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Artists and Arts Contributors Named for 2016 Annual Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts

New Mexico's Highest Artistic Honors Celebrate Lifetime Achievement in the Arts

Santa Fe – Governor Susana Martinez and the New Mexico Arts Commission today announced the eight artists and major contributors to the arts who will be recipients of the 2016 Annual Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts.

“Our arts and culture make New Mexico unique, and are very important economic and tourism drivers in our state,” said Governor Martinez. “These artists and arts supporters represent the very best New Mexico has to offer. Through the Governor's Arts Awards, we recognize the diverse and amazing talents of these 2016 recipients, and celebrate their dedication and contributions that ensure our arts and culture are accessible to all, and that our creative industries continue to thrive.”

The 2016 Governor's Arts Awards ceremonies will be held on Friday, September 23, at 5:15 pm at the St. Francis Auditorium in the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe. The ceremony is preceded by an afternoon reception and exhibition opening, 3:30 – 4:30 pm, in the Governor's Gallery at the State Capitol. Both the awards ceremony and gallery reception are free and open to the public.

This year marks the 43rd annual celebration of the Governor's Arts Awards, which was established in 1974 to celebrate the extensive role that artists and their work have in New Mexico. A diverse and noteworthy list of painters, weavers, sculptors, dancers, musicians, storytellers, poets, actors, playwrights, and potters have been honored by the Governor's Arts Awards, New Mexico's most prestigious arts awards. Past awardees include: Georgia O'Keeffe, Robert Redford, George R.R. Martin, Maria Martinez, Tony Abeyta, Glenna Goodacre, Tony Hillerman, N. Scott Momaday, Tammy Garcia, and Catherine Oppenheimer.

Nominations are accepted from arts groups and interested New Mexicans. All nominations are reviewed by a committee of the New Mexico Arts Commission, which sends its recommendations to the full commission and to the Governor.

Governor Martinez and the New Mexico Arts Commission announce that the awardees for this year's Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts are:

- 1. David Bradley of Santa Fe, Artist, Painter/Mixed Media:** David Bradley is one of the nation's most respected and well-known Native American artists whose work has inspired at least three generations of artists. “David's paintings address many contemporary issues that Native people are confronted with such as stereotypes and cultural appropriation,” said nominator Della Warrior, director of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture (MIAC) in Santa Fe. “His style is unique and he is multi-talented. ...His work exemplifies activism through art.” Bradley himself has said, “To be an artist is to seek Truth. Art is about freedom, an artist should follow their heart.” Born in California, Bradley spent most of his childhood in Minneapolis and on the White Earth Ojibwe Reservation. As a member of the Peace Corps, he lived for two years in Guatemala with Mayan Indians and learned a new life outlook – an experience with essentials – that allowed him to better understand his heritage and changed him forever. Bradley has lived in New Mexico for nearly 40 years since moving to Santa Fe to study art at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA). He was awarded an honorary doctorate at IAIA's spring commencement ceremonies in May. “His Native art activism has impacted federal and state policies that protect Native artists' authentic work,” said Dr. Robert Martin, IAIA President, who noted that Bradley was

instrumental in the establishment of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990. Bradley has received numerous awards and fellowships, and is the only artist to win the top awards in both the Fine Art categories of painting and sculpture at the Santa Fe Indian Market. “Bradley’s Postmodern style mixes various moments from art history with today’s cultural concerns and labels, all with a clever sense of humor,” said Peter Stoessel, director of Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe. MIAC recognized Bradley’s excellence in artistic achievement with a solo retrospective exhibit in 2015. “The aura of his work is profound and a gift to the field of art,” Warrior said.

2. **Nicholas Herrera of El Rito, Artist, Painting/Sculpture/Mixed Media:** Nicholas Herrera is one of the most important folk artists in the United States, who has pioneered a folk art form with his more personal interpretations of traditional *bultos* and *retablos*, using wood and recycled metal, including salvaged automobile parts. “These artworks are edgy, comic, satirical and powerful,” said nominator Jack Parsons, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2006. “He is a treasure for our community.” A drunk-driving accident and a near-death experience forced Herrera to choose between life and death. “He chose a life of art,” said Carmella Padilla, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2009 and Luis Tapia, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 1996, in a joint statement. Herrera is an old soul with a modern outlook, Padilla and Tapia said. “Even with widespread exposure and acclaim, he has stayed true to his artistic history and his home state, while staying true to himself.” Herrera himself has said: “Sometimes, I feel like I should have been born in the 1800s. I’ve got this feeling of the old days in me, like I’m feeling my ancestors, like I want to live like they did.” Tey Marianna Nunn, director and chief curator at the National Hispanic Cultural Center’s Art Museum and Visual Arts Program, called Herrera “a trailblazing artist whose works are informed by the Traditional Colonial Santero practice of New Mexico, yet he has developed a style all his own – a style that while rooted in the past, directly addresses contemporary cultural issues.” Herrera has been featured on NPR’s Weekend Edition, and has received numerous awards, including the 2006 Award of Distinction from the Folk Art Society of America. His art is in the collection of more than 30 museums including the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC, the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City, and the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe.
3. **Elodie Holmes of Santa Fe, Artist, Glass:** Elodie Holmes is an internationally acclaimed artist of the contemporary glass movement who has spent more than 35 years honing her craft. Born in 1959 into a family of artists in Washington, D.C., Holmes began studying ceramics at a young age and later at Montgomery College in Maryland. She went on to study at the California College of the Arts where she met Marvin Lipofsky, one of the founders of the studio glass art movement, who would become her teacher, mentor and life-long friend. As her initial passion for ceramics gave way to hot glass, Holmes moved to New Mexico in 1981 to co-manage a glass shop and to develop her body of work. Three years later, she became a teaching assistant to Lipofsky and Fritz Dreisbach at the Pilchuck Glass Studio in Seattle. She moved back to New Mexico and started Liquid Light Glass in 1986. “Elodie is a ballerina in the dance of glass,” said Amy Summa, arts education coordinator for the Santa Fe Public Schools, whose late husband Henry was a renowned glass artist. “When so many glass blowers were suffering through the ups and downs of the economy, Elodie’s business continued to flourish.” In 2000, Holmes founded Baca Street Studios and the Baca Street Arts District. In 2004, she co-founded Prairie Dog Glass, a second instructional glass blowing studio where artists can learn, practice, and sell their work in a professional setting. “Holmes has developed a broad understanding of the technical aspects of working in glass and has parlayed this into pushing known techniques to new heights and directions,” said art consultant Jane Sauer. “She has been fearless in seeking new ways to expand her chosen media.” Holmes’ glass pieces are showcased in hundreds of collections, including the White House Permanent Collection. “Elodie is one of those rare talents who not only creates her own work but also encourages, mentors and supports other artists,” said John O’Hern of Santa Fe. Holmes’ awards include the 2015 Glass Alliance – New Mexico Reflections Award.
4. **Felix López of Espanola, Artist, Master Santero/Spanish Colonial Bultos:** Felix López, who grew up in the village of Santa Cruz, is one of the most accomplished artists of his generation, renowned as a leader and a teacher dedicated to preserving the traditions of *Santeros* and to inspiring others. “Felix has devoted his life to making sure that the Spanish Colonial Arts remain an important part of the New Mexico art community,” said nominator Jean Anaya Moya, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2014. “He is a mentor to many in his field and considered a Master Santero by his peers and collectors.” López has won numerous awards, including the Masters Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Spanish Colonial Arts Society and a visual artist fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. He took first prize at Spanish Market in both Painted Bultos and Straw Applique. “I see Felix as the quintessential New Mexican *santero*,” said Robin Farwell Gavin, curator of the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art. “His art embodies those things that he holds dear and that have

been core values for Nuevomexicanos for centuries: family, faith and tradition. Through his art and his teaching, Felix truly helps to make the world a better place.” López has incredible carving skills, said Tey Marianna Nunn, director and chief curator at the National Hispanic Cultural Center’s Art Museum and Visual Arts Program. “He makes his own pigments from natural sources and his masterful use of their color contributes greatly to the overall ethereal effect and appearance of his artworks,” Nunn said. “I consider his technique to be the pinnacle of artistic achievement.” López’s bultos and retablos are infused with spirit and energy. “Felix López’s work has movement and – it glows,” Nunn said. López said he has been richly blessed. “The meaning of the name ‘Felix’ is ‘happy,’” López said. “I have not only found happiness. I have found faith and trust in God and meaning in my work as a santero. I will continue working for as long as I am able.”

5. **Jim Vogel of Dixon, Artist, Painting:** Born in Roswell, Jim Vogel was encouraged by his parents to pursue drawing and painting as a child. He is now considered a storyteller with a paintbrush and is nationally recognized for his depictions of rural New Mexico. “He makes the almost ordinary, heroic, singular and noteworthy,” said nominator John Gray of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. “While there is a definitive realism, mostly of New Mexico, his stories transcend the ordinary.” Vogel said he paints to tell the stories of New Mexico, “the stories told to me by my Grandfather, my Mother, my friends and neighbors of the Embudo Valley, and the land itself.” Growing up, Vogel was influenced by Southwest artists such as Peter Hurd, Luis Jimenez, and Georgia O’Keeffe. He received an associate degree in advertising and graphic design from the Colorado Institute of Art in Denver, which greatly influenced his composition and color sense. “I also attribute this experience to forming my work credo: to be creative, I must create.” Vogel said. “I do not wait for the muse to strike. I have to go into the study every day and put pencil to paper, paint to canvas. If I don’t have an idea, one will come as I draw.” Artist Erin Currier said Vogel is “at the forefront of the 21st century New Mexican Avant Garde.” Currier said she is especially impressed by Vogel’s handling of light in all of its manifestations. “Jim’s awareness of his light source is constant and uncanny; the way in which this ever-present source illuminates his subjects is nothing short of pure New Mexican magic,” Currier said. Eva Encinias-Sandoval, director of the National Institute of Flamenco, said when the institute lost its headquarters and 30 years of costumes and archival resources to a fire in 2013, Vogel created a piece and donated 100 limited edition giclée prints of *La Resurrección*, raising thousands of dollars to benefit their recovery efforts. “It is not only his art that makes Jim Vogel an exceptional New Mexican, but his generosity and love of our state’s culture,” she said.

6. **Dr. Ramakrishna and Ammu Devasthali of Las Cruces, Major Contributors to the Arts:** Dr. Rama and Ammu Devasthali are passionate supporters of the arts in southern New Mexico. “Their very generous donations of both time and money have helped create a level of community engagement in the arts that is unique,” said nominator Donna Tate of Las Cruces. “In addition, they have and continue to encourage the diversity in the performing, literary and visual arts that sharing a border with Mexico offers.” The Devasthalis moved to Las Cruces in 1987 with their two children, and for more than 20 years Dr. Devasthali was the president and managing partner of Las Cruces Radiology Associates. “The business success which has accompanied professional success has enabled Ammu and me to give back to the community,” said Dr. Devasthali. “A big part of this is our support for the Arts which tend to be first in line for spending cuts when budgets are tight.” The Devasthalis are credited with raising millions of dollars for arts and culture in New Mexico through their leadership and advocacy. They created the Devasthali Family Foundation-Donor advised Fund in the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico in 2011. “All of us have been influenced by the arts at some point in our lives,” said Ammu Devasthali. “It is food for the soul and we need to feed that.” An artist herself, Ammu was a small business owner of Designs by Ammu from 2005 to 2011, and she was one of the organizing members of the Las Cruces Art Fair. “Dr. Devasthali and his wife are committed to making our community and our state beautiful through their creative endeavors,” said former state Rep. J. Paul Taylor of Mesilla, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2005. “I know of no other couple that has been so deeply involved in making our city, our university, and our state an outstanding place for arts and culture.” Ammu Devasthali chaired the fundraising committee for the New Mexico State University (NMSU) Center for the Arts and the couple has taken the lead in raising private funds to rebuild Williams Hall which houses NMSU’s Art Department. The Devasthalis have an unparalleled commitment to arts education, said Jennifer Cervantes, executive director of the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico. “Through Rama and Ammu’s exemplary engagement with and support of arts programs, the communities of New Mexico are stronger and lives have been transformed,” Cervantes said. “They have made New Mexico a better place to live through their vision, compassion, and generosity.”

7. **Michael Hurd of San Patricio, Major Contributor to the Arts:** An accomplished painter in his own right, Michael Hurd is being recognized not only for his own impressive artistic achievements but for his vitally important work to preserve and enhance his family’s legacy and historic property in New Mexico. The youngest son of Peter Hurd and Henriette Wyeth Hurd, Hurd was born in Roswell and raised on the family’s Sentinel Ranch in the Hondo Valley. Encouraged by his father to explore pursuits other than art, Hurd studied business at Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts, and graduated from Stanford University with a degree in political science. He spent a year performing with the New Kingston Trio and then did a stint in Chicago selling real estate. Realizing he was “definitely not a city boy,” Hurd returned to his beloved Sentinel Ranch in the 1970s. Hurd oversees the operations of the Sentinel Ranch and the Hurd-La Rinconada Gallery, which he designed and built. “The scenes immortalized through Michael’s work reflect the inner soul of him,” said nominator Rep. Candy Spence Ezzell of Roswell. “He is a true Renaissance Man whose importance to New Mexico encourages viewers to be inspired by and to drink in the beauty and colors of his timeless works of art.” Hurd works from reality, as did all the Wyeth and Hurd painters. “The inspiration of his father’s landscape scenes and the still life compositions of his mother are evident in his work,” Ezzell said. “He doesn’t refute his heritage or the effect it has had on his work, but Michael’s style is distinctly his own.” Hurd was very involved in the massive undertaking to relocate his father’s mural, “The Future Belongs to Those Who Prepare for It,” from Houston to the Artesia Public Library, where it was dedicated in 2015. “Michael’s art is rooted in the tradition of family – a family that has produced four generations of world famous artists,” said Elizabeth Stephens of the Artesia Arts and Cultural District. “Michael is devoted to keeping alive the art of that family. At the same time, he paints his own vision, seeing and capturing the world that he loves through his own eyes.” Gallery owner Nedra Metteucci said Hurd is “tireless and broad thinking in his pursuit of excellence for his own painting but also in his efforts to sustain the rich artistic heritage that his family has contributed to for generations. . . . His impeccable standards apply not only to his colorful array of paintings that capture the heart of New Mexico, but also to the arts community statewide, and he is sensitive to our museums, with a continual awareness for cultural preservation.”
8. **New Mexico Magazine of Santa Fe, Major Contributor to the Arts:** Founded in 1923 as the *New Mexico Highway Journal*, *New Mexico Magazine* is the oldest state magazine in the country. Today, as an arm of the New Mexico Tourism Department, *New Mexico Magazine* is a key promoter of the state’s artistic assets and attractions, helping to drive tourism and build the New Mexico economy. *New Mexico Magazine* currently boasts an international circulation of 92,000, a total monthly readership of 240,000, and a combined print and digital audience of over 300,000. “No doubt, *New Mexico Magazine’s* success is partly due to its in-depth coverage of the arts, one of the state’s major attractions for residents and visitors alike,” said nominator Carmella Padilla, who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2009 for literary arts and is a frequent contributor to the magazine, which she credits with helping to launch her professional writing career. “Above all, I value having a voice in a publication devoted to promoting the state, and the places and people, I most love.” The archive of *New Mexico Magazine* includes a who’s who of notable New Mexican writers, including Mabel Dodge Lujan, D.H. Lawrence, Rudolfo Anaya, Tony Hillerman and countless others. Renowned photographers such as Douglas Kent Hall and Jack Parsons have contributed to the magazine. “Like the artistry it promotes, *New Mexico Magazine* is itself a dedicated work of art, the creation of countless staff members, past and present who, month after month, decade after decade, have ensured its delivery,” Padilla said, calling the publication “one of our state’s most esteemed artistic treasures.” Coverage by *New Mexico Magazine* of its many festivals, artists and galleries has helped Silver City become known nationally as “one of the Best Small Arts Towns in America,” said Faye McCalmont, the former longtime executive director of the Mimbres Region Arts Council, which received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2013. “It would be fascinating to discover how many others like myself were first drawn to the Land of Enchantment – and learned to appreciate its arts and culture – through *New Mexico Magazine*.” McCalmont said she moved to New Mexico some 24 years ago “in part because of the beautiful photos and articles in *New Mexico Magazine* that painted a compelling picture of life in the Southwest.” Artist Michael Hurd said he remembers as a young boy seeing publicity about his parents, artists Peter Hurd and Henrietta Wyeth, in *New Mexico Magazine*, and in *LIFE* and other notable magazines. “(*LIFE* has) faded away, but *New Mexico Magazine* remains a strong and vivid source for the great stories within our state,” Hurd said.

This year’s Governor’s Arts Awards Selection Committee was chaired by New Mexico Arts Commissioner John Rohovec of Silver City, and included Arts Commission Chair Sherry Davis of Santa Fe; Arts Commissioners Charmay Allred of Santa Fe; JoAnn Balzer of Santa Fe; Glenn Cutter of Mesilla; as well as Michelle Laflamme-Childs, manager of the state

public art program for New Mexico Arts. Loie Fecteau, New Mexico Arts Executive Director, served on the committee in a nonvoting capacity.

New Mexico Arts is a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs and partners with the New Mexico Museum of Art in presenting the annual Governor's Arts Awards events. The New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs is New Mexico's cultural steward charged with preserving and showcasing the state's cultural riches. With its eight museums, eight historic sites, arts, archaeology, historic preservation and library programs, the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs is one of the largest and most diverse state cultural agencies in the nation. Together, the facilities, programs, and services of the Department support a \$5.6 billion cultural industry in New Mexico.

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