmy Tavaréz (Gabrielino-Tongva).

“Skate culture is a great lens to learn about both traditional and contemporary Native American culture,” said Betsy Gordon, curator of “Ramp It Up.” “This exhibition not only showcases the Native skater but also the Native elders, parents, government officials and community activists who have encouraged their kids to skate.”

The exhibition features the work of visual artists Bunky Echo-Hawk (Yakama/Pawnee), Joe Yazzie (Navajo), Traci Rabbit (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma) and Dustinn Craig (White Mountain Apache/Navajo) and highlights young Native skaters such as 22-year-old Bryant Chapo (Navajo) and 13-year-old Augustin and 10-year-old Armondo Lerma (Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians).



Lerma Family

As skateboarding continues to rise in popularity in Indian Country, Native skaters and entrepreneurs have combined core lessons learned from the sport—strength, balance and tenacity—with traditional tribal iconography and contemporary art to engage Native youth in their history and culture. “Ramp It Up” examines the role of indigenous peoples in skateboarding culture, its roots in ancient Hawaiian surfing and the visionary achievements of contemporary Native skaters.

Skateboarding combines demanding physical exertion, design, graphic art, filmmaking and music to produce a unique and dynamic culture. “Ramp It Up” illustrates how indigenous people and tribal communities have used skateboarding

to express themselves and educate their youth.

Ramp It Up: Skateboard Culture in Native America is organized by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian and circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

For more information, go to www.tamastslitk.org.

About Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute

Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute is owned and operated by the [Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation](#). A Blue Star museum, Tamástslíkt is one of the many museums across the nation that offers free admission to families of active duty servicemen and women year-round.

In addition to the museum and interpretive center, Tamástslíkt operates a museum store, café, and offers meeting room rentals. Tamástslíkt is open six days a week, 10am-5pm, Monday-Saturday; closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Kinship Café is open from 11am to 2pm on the same days the museum is open.

Tamástslíkt is located at 47106 Wildhorse Boulevard at the far end of the main driveway of the Wildhorse Resort & Casino, 10 minutes east of Pendleton, Oregon. Tamástslíkt can be reached via Exit 216 off Interstate I-84 or by following the "Mission-LaGrande" sign south off Highway 11 onto Highway 331.

For more information, contact Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute at 541.429.7700 or visit www.tamastslíkt.org.

Media: for more information, photos, interviews, please contact Michelle Liberty at [Attitude Marketing](#), 509.540.0931 or email liberty@getattitude.net.

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