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**High-Res photos & Info** at [tulsahistory.org](http://tulsahistory.org)

## **BALLERINA MARJORIE TALLCHIEF COMES HOME TO FIVE MOONS**

Stolen Bronze Sculpture Recrafted - to Be Unveiled Sunday, October 29

**Tulsa, Oklahoma, October 29, 2023** – The Tulsa Historical Society & Museum (THSM) will unveil and rededicate the bronze statue of famed Osage ballerina, Marjorie Tallchief, **Sunday, October 29 at 1:30pm in the Five Moons Sculpture Garden of the Tulsa Historical Society & Museum, 2445 S. Peoria Avenue, Tulsa.**

It was a shock to Tulsa and the nation when thieves in the night took off with the beloved bronze sculpture of celebrated Oklahoma ballerina Marjorie Tallchief in the spring of 2022.

Tallchief, who died in 2021 at the age of 95, was the first Native American to be named "première danseuse étoile" in the Paris Opera Ballet, the highest rank a dancer can achieve at the Ballet. She performed for Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and French President Charles de Gaulle. She later taught at the Dallas Ballet.

The theft made national news. "People were outraged when the artwork was found in pieces," said Tulsa Historical Society Interim Executive Director, Cray Bauxmont-Flynn, a member of the Cherokee Nation. "The pieces had been sold at a scrap yard for a few hundred dollars." The culprits were later apprehended and some of the pieces recovered. *THSM has embarked on an upgrade project which includes greater security for Five Moons and the Museum as a whole. Osage Casinos has signed on as a lead sponsor for the effort.*

**WHAT:** Celebrated Osage Ballerina, Marjorie Tallchief, Bronze Statue Unveiled

**WHEN:** Sunday, October 29 at 1:30pm

**WHERE:** Tulsa Historical Society & Museum, 2445 S. Peoria Avenue, Tulsa

*Media parking at Main/VIP entrance off Peoria near 25<sup>th</sup> Street*

*Public parking offsite only at Cascia Hall - Shuttle bus provided*

**INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE:** Nathalie Skibine, Marjorie's granddaughter; Gary Henson, bronze artist. Cray Bauxmont-Flynn, Tulsa Historical Society. Text or call Daphne Dowdy, above, for help locating these interviews or others.

The sculpture garden, first dedicated in 2007, features the Five Moons of American Ballet: Marjorie Tallchief, her elder sister Maria Tallchief (Osage), Moscelyne Larkin (Eastern Shawnee/Peoria), Rosella Hightower (Choctaw), and Yvonne Chouteau (Shawnee).

The statues were created by two local artists, Monte England and Gary Henson. England worked on two of the pieces before his death in 2005, and Henson completed the project. *Gary Henson recrafted the bronze of Marjorie, incorporating the pieces that were recovered. He will help unveil the statue.*

The unveiling will be part of a full afternoon of celebration as THSM welcomes the Osage Nation, the US Mint and the Smithsonian American Women's Museum for "Historic Change," a celebration of Marjorie's sister, Maria Tallchief, and the release of a coin featuring Maria's image.

The Grand Opening of the full event begins at 1pm with a flag presentation and continues through 5pm featuring Osage singers and dancers, remarks from Osage Chief Standing Bear, and a coin pour.