

The Superb Denver Art Museum

by Liz Gibbons

My daughter-in-law has worked in the PR Department at the Denver Art Museum for many years. Whenever there is a new special exhibit she and my son invite me to join them to view it. She is able to get a few free tickets to give to family, so I am fortunate to be able to attend for free. Often a group of their friends also join us which adds to our enjoyment. Because the Art Museum has been a part of her life and her conversations for years it is very familiar to me. Thus, I don't think of it as a tourist attraction, although I know it is.

When I moved to Colorado from Atlanta almost two years ago I compared the Denver Art Museum to Atlanta's High Museum of Art. The High was named after the High family who donated their home on Peachtree Street to house the museum when it was founded in 1905. I lived in Atlanta for 31 years and attended some of the special exhibits at the High Museum. None of them compare to the blockbuster exhibits at the Denver Art Museum.

Of course, each museum has its own special focus and the Denver Art Museum is known for its collection of American Indian Art which now numbers 20,000 pieces. I was surprised at the extent of their collection of Asian Art. Denver has over 70,000 pieces in its permanent collection. In comparison the High Museum is smaller and its permanent collection is only 15,000 pieces. The High was one of the first museums to develop a photography collection which includes a significant collection of prints from the civil rights era.

I have been very impressed with the quality of the special exhibits at the Denver Art Museum and pieces displayed from their permanent collection. They regularly develop temporary special displays from their own collection. One recent one was about Ganesha, the Hindu deity with the elephant head. That was such a surprising and unexpected display to see at the museum.

The Denver Art Museum is outstanding, a real gem to have in our city, and a favorite place I am fortunate to visit often.