

CHARITY SPOTLIGHT

{giving back}

SHEMER ART CENTER

Art Lives There

Ashley Ford | Assistant Publisher

THE STORY

Hidden along the base of Camelback Mountain is the first home built in one of Phoenix's best-known neighborhoods: Arcadia. In 1919, this home housed the foreman of a water company set to develop irrigation in the newly named neighborhood. Years later, in 1984, a successful real estate investor named Martha Shemer purchased the house and donated it back to the City of Phoenix with hopes of it being preserved and developed into a place where community residents could gather.

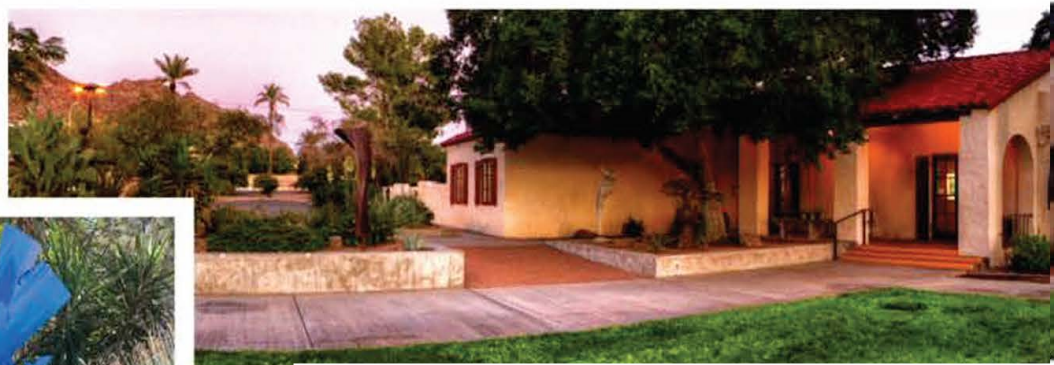
Today the home stands as a statewide arts center and one of Phoenix's "Points of Pride." Though the city owns and maintains the house and land, the Shemer Art Center is completely community-funded.

Since its creation in 1984, exhibitions and events have taken place at Shemer, and that's still what you can expect today.

"We host classes, weekend workshops, summer camps and after-school art clubs," said Shonna James, president and executive director of the Shemer Art Center. **"We** are inviting people to come to the center all the time to do a lot of different things and that is exactly what Martha Shemer would have wanted."

THE CAUSE

The Shemer Art Center offers up to seven fine-arts classes a day and weekend workshops year-round, available both to children and adults. Attendees can





Artists of all ages find their muse at Shemer Art Center, a Mission-style house used for art education.

get creative with a variety of mediums, including paint, ceramics, embroidery and silk screen. All classes are instructed by professional artists, many who are actively working and showing in the community.

• It is so important to creative thinking, developing problem-solving skills and is proven to provide success in academics and increase graduation rates," James said. "Art is everywhere, and a lot of people are really starting to realize that a lot of art is happening at the Shemer."

The Shemer Art Center prides itself on supporting and showcasing Arizona artists throughout the property. In addition to classes, workshops and

camp, the center features 10 rotating exhibitions per year. Four major fundraising events take place yearly including Fury Friends, a fine arts festival for both animal and arts lovers, and Art in the Garden, a garden-themed boutique followed by a tea party. Also located at the Shemer is a gift shop featuring unique, handmade gifts, all created by Arizona artists.

THE FUTURE

The Shemer celebrated its 100th anniversary this year and planning is already in the works for the next 100 years. "In just the last three years we've really grown the number of classes we host," James said. "Last year we offered over 200 classes, had 1,100 students and 3,500 visitors, and that number will continue to grow."



SHEMER

art center

James and her team at Shemer are also looking to grow their offerings throughout the community by partnering with local businesses, stores and boutiques for “giveback nights,” where guests can learn watercolor art and a portion of the sales will go back to charity.

“Our neighborhood has been so supportive,” James said. “There are a lot of people who visited when they were young children and now, they come back and bring their kids. We are growing as a community organization and the community is getting more and more involved and engaged with the Shemer Art Center.”



Perhaps it's time to see the art inside this neighborhood jewel.

To learn more, visit shemerartcenter.org.



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