



NEWS RELEASE



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IRVING ARCHIVES & MUSEUM NAMED 2020 OBELISK AWARD HONOREE FOR COLLABORATION WITH THINKINDIA FOUNDATION

(IRVING, TEXAS) – Business Council for the Arts has awarded the Irving Archives & Museum (IAM) with its annual Obelisk Award Honoree for ‘New Initiatives – Small’ for IAM’s India a la Art project.

The IAM public programming and exhibition project, India a la Art, was a partnership with thinkIndia, a local cultural nonprofit organization. The thinkIndia foundation is focused on bringing communities together through the power of arts and culture.

The City of Irving is a highly diverse city and the Indian population is one of its fastest growing segments. Following a series of discussions, IAM and thinkIndia agreed that a collaboration between the two organizations would be a great fit; and, this program complemented the temporary exhibit on display at IAM from the Smithsonian, *Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation*.

In partnership with thinkIndia, public programming and an exhibition were developed to educate the public about Indian American heritage and culture. The exhibition, located in IAM’s community space and gallery, is entitled *India a la Art*, and includes language, literature, history and material culture.

Public programming included interactive workshops that bring Indian culture to life. These workshops, coordinated and managed by the IAM staff and presented by members of the community, taught attendees about the colorful tapestry of the language, history, traditions, cuisine, spiritual practices and methodologies of Indian culture, and how it is all connected to our collective American culture.

“IAM staff and thinkIndia look forward to future collaborations and partnerships” said Director of Museums, Jennifer Landry. “The collaboration with thinkIndia was an excellent first project for the museum and provides a template for how we would like to see future community partnerships develop. The awarding of the Obelisk Award to IAM is a wonderful confirmation that the museum is achieving its goals of being of, by, and for the community.”

The exhibit *India a la Art* will remain on display through the fall to allow visitors to experience the exhibit once the museum reopens. The IAM plans to reopen through a timed reservation system the first week of November. For more information visit <https://www.irvingartscenter.com/museums-and-archives/irving-archives-museum/> and follow on Facebook @iamirvingtx.

Below are a few examples of digital promotions related to the project:

- Introduction to initiative & partnership between thinkIndia Foundation and Irving Archives and Museum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf2iLEi300I>
- Overview of the "India a la Art" exhibit at Irving Archives and Museum: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/lnzrdvfrvinejsi/IndiaAlaArt-v3-HD.mp4?dl=0>
- "Around Town" video featuring "India a la Art" exhibits and interactive programming at Irving Archives and Museum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMO1OOXAk3Q>
- Celebration of Poetry at India a la Art's Lifelong Learning Weekend: https://www.dropbox.com/s/ileh10frftdljkq/Poetry_v3_HD.mp4?dl=0

About IAM

IAM is a newly built community history museum and also includes two historic sites: the Ruth Paine House Museum which tells the story of events leading up to the assassination of President Kennedy from a female perspective, and the Jackie Townsell Bear Creek Heritage Center which includes three historic structures, and interprets the African American experience from Emancipation through the Civil Rights Movement. Bear Creek is one of the oldest freedmen communities in North Texas. IAM also manages the Mustang Museum which tells the story of the Mustangs of Las Colinas.

IAM's primary goal is to connect with the community and create an environment that welcomes all. Recent programs included a sold out discussion with Ruth Paine (now in her 80s) about the impact of the events of 1963 on her life, a collaboration that brought the Slave Dwelling Project to North Texas, and hosting the Smithsonian traveling exhibit *Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation*.

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