

# Glenbow

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## **Glenbow becomes first major Canadian museum to offer free general admission permanently thanks to \$35-million donation commemorating legacy of JR Shaw**

**Downtown Calgary building that houses Glenbow to be named JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture after the late Canadian business and philanthropic leader**

**CALGARY – February 17, 2022** – Glenbow is thrilled to announce a transformative \$35-million donation from the family of JR Shaw, including an endowment that will make it the first major Canadian museum to offer free general admission, forever.

The Shaw family’s donation is the largest since Glenbow’s founding and celebrates the legacy of JR Shaw, the legendary Calgary businessman and philanthropist who founded Shaw Communications and Corus Entertainment.

The downtown Calgary building that houses Glenbow and its collection is currently undergoing a massive top-to-bottom renovation that will transform 312,000 square feet of space into one of the most vibrant and inclusive art museums in North America. When it reopens, the building will be renamed JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture.

With the establishment of the \$25-million JR Shaw Free Admissions Endowment, Glenbow will eliminate general admission in perpetuity, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to access its resources. By removing the fundamental barrier of affordability, access to arts and culture will become a right for all rather than a privilege.

“At Glenbow, we have long believed that art is for everyone and have committed to increasing accessibility to arts and culture,” said Nicholas R. Bell, President and CEO, Glenbow. “This gift is pivotal in our journey to reimagine the museum. The Glenbow collection belongs to the people of Alberta and now, thanks to the incredible generosity and vision of the Shaw family, it will truly be inclusive and accessible to everyone.”

“Our family is proud to honour JR the best way we know how – by building upon his passion for Canadian art and artists and passing it along for future generations to enjoy without any barriers,” said Julie Shaw, President, Shaw Family Foundation.

Throughout his lifetime, JR Shaw grew his passion for celebrating Canadian art and artists; many who he counted as personal friends. His family’s donation will also fund a \$10-million endowment to create the JR Shaw Institute for Canadian Art.

The Institute, to be operated by Glenbow, will feature annual exhibitions, a diverse and exciting mix of programs, an artist-in-residence program, and opportunities for further study through an internship and fellowship program.

“JR was so proud of the beautiful works created by Canada’s artists, and he did everything he could to ensure people would have the opportunity to enjoy them as much as he did,” said Ms. Shaw. “In that

spirit, this tribute to JR is also meant to be a generational gift for the people and visitors to the city he loved to call home.”

JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture will be a place for everyone, leading the future of arts and culture in Canada. It will be vital to enhancing Calgary’s downtown core while creating cultural and economic benefits for the city and the province.

“The Glenbow is a jewel in Alberta’s cultural crown,” said Premier of Alberta Jason Kenney. “This amazing gift, bestowed in memory of one of Alberta’s greatest entrepreneurs, means that it will be open and accessible for all Calgarians, Albertans and visitors to enjoy, free of charge. Thank you to the Shaw family for their generosity. It truly is a wonderful testament to JR, that reflects his tremendous impact and love of Calgary.”

“Thanks to this generous donation from the Shaw Family Foundation, the Glenbow Museum, Alberta’s premier cultural facility will become more accessible to all Albertans in the newly renovated and renamed JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture building,” said Minister of Culture Ron Orr. “The Glenbow Museum has been a staple in Alberta and will continue to be. I look forward to the completion of the new JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. This is an exciting step towards making Calgary and Alberta a cultural destination and showing off our art to the world.”

“As the minister responsible for Alberta’s government buildings I am thrilled that this centre of arts and culture in Calgary will now bear JR Shaw’s name,” said Minister of Infrastructure Prasad Panda. “This is a fitting recognition of the tremendous contribution by the Shaw family to the Glenbow museum.”

“The significance of the Shaw family’s endowment for the future of our city simply cannot be overstated,” said Mayor of Calgary Jyoti Gondek. “This is unprecedented in Canada and will offer everyone who makes Calgary home or who visits our city, regardless of age or income, the opportunity to be part of a world class arts and culture experience for free. Museums are more relevant today than ever as they play an important role in learning from our past, giving us perspective and building common ground.”

With \$105-million from government, \$35-million from the Shaw family through its Shaw Family Foundation, and \$12-million in donations from Glenbow supporters to date, Glenbow has raised \$152-million. However, the future of Glenbow still requires additional community support to enhance its facility, programming, exhibitions, activities and events for many years to come. As such, Glenbow is working to raise an additional \$23-million to reach its new fundraising target of \$175-million, taking its aspirations for arts and culture in Calgary to new heights.

For more information, please visit [www.glenbow.org](http://www.glenbow.org).

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## **About Glenbow**

Founded in 1966 as an independent, non-profit museum, archive and gallery, Glenbow Museum cares for an extraordinary collection of more than 250,000 works of art and historical objects – from Canada and cultures around the world – on behalf of the people of Alberta. Glenbow Reimagined is a project to renovate the museum’s nearly 50-year-old building and provide a vibrant, thriving cultural resource in the heart of Calgary. Glenbow is committed to expanding the accessibility and impact of arts and

culture, with a mission to activate art, objects, and ideas so everyone who experiences Glenbow leaves with something to share.

## **About the Legacy of JR Shaw**

### **JR Shaw (1934 – 2020)**

A brilliant leader, an extraordinary entrepreneur, founder of Shaw Communications and Corus Entertainment, JR was a true pioneer of Canadian business, a visionary of the Canadian media and telecommunications sectors, a dedicated philanthropist, a friend who was loved by so many, and a devoted family man.

From the simple idea of giving people more television viewing choices, JR built Shaw Communications into one of Canada's leading connectivity providers. The growth and success of both Shaw Communications and Corus Entertainment reflect JR's commitment to deliver excellence, his unlimited curiosity about technology, and his unwavering passion for innovation, all of which benefited Canadians from coast to coast.

JR offered his expertise to many institutions and organizations, earning a reputation as an outstanding Canadian business leader who exemplified corporate social responsibility, ethics, and entrepreneurship. JR was designated an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2002.

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