The Utah State University Eastern Prehistoric Museum is pleased to announce the extension of the exhibit Charlie J. Johnston: Turning Life into Art exhibit currently on display in the temporary gallery. Originally scheduled to end on October 24th, the exhibit will now remain on display until March 27th, 2021. The decision to extend this exhibit was made, in part, due to the long COVID-19 associated closure of the museum shortly after the exhibit opening on February 28th, 2020. Another factor in deciding to keep the exhibit up was due to the unfortunate passing of Charlie this summer.

On July 22nd, Charlie passed away at his home in Helper where he lived with his wife Elaine Rhode. While we at the museum grieve his passing, we have chosen, in this exhibit, to focus on the joy and exuberance with which Charlie lived his life and the way this is reflected in his artwork. Charlie filled his life with adventure and passion, making friends across cultures and generations everywhere he went. We send our regards to Elaine and his children Pat, Mary Susan, and Chuck and thank them again for sharing this incredible exhibit with us. Charlie, you will truly be missed by us as well as the community of Helper and beyond. You spent a lifetime turning your passions into art that will impact people for years to come.

This exhibition tells the story of naturalist Charlie J. Johnston, through his paintings, natural history collections and detailed sketchbooks. He served as the curator of exhibitions at the Science Museum of Minnesota, as the first national interpretive specialist for the Fish and Wildlife Services and as artist and naturalist for the Lee and Rose Warner Nature Center of Minnesota and for Oregon’s West Eugene Wetlands Partnership.

Johnston was selected as the artist in residence for the Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim in 2007. He has had solo exhibitions in Moab, Salt Lake City and galleries in Oregon, Minnesota and was featured in the Alaska Parks. Johnston splits his year between Alaska and Utah painting, journaling and exploring the west with his wife Elaine.

"I made my art an integral part of my life and my careers," Johnston said.

The Prehistoric Museum is located at 155 East Main Street, Price, Utah. The museum features fossils and artifacts from Utah. The museum is open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission rates apply.

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