

Phoenix Art Museum: A Vibrant Destination

Written by Rachel Roland

Monday, 19 December 2011 07:56 -

Rachel Roland is a mom on a mission - exploring the Valley with her two little companions in search of the best restaurants, attractions, and products for you and your children. See what she has in store for your family today!

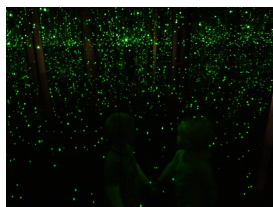


Years ago, I had a membership to the [Phoenix Art Museum](#). I loved going by myself and exploring the beautiful building filled with everything from ancient Asian art to modern pieces from this century. As my kids grew older, I wondered if they were ready to visit the museum, so we bought a membership and hoped for the best.



The Phoenix Art Museum is actually very kid-friendly, although you need to talk to your children about appropriate behavior before visiting. We discussed that we needed to be quiet, to walk, and to keep our hands to ourselves (with the exception of the PhxArtKids Gallery). The Museum also has a punch-card program, where children can earn a prize after visiting 10 times, as well as a children's scavenger hunt you can request when you pay your admission.

There are two exhibits that are 'must see' when we visit. The first is what the kids call "Mr. Blob" (actual name: "Blob," by Tony Oursler)— a kind of blob-looking screen that has a face projected on to it. The face is distorted, and it talks and says silly things. Jeremiah and Sarah were frightened of him at first, but they've grown to really like him. In fact, the day we visited, he was being moved to another part of the museum and the kids were sad.



The other exhibit we must visit (over, and over, and over) is "You Who are Getting Obliterated in the Dancing Swarm of Fireflies" by Yayoi Kusuma. We call it "Fireflies" and Jeremiah and Sarah love it. It's an installation piece – well, it's actually a room – filled with small LED lights that change colors. The floors are a highly polished black stone, and the walls are mirrors. It can be both disorienting and exhilarating to walk through. And, even though we've been through it a million times, Sarah still is afraid of that black floor and I always have to hold her when we enter the first time. When you find your way out, you can go back around to the entrance, or explore the rest of the gallery. Jeremiah and Sarah, however, always need to go through several times.



The PhxArtKids Gallery is a great spot for kids to wind down after keeping their hands to themselves throughout the Museum. There are easels, stencils, and magnets children can use to create artistic patterns. There are also books to read about art, as well as educational opportunities about the history of art in early Mexico. In addition to the children's gallery, the whole museum itself is full of 'secret' stairways and passages - we always have fun exploring all the different ways to get around throughout the museum.

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After all that exploring, you're bound to get hungry. The [Phoenix Art Museum Café](#) is a great place to stop. The menu is local and seasonal, and everything I've had is delicious. We ordered the red lentil hummus to start (the food can take a little while if you come during a busy time) and we all enjoyed it – it's inspired me to try and create my own hummus with lentils! The kids menu is pretty basic – pizza, pasta and pb&j, and I was able to order one kids meal (pizza) which they split. With the hummus, they were both full.

The [Phoenix Art Museum](#) is a great place for families to visit – and with our membership, we probably go once a month. Jeremiah and Sarah are learning to appreciate art and I hope they carry that appreciation through their youth and into their adulthood.

Phoenix Art Museum is located at: 1625 N. Central Avenue Phoenix, AZ 85004 They are closed Monday and Tuesdays, and open Wednesday: 10am-9pm, Thursday-Saturday: 10am-5pm, Sunday: 12pm-5pm.

Admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for senior citizens and students with ID, \$6 for children 6-17, and children under 6 are free!

The Phoenix Art Museum also runs many special free admission days: Every Wednesday, from 3pm-9pm, First Friday of every month, from 6pm-10pm, and Bank of America cardholders can enter free on the first full weekend of every month.



I'm Rachel - a mom, wife, and 'green' blogger at [Small Steps On Our Journey](#). If you have any suggestions for future articles or any questions on this one, please contact me at rachel@smallstepsonourjourney.com or tweet me @rachelroland!