

JEWISH NEWS

of Greater Phoenix Online



- Search
- Newsletter
- Subscribe
- Advertise
- Contact Us
- Calendar
- CHOSEN
- Directory
- Blogs

July 16, 2010/AV 5 5770, Volume 62, No. 43

FEATURES

[ShareThis](#) [E-mail story](#) [Print story](#)

Painter of dreams

Late artist's work celebrated at Prescott museum

JENNIFER GOLDBERG
Special Sections Editor
[E-MAIL](#)



IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

[Going once, twice...](#)

[Painter of dreams](#)

COMMUNITY

[Green in State Senate race](#)

[Rabbi leaves Sephardic center, leads new synagogue](#)

[Jess Schwartz submits charter-school application](#)

[Valley View](#)

SPORTS

[Striking out: 'Ballgame' writer little-remembered](#)

SINGLES

The faces on the walls of The Phippen Museum in Prescott are a testament to the diversity of the West. Gamblers, rodeo cowboys, children, mountain men, cowgirls, Indian warriors - they impress the viewer not only with their strength and beauty, but also the talent of the artist responsible for all of them.

The exhibition, "Portraits of the West: The Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy," celebrates the long career and large body of work of Freeman, the Scottsdale-based artist who died in 2008 at the age of 73. Freeman's efforts, from his early pieces as a commercial illustrator to his celebrity portraits and many depictions of life in the West, is now curated by his widow, Bonnie Adams-Freeman.

Jewish cowboy

Freeman, a self-described "Jewish cowboy from Chicago," knew exactly what he wanted



Kenneth M. Freeman's work exemplifies the spirit of the West. Shown: "Impending Decision"
Image courtesy of The Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy



Local Guides

- Apache Junction
- Avondale
- Buckeye
- Casa Grande

Featured Jobs powered by



Single, appreciative and focusing on now

NATION

Presbyterians reject Israel boycott

WORLD

Obama presses Abbas to begin direct talks

Israel conversion bill alarms Diaspora leaders

Falash Mura bid gains steam

ISRAEL

Bibi drops hints at negotiating on Jerusalem

OPINION

Editorial - Klal Yisrael?

Commentary - All about cottages

Commentary - A stand against Holocaust denial

In the Mail - Letters to the Editor

ARTS

Artists stage 'cultural intifada'

BUSINESS

People on the Move

What's New?

MILESTONES

B'nai Mitzvah

Weddings

Obituaries

EDUCATION

Orthodox day school to open in Scottsdale

TORAH STUDY

Positive thinking

out of life at a young age, Adams-Freeman says.

"When he was a little boy, he said, 'I'm going to be a great artist, and I'm going to be a cowboy.' And there was absolutely no doubt in his mind that that's what he was going to be," she says.

His parents supported him in his quest; beginning at age 8, Freeman's mother took him to weekly art lessons at the Chicago Institute of Art, then to the movie theater to spend the day watching the movies he loved. In high school, Freeman won a number of art competitions that earned him a scholarship to the American Academy of Art. After college, he began a career in commercial illustration, working for renowned illustrator Haddon Sundblom (creator of the iconic Coca-Cola Santa Claus).

While in Chicago, Freeman married his first wife, Alice, and had two daughters, Dori and Tracy. In the early 1960s, Freeman ran a teen nightclub in Chicago called the Pink Fink, where acts like The Turtles and Janis Joplin performed.

Out to Arizona

Even in Chicago, Freeman's passion for the West found an outlet. He made a number of visits to Scottsdale in the 1970s and 1980s, taking photographs and making connections to facilitate his art.

His religious identity was not always welcomed in the Western art community, though.

"Even today, there are a lot of doors that are closed because you're Jewish," Adams-Freeman says. "He came across some of those, and it would infuriate him because it stopped his growth as an artist. I'm not going to point fingers, but I will tell you that he came up against those challenges."

Freeman retired from commercial illustration and made the move to Scottsdale in the 1980s, where he continued to paint. He produced paintings for rodeo posters (including five for Scottsdale's Parada del Sol rodeo); did portraits of celebrities, including musician Waylon Jennings and actor John Wayne; illustrated book covers; and continued to depict his favorite subject, the people and spirit of the West. Earlier this year, Freeman was posthumously given the Cowboy Spirit Award at the National Festival of the West, the only artist to ever receive the honor.

For the love of the West

Adams-Freeman believes that Freeman's work resonates with the public because of its photographlike accuracy (Freeman painted from photographs), their bold color and the love for the West that comes through in his work.

She says viewers of Freeman's work "always feel the spirit. He was able to paint (each subject's) passion for what they were doing, and Ken's passion was being able to do that."

"Ken painted pride, honor, tradition, beauty, happiness," says Adams-Freeman. "He painted dreams."

No jobs available.

[More Local Jobs](#)
[Post Jobs](#) [Post Resume](#)
[Search Jobs](#)

Ads by Google

[Are You Jewish?](#)

What Does Being Jewish Mean to You? Tell Us- \$.25 Goes to the #ish Fund

www.WhatsYourIsh.com/

[Torah Covers](#)

award winning artist corinne soikin strauss

torahcoverdesigns.com

[Reno Art Installations](#)

We Have Over 25 Yrs Of Experience With Art Installation. Call Now.

www.ArtGalleryReno.com

[Coeur d'Alene Art Auction](#)

World Record Prices-Free Estimates Specialists in Western/Wildlife Art

www.cdaartauction.com

Details

- What: "Portraits of the West: The Kenneth M. Freeman Legacy"
- When: Through Oct. 24
- Where: The Phippen Museum, 4701 Highway 89N, Prescott
- Cost: \$5
- Contact: (928) 778-7385 or phippenartmuseum.org

Now Online
Community Directory 2010

[Issue Index](#)

[Home](#)