

For Immediate Release

Groundbreaking Exhibition Featuring Native Glass Artists and New Commissions by Contemporary Artists Lead 2026 Spring/Summer Season at Mingei International Museum

January 13, 2026, SAN DIEGO, CA — After this Fall season focused on regional design icons and San Diego's natural landscape, Mingei International Museum prepares to showcase four new exhibitions for the 2026 spring/summer season, led by *Clearly Indigenous: Native Visions Reimagined in Glass*, a groundbreaking traveling exhibition originated by the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, NM, featuring 120 glass art objects created by 29 Native American artists and leading glass artist Dale Chihuly. The Museum's latest presentations are poised to captivate visitors with a broad range of creative perspectives, both historic and contemporary, and a rich diversity of mediums.

"Mingei is showcasing "art of the people" through the beautiful presentation of contemporary craft and traditional folk art, made by both unknown makers and celebrated living artists," **said Jessica Hanson York, Executive Director and CEO**. "Developed in extensive collaboration with partners both from our region and the broader art communities, Mingei's 2026 exhibitions and related programming celebrate craft, folk art, and design from cultural traditions and communities across the globe."

[Farm to Craft: Grains in Global Folk Art](#) (For press images, [click here](#))

February 14, 2026 through January 10, 2027 | Curators: Emily Hanna, Ph.D., Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator; Guusje Sanders, Curator; Ariana Torres, Assistant Curator

Curated from Mingei International Museum's Permanent Collection, this Entry Level exhibition, ***Farm to Craft***, explores the global significance of grains as a source of sustenance and an inspiration to human creativity. Grains such as corn, wheat, rice, quinoa, and oats are dietary staples around the world, their common presence forming important roles across communities and the cultures built around them. From tools used to harvest and process, to containers used to store and consume, each object is an example of how innovative design, borne from a need, and a craftsman's own artistic eye, intersect to produce clever results. Artisans use straw, husks, chaff, hulls, and the grains themselves to make whimsical figures and fashionable creations, revealing how even the humblest of materials can spark endless imagination.

[To Catch a Fish](#) (For press images, [click here](#))

May 2 – November 1, 2026 | Curator: Emily Hanna, Ph.D., Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator

To catch a fish takes skill, patience, and the right equipment, and requires that people – who are land-dwelling and oxygen-breathing – approach or enter the water, a realm profoundly apart from their own. A human experience translated as a utilitarian practice for survival, a root of culture and tradition, and as a magical subject of lore and wonder.

To Catch a Fish presents over sixty works of craft and art that are either used in fishing, or that illuminate the relationship between people and fish. Utilitarian fishing objects include hand-crafted basketry fish traps, scrapers, weights, and nets. Works with spiritual significance and symbolism include amulets, robes, images of saints, and even kites. A stunning work of contemporary art by Marianne Nicolson addresses the mystical undersea realm, and the delicate relationship between human beings and the wealth of resources from the ocean. The show also features Robert J. Lang's *Vertical Pond III*, inspired by a predecessor work, "Vertical Pond II," which was destroyed in the Eaton Fire, along with the artist's studio, materials, and artwork. The installation is a wall-mounted collection of origami koi, each koi folded individually from an uncut square, each square from a hand-made sheet of paper made of the ashes from his studio and the ashes of its predecessor artwork, all burned to the ground in the Los Angeles wildfires of January 2025.

India Thompson: Looks Like Home (For press images, [click here](#))

May 16, 2026 - October 18, 2026 | Curator: Ariana Torres, Assistant Curator

India Thompson: Looks Like Home explores emotional attachment to the ordinary domestic objects in the places we call home in the age of renting. By meticulously weaving works from reed, the artist creates versions of her apartment's contents, unpacking what it means to live in a space that is not legally hers. Thompson transforms familiar, perhaps oft-overlooked, forms we depend on in our daily routine—such as a microwave, toilet, or refrigerator—into poignant sculptural pieces

Clearly Indigenous: Native Visions Reimagined in Glass (For press images, [click here](#))

June 27 – September 20, 2026 | Curator: Dr. Leticia Chambers

Clearly Indigenous: Native Visions Reimagined in Glass is a first-of-its-kind, groundbreaking exhibition giving broader and overdue recognition to a wide range of contemporary Native artists working in glass. The exhibition includes approximately 120 glass art objects created by twenty-nine Native American artists, four Pacific Rim artists from New Zealand and Australia, and leading glass artist Dale Chihuly, who first introduced glass art to Indian country.

The stunning art in the exhibition embodies the intellectual content of Native traditions, newly illuminated by the unique properties that can only be achieved by working with glass. Whether re-interpreting traditional stories and designs in the medium of glass, or expressing contemporary issues affecting tribal societies, Native glass artists have created a content laden body of work. These artists have melded the aesthetics and properties inherent in glass art with their cultural ways of knowing.

Clearly Indigenous: Native Visions Reimagined in Glass was originated by the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, New Mexico where it was curated by Dr. Leticia Chambers and Cathy Short (Potawatomi). The traveling exhibit was curated by Dr. Chambers and is toured by International Arts & Artists.

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ABOUT MINGEI INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM

Mingei International Museum, located in San Diego's Balboa Park Cultural District, celebrates human creativity through multicultural works of folk art, craft, and design. Inspired by the Japanese mingei (art of the people) movement, Mingei cares deeply about design functionality, handmade craft, and bringing out the creativity that lives in all of us. In addition to rotating gallery exhibitions and event programming, Mingei's gift shop, theater, education center, restaurant, and café are backdrops for finding inspiration and connecting with the community. As the presenter of San Diego Design Week and a partner to over 50 local artists and art and cultural organizations, Mingei puts celebrating creativity at the core of its mission through workshops, film festivals, lectures, and more. Mingei is a nonprofit institution funded by admission, individuals, and institutional support.

ABOUT THE BALBOA PARK CULTURAL DISTRICT

Located in the heart of San Diego, the Balboa Park Cultural District is home to a variety of arts and culture offerings. The 1,200 acre public park has been a hub for art, science, history, and culture since the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. The Cultural District includes Balboa Park's central mesa, particularly 17 museums, performing arts centers, gardens, and of course, the world famous San Diego Zoo. Thanks to organizations like the City of San Diego, Forever Balboa Park, the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, and staff members of various institutions, the Balboa Park Cultural District is a major tourist destination.

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