American roots music isn’t restricted to the Southern gospel of Mahalia Jackson and the down-home country of Roy Acuff. The nationwide musical tradition also includes the sounds of Northern Ute powwows and Mormon pioneers’ cappella hymns.

That’s why a traveling Smithsonian exhibit will visit four Utah communities to expose music-lovers to the unique American story of roots music. “New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music,” curated by Grammy Museum director Robert Santelli, opens Saturday at the Park City Museum and will be shown through May 25, before it travels to Cedar City, Moab and West Jordan.

“This program brings [Smithsonian works of art] to small communities who otherwise wouldn’t be able to see it,” said Megan Rose, field manager of museum and history programs for Utah Humanities Council, which combined with the Smithsonian Institution to bring the exhibit to Utah as part of a Museum of Main Street collaboration.

Besides the museum exhibition, each community will sponsor programs of the Utah Museum of Western History that reflect the historical programs of the Utah arts and culture and American history.

American roots

Exhibit curator and Grammy Museum director Robert Santelli will speak about roots music and the process of creating a traveling Smithsonian exhibition.

When: April 10 at 3:30 p.m.

Where: Egyptian Theatre, 528 Main St., Park City

Tickets: Free

Exhibition dates

Where: Paris Park City Museum, 528 Main St., Park City; 435-649-3476
When: July 26–Sept. 10

Where: Cedar City Daughters of Utah Pioneer Museum, 391 N. Main; Cedar City; 435-586-2046
When: Sept. 18-Nov. 2

Where: Moab, 118 E. Center St., Moab; 435-259-7985
When: Nov. 17–Jan. 21

Where: West Jordan Historical Society, 205 W. 7800 S. West Jordan; 801-586-0938

Information: www.utahhumanities.org/newharmonies.htm

Mahalia Jackson performs in an undated photo provided by the Smithsonian.

American roots

In an undated photo provided by the Smithsonian.