

**For Immediate Release:**  
August 28, 2006

Contact:  
Kathy Lyles, Director of Marketing  
770-387-1300  
[Kathyl@georgiamuseums.org](mailto:Kathyl@georgiamuseums.org)

### **Booth Western Art Museum Becomes Smithsonian Institution Affiliate**

Cartersville, Ga. – The Booth Western Art Museum is now one of only 150 cultural institutions nation wide and one of only eight in Georgia to be named a Smithsonian affiliate. The official announcement was made at the Booth Museum’s Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, August 26, 2006.

The purpose of Smithsonian Affiliations is to establish relationships with communities across the country through local museums and cultural institutions to maximize the cultural and educational benefits that both the Smithsonian and the affiliate can provide the community. Institutions affiliated with the Smithsonian, such as the Booth Western Art Museum, have access to the Smithsonian’s collections for long term loan, thus making the Smithsonian collection more accessible to the American people.

Smithsonian Affiliations was established in 1996. There are now 150 affiliates in 39 states, the District of Columbia, Panama, and Puerto Rico. Over the past ten years, affiliates have borrowed more than 7,000 artifacts from the Smithsonian and have greatly extended the reach of the Smithsonian Institution. “Today, Smithsonian Affiliations is doing more than sharing its treasures with the museums of America,” said Harold A. Closter, director of Smithsonian Affiliations. “We are building relationships with people in neighborhoods coast to coast, ensuring that all Americans can enjoy a quality Smithsonian experience, regardless of their proximity to Washington, D.C.”

“The Smithsonian is one of the most respected names in the museum field,” said Seth Hopkins, executive director of the Booth Western Art Museum. “To be one of only 150 Smithsonian Affiliates in the country is a great honor. During the application process Smithsonian staff members reviewed our collections, exhibitions, facility, and programs to be sure we met their high standards. I am very proud to say the continued efforts of our staff and volunteers have allowed us to become affiliated with the Smithsonian. Going forward the Booth Museum will be able to use the Smithsonian name in our marketing efforts and we will have the opportunity to borrow from various Smithsonian museums. We at the Booth are very excited about our new relationship with the Smithsonian Institution.”

#### **About the Booth Western Art Museum**

The Booth Western Art Museum is an 80,000 square foot museum located in Cartersville, Georgia, where guests are invited to explore the American West through contemporary Western artwork. The Museum also features a Presidential Gallery; a Civil War art gallery; and Sagebrush Ranch, featuring hands-on art activities and areas for role playing, storytelling and reading, all with a Western flair. Visitors to Booth Museum also enjoy

the intimate downtown setting with unique specialty and antique shops, boutiques and nationally featured restaurants all within walking distance of the Museum. Open since August 2003, the Booth Museum is the only museum of its kind in the Southeast and is the second largest art museum in the state of Georgia. To learn more about the Booth Western Art Museum, visit [www.boothmuseum.org](http://www.boothmuseum.org).

### **About the Smithsonian Institution**

In 1826, James Smithson, a British scientist, drew up his last will and testament, naming his nephew as beneficiary. Smithson stipulated that, should the nephew die without heirs (as he would in 1835), the estate should go “to the United States of America, to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men.” The motives behind Smithson’s bequest remain mysterious. He never traveled to the United States and seems to have had no correspondence with anyone here. Some have suggested that his bequest was motivated in part by revenge against the rigidities of British society, which had denied Smithson, who was illegitimate, the right to use his father’s name.

Smithson died in 1829, and six years later, President Andrew Jackson announced the bequest to Congress. On July 1, 1836, Congress accepted the legacy bequeathed to the nation and pledged the faith of the United States to the charitable trust. In September 1838, Smithson’s legacy, which amounted to more than 100,000 gold sovereigns, was delivered to the mint at Philadelphia. Recoined in U.S. currency, the gift amounted to more than \$500,000. After eight years of sometimes heated debate, an Act of Congress signed by President James K. Polk on Aug. 10, 1846, established the Smithsonian Institution as a trust to be administered by a Board of Regents and a Secretary of the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian Institution conducts scientific and scholarly research, administers the national collections and performs educational public-service functions. It is supported by its trust endowments and revenues, gifts, grants, contracts and funds appropriated by the Congress. For more information visit [www.smithsonian.org](http://www.smithsonian.org).

###