



AKTÁ LAKOTA

Museum & Cultural Center

- an outreach of St. Joseph's Indian School -



NATIONALLY RENOWNED CENTER OF AMERICAN INDIAN ART

EXPLORING THE RICH ART AND CULTURE OF THE LAKOTA PEOPLE

Discover the rich cultural heritage of the Lakota people, the first to inhabit this area. A visit to the Aktá Lakota Museum offers an inspiring view of both traditional and contemporary Native American culture and artistry.

Our collection features rare historic artifacts alongside exceptional contemporary works by notable Lakota artists and artisans. Over the years, Lakota artwork has evolved to incorporate a variety of materials, including glass beadwork, porcupine quillwork, hide painting, feather work, wood, pipestone carving, and metalworking. Traditional forms such as decorated garments, ceremonial regalia, personal adornments, and containers like bags and parfleches, reflect the creativity and resourcefulness of the Lakota during their nomadic hunting era of the early 1800s. The museum's contemporary collection highlights the work of celebrated artists like the late Oscar Howe, Herman Red Elk, Robert Penn, Arthur Amiotte, Dyani White Hawk, Henry Payer, and many others. The intricate tribal styles and surface embellishments in beadwork and quillwork, developed during the early reservation era of



the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, showcase the enduring artistry of the Lakota people.

In addition to our permanent exhibits, the Aktá Lakota Museum also features rotating exhibitions that continue to share the vibrant and evolving story of the Lakota nation.



LAKOTA MOON CALENDAR - *WÍYAWAPI WÓWAPI HANWÍ*

Wetú:

The Moons of Renewal and Growth (Spring)

Majáksicaagli Wí Moon When Ducks Come Back

Wihákata Céwapi Wí Moon of Making Fat

Wójupi Wí When the Leaves are Green

The Lakóta year is divided into 13 moons. Each moon is 28 days long, and every day represents something sacred:

Two days for the Great Spirit

Two days for the Mother Earth

Four days for the Four Winds

One day for the Spotted Eagle

One day for the Sun

One day for the Moon

One day for the Morning Star

Four days for the Four Ages

Seven days for the Seven Rites of the Sacred Pipe

One day for the Buffalo

One day for the Fire

One day for the Water

One day for the Rock

One day for the Two-legged People



Grass Mountain II Robert Penn (c) 1997

Wetú: Moons of Renewal and Growth (Spring)
Each spring, the camp circle moved to higher ground. Men fixed and created weapons and resumed hunting. Women gathered early berries and roots and repaired the tipis. Children enjoyed the warm weather after the confines of winter.

[Learn More!](#)

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

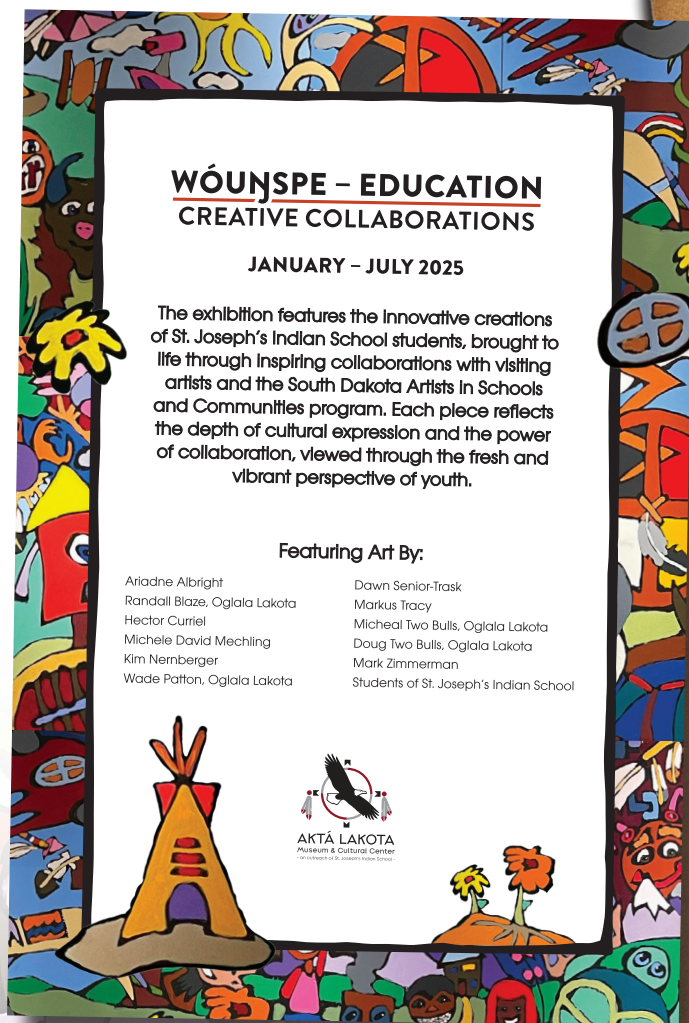
WÓUNSPÉ — EDUCATION | CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS EXHIBIT

Wóunspé – Education | Creative Collaborations celebrates the profound connection between Native American students and their mentors through an artistic lens. This exhibition showcases the creative works of students from St. Joseph's Indian School, developed in collaboration with visiting artists and the South Dakota Artists in Schools and Communities program.

Each piece reflects a powerful fusion of cultural expression, artistic mentorship, and collective creativity. Through these collaborations, students explored a range of media and themes, deepening their ties to their artistic identities and cultural heritage. The exhibition highlights the significance of sharing traditions, storytelling practices, and artistic techniques across generations.

Visitors will experience a dynamic array of voices and styles, blending youthful insight with seasoned expertise. The exhibition also features work from Oglala Lakota Artists in Residence Micheal Two Bulls, Randall Blaze, Douglas Two Bulls, and Wade Patton, alongside pieces by Ariadne Albright, Hector Curriel, Michele David Mechling, Kim Nernberger, Dawn Senior-Trask, and Mark Zimmerman. The exhibit is curated by David A. Meyer III, and is on display through July 2025.

[Learn More!](#)



BUILDING OUR COLLECTION

For enthusiasts of American Indian art, stumbling upon the Aktá Lakota Museum feels like uncovering a hidden treasure trove. This museum boasts one of the most extensive collections of historic and contemporary American Indian art from the Northern Plains in the state. With a collection now nearing 3,000 pieces, it continues to expand annually. A key focus of the museum is to honor contemporary American Indian artists by showcasing their evolving work to new audiences. When choosing new pieces, the Collections staff and Advisory Committee prioritize emerging Native artists not yet featured in the collection and seek out works that highlight the creative growth of existing artists. Ultimately, the goal is to enrich the collection in a manner that highlights the diverse talents and perspectives of American Indian artists. Recently added pieces include:



She Sings for Water © 2023
Italian Alabaster
Presley LaFountain, (1956-2023)
Turtle Mountain Chippewa



Ceremonial © 2025
Mixed Media
Gerald Cournoyer Sr., Oglala Lakota



Cikala Skatapi - Little Play © 2025
Mixed Media
Mike Marshall, Rosebud Sioux

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

FIELD TRIPS WELCOME!

The Aktá Lakota Museum offers educational experiences for children of all ages and abilities through interactive, hands-on exhibits and programs.



A welcoming, fun, and inspiring setting, the museum honors the rich history and culture of the Lakota people. Both indoor and outdoor exhibits showcase art, literature, culture, and history, creating an immersive experience for visitors.

Serving as a living lesson on the American Indian way of life — past and present — the Aktá Lakota Museum is a valuable resource for both children and adults. Admission is free. [Plan your visit today!](#)

STORY TIME WITH UNČÍ & LALÁ RETURNS JUNE3!

Story Time with Unči and Lalá is a free public program that brings American Indian history to life through Native American literature. While designed for children, all are welcome to join.

Enjoy lively stories and hands-on activities every Tuesday from 10:30 to 11:30 AM at the museum throughout June and July. Come discover, learn, and connect!



[Learn More!](#)



JOIN THE JUNIOR RANGER PROGRAM!

The National Lewis and Clark Trail Junior Ranger Program is a free kids program available at the Aktá Lakota Museum. The museum is one of 30 locations in 13 States along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to host the Lewis & Clark Trail Junior Ranger Program. Part of the National Park Service's popular Junior Ranger Program, the Lewis and Clark Trail Junior Ranger Activity Journal is available at the museum and free to the public. Visit [Where to Become a Junior Ranger](#) to learn more!



NATIVE INSPIRED GIFTS

For American Indian people, hand-beaded crafts have been a form of artistic expression and storytelling for centuries. As a result of the introduction of glass beads by European colonizers, this rich and colorful tradition has been able to continue to thrive. Today, many talented artists invest their time and share their experiences through this medium.

At the Aktá Lakota Museum, we take pride in supporting these artisans by showcasing their pieces in our [gift store](#) and museum. We welcome anyone who wants to learn more about this beautiful art form to visit us and see these stunning works of art for themselves.



CAMPUS TOURS

STOP BY AND SEE US!

Experience the rich Lakota culture by visiting the Aktá Lakota Museum and St. Joseph's Indian School! Admission is free of charge, and donations are greatly appreciated.

Explore our exhibits at your own pace or request a guided tour of the campus by speaking with the receptionist. For more information, please call us at 800.798.3452 or email us at aktalakota@stjo.org.

Plan your visit today and discover the timeless lessons that our museum has to offer. For more information about Lakota traditions and activities, visit us at <https://aktalakota.stjo.org/>



GENERAL MUSEUM INFORMATION

Aktá Lakota Museum & Cultural Center

St. Joseph's Indian School

1301 North Main Street

Chamberlain, SD 57325

Phone: 1-605-234-3452

Toll Free: 1-800-798-3452

E-Mail: aktalakota@stjo.org

Online: <http://www.aktalakota.stjo.org/>

Memberships and Affiliations

ABA – American Bus Association

NTA – National Tour Association

ASDM – Association of South Dakota Museums

SDSHS – South Dakota State Historical Society

AAM – American Association of Museums

IACA – Indian Arts & Crafts Association

MPMA – Mountain Plains Museum Association

AASLH – American Assoc. for State &

Local History

Summer Hours

May – October

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Monday - Saturday

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.; Sunday

Winter Hours

November – April

8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; Monday - Friday

Closed weekends and National Holidays

- Interactive Displays
- Medicine Wheel Garden
- After Hours Tours by Appointment
- Bus/RV Parking
- Handicap-Accessible
- Guided Tours Available Upon Request

FREE ADMISSION

Donations Welcome



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