

CULTURE DURING COVID-19

Surround yourself with marvels of science, art and history

By Robin Roenker

MUSEUMS, AT THEIR CORE, are storytellers, teachers and sources of inspiration and awe. Around every corner, there's a chance to learn and explore something new.

Shipwrecks. The solar system. Modern art. Military heroism. You can discover it all — and more — at these visitor-favorite museums in the region:



OREGON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY (OMSI) Portland, Ore.

Engaging for visitors of all ages — but especially kids — OMSI makes learning science fun. Beginning in October, explore the life and legacy of Genghis Khan in a new featured exhibit. "We'll look at Mongolian Culture and take a 'science-y' spin on things by looking at genetics" — tying into the fact that millions of modern-day people are said to be genetically linked to Khan — "to explore why your eyes are this color and so on, from a genetics viewpoint," says John Farmor, OMSI's marketing and communications manager.

You can also tour the USS Blueback — decommissioned in 1990 and now one of the most modern submarines publicly displayed anywhere in the U.S. — and imagine what it would have been like to work onboard, submerged for months at a time.

COVID-19 DETAILS:

The USS Blueback, *Body Works & the Cycle of Life* and the Genghis Khan gallery exhibit are open, as is the museum store. Mask wearing and social distancing are required. OMSI's other, more hands-on exhibits, including the Natural Science Hall and Turbine Hall, as well as the Empirical Theater and Kendall Planetarium, will be opened in phases in accordance with public health guidelines.

OREGON MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY



ANCHORAGE MUSEUM Anchorage, Alaska

Showcasing artwork both contemporary and traditional — with a special emphasis on Indigenous cultures of the region and artists of the North — the Anchorage Museum celebrates Alaskans' connections to their land, waters and native communities.

Permanent exhibits include the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center, home to more than 600 objects on loan from the Smithsonian Institution's collection of Indigenous Alaskan artifacts, and *Alaska Exhibition*, which sheds light on modern life in the region. "Our three permanent galleries help visitors learn the story of Alaska — its history, its art and its people," says Monica Shah, the museum's chief conservator and chief collections officer.

Current exhibitions include *Aperture* (through Winter 2021), a sweeping photographic exploration of the state's changing physical and social landscape. Families with kids will also want to make time for the museum's Discovery Center, featuring marine-life tanks, interactive experiment stations, a planetarium and more.

COVID-19

DETAILS: The museum expects to reopen in September. Masks and social distancing will be required. The Discovery Center will be open in limited capacity by advance reservation only.

KEVIN SMITH/ANCHORAGE MUSEUM; CHRIS AREND/ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

NORTHWEST MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CULTURE (THE MAC)

Spokane, Wash.

Experience personal stories behind the devastation in exhibits highlighting two of the world's most famous volcanic eruptions through Pompeii: *The Immortal City* and Mount St. Helens: *Critical Memory 40 Years Later*.

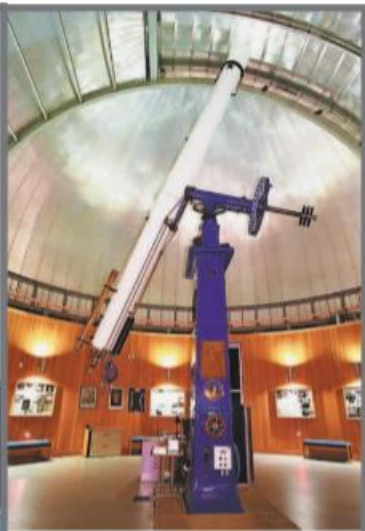
Then, discover the enduring appeal of pop art in *POP Power from Warhol to Koons: Masterworks from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation*, scheduled to run from Oct. 3 to Jan. 14, 2021. Get up close to seminal works in the American pop art movement, including pieces by Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and James Rosenquist, as well contributions by contemporary artists.

Two additional fall installations commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II: *Bomber Boys: Portraits from the Front and American Inheritance: Unpacking World War II*. Taken together, they will offer an in-depth look at the toll of war via artifacts from front-line fighters and civilians alike.

While there, take time to enjoy The MAC's collection of Plateau Indian art and artifacts — the largest of its kind in the world.

COVID-19

DETAILS: Currently closed, but masks and social distancing will be required when the museum reopens, and timed-entry tickets can be purchased in advance.



CHABOT SPACE & SCIENCE CENTER

Oakland, Calif.

Marvel at the beauty of the nighttime cosmos through Chabot's three refracting telescopes — Leah (in operation since 1883), Rachel (installed in 1915) and Nellie (the center's most powerful scope, in use since 2003). Public viewings are offered free every Friday and Saturday beginning at 7:30 p.m. "Our astronomers are there to answer visitors' questions and give them a peek at the stars," says Mary Catherine Frantz, Chabot's marketing and communications manager.

Daytime visitors to Chabot's Observatory Deck are in luck, too: at 1,500 feet high, it offers breathtaking views of the San Francisco Bay Area, the chance to get a zoomed-in look at the sun (through solar filters) and more. The Center also includes a planetarium and interactive exhibits on space.

COVID-19

DETAILS: The center is currently closed, but when open, masks and social distancing will be required. Indoor experiences are set to open in phases.



USS MIDWAY MUSEUM

San Diego

The USS Midway Museum offers an immersive journey through decades of American military history. Housed on the venerated ship itself — the longest-serving American aircraft carrier of the 20th century, in use from 1945 to 1992 — the museum's Hangar Deck and Flight Deck exhibits feature aircraft from World War II through today's modern fighter jets.

The Battle of Midway Theater and accompanying exhibits detail the history of the critical WWII Allied victory in the Pacific, for which the ship was named. Self-guided audio tours are available, but do pause to listen to the brief docent talks, if you come across one — they're often given by former military jet pilots. "You'll hear firsthand what it's like to catapult off an aircraft carrier," says David Koontz, the museum's marketing director.

COVID-19

DETAILS: Masks and social distancing are required. Guests receive a contactless temperature check upon arrival. Hand sanitization stations have been added. Outdoor, open-air exhibits are open; lower-deck exhibits, The Battle of Midway Theater and flight simulators to open as COVID-19 status allows.



COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

Astoria, Ore.

The Columbia River Bar — where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean — is one of the most dangerous water passages on the planet, and it has the shipwrecks to prove it. At the Columbia River Maritime Museum, get up close to the rich maritime history of the region through artifacts like the salvaged cannon from the USS Shark, a Navy vessel that met its demise in the Columbia River Bar in 1844. “Our museum is really about the river and how it affects the lives of people throughout the Columbia Region — going back from the age of Indigenous people through present day,” says Caroline Waebben, the museum’s manager of membership, communication and marketing.

A new exhibit, Shipwrecked! Causes and Consequences on Oregon Shores, opening next spring, will dive deep (pun intended) into the science behind shipwrecks — and their emotional and physical costs. Don’t leave without stopping aboard the Lightship Columbia, anchored outside, which operated as a “floating lighthouse” to mark the treacherous Bar between 1951 and 1979 and is now preserved in its original condition.

COVID-19 DETAILS:

Masks and social distancing are required and hand sanitization stations have been added. Direction through the museum has been changed to one-way to avoid cross-traffic, and capacity has been capped at 254 visitors at a time.

PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM

Honolulu

As one of four official Pearl Harbor historic sites — along with the USS Arizona Memorial, the Battleship Missouri Memorial and the USS Bowfin Submarine & Park (combination tickets are available) — the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum lets visitors step back in time to understand the power of the infamous attack and how it shaped World War II. Housed in two historic WWII hangars, where bullet holes can still be seen in one of the windows, guests learn about the defense launched on Dec. 7 from the site. “Our museum grounds actually mark one of the only places on Ford Island where fire was returned to try to protect some of the battleships,” says Kalli Abernathy, the museum’s director of marketing. “It’s a very emotional place to visit.”

Recently, the museum added a relic from the USS Arizona alongside its other permanent collections, including Japanese WWII aircraft and a Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bomber — known as the star of the Battle of Midway. Later this year, the museum hopes to open the historic Ford Island Control Tower to visitors, offering panoramic views of the USS Arizona Memorial and more.

COVID-19 DETAILS:

Masks and social distancing are required. Online ticket purchases are encouraged. On-site café and flight simulators may be closed.

