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## 20-foot `Vaquero' rides into El Paso

Ken Flynn / El Paso Times  
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A 20-foot sculpture by Luis Jimenez that depicts a Mexican cowboy was placed in front of the new Museum of Art Thursday, a bonus to help celebrate the opening of the \$8 million facility.

Called "Vaquero," the fiberglass sculpture depicts a Mexican cowboy riding a bucking stallion, its rear legs high in the air. The vaquero rears back with the horse, waving a gun wildly.

Becky Duval Reese, museum executive director, said the El Paso artist's well-known sculpture was on loan from Frank Ribelin, a private collector from Dallas. It is one of five such sculptures in existence.

"It's a great statue and one that El Pasoans will really appreciate," Duval Reese said. "We've placed it right in front of the museum entrance so it will be viewed by the largest number possible."

Jimenez, who grew up in El Paso and Mexico City, was in El Paso to supervise unloading of the statue and its assembly at the museum.

"There weren't Hopalong Cassidys and John Waynes riding off into the sunset," Jimenez said of the Old West. "The (cowboys) were from Mexico, and that's what `Vaquero' is all about."

"Vaquero" will remain in El Paso for about a year, Duval Reese said.

The museum will open Aug. 29. Other works by Jimenez include "The Bar-fly-Statue of Liberty" on permanent exhibit at the museum, and "Fiesta Dancers," also on loan from Ribelin.

"This is impressive," said David Levine of Toms River, N.J., who is touring El Paso as part of an Amtrak tour and stopped to watch as the crane unloaded the statue in front of the museum.

Jimenez is creator of the alligator fountain in San Jacinto Plaza and "End of the Trail," a defeated Indian on a horse, which usually is on exhibit at the University of Texas at El Paso library but now is touring the United States.