

**Palace of the Governors
New Mexico History Museum
News**

***Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción*
Large collection of *bultos*, *retablos*, and *crucifijos* features
works by *santeros* from late 1700s to 1900**

Santa Fe, NM (June 19, 2008)—*Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción* contains *bultos*, *retablos*, and *crucifijos*, dating from the late 1700s to 1900. They demonstrate how European stylistic traditions and iconography were combined with new palettes, different styles, and distinctive regional decorative designs that transformed New Mexican *santo* making into a unique hybrid. Highlighting the exhibit will be esoteric pieces such as the *Crucifixion in a Large Nicho* by the Laguna Santero and *La Santísima Trinidad*, a wood *retablo* with an applied paper painting of the Holy Trinity. *Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción* exhibition opened at the Palace of the Governors/New Mexico History Museum on July 20, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. and will be a long-term exhibition.

Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción illustrates the distinctive tradition of *santo* making in New Mexico introduced by settlers from Mexico. Finding themselves living in isolated and remote villages in Northern New Spain, far removed from their homeland, their spiritual needs changed. The local *santero* responded, evolving the art form from the Spanish baroque imagery popular in New Spain, principally, Mexico City into their own innovative styles.

The pieces in *Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción* show the diverse artistic responses that occurred as *santeros* answered the demand from their respective communities to bring devotional images into their churches, homes, and lives. The *bultos*, *retablos*, and *crucifijos* presented reveal a visual documentation of New Mexico's cultural heritage.

Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción, once part of the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Frank, was recently purchased by the New Mexican legislature for the Palace of the Governors, New Mexico History Museum in order to preserve New Mexico's cultural heritage. It is one of the defining traditional art forms of the region and a source of pride and identity for New Mexican Hispanics.

“The recent acquisition of the Larry Frank Collection of santos, retablos and tinwork greatly enriches the existing collection of the New Mexico History Museum,” said Cultural Affairs Secretary Stuart Ashman. “The Tesoros exhibition at the Palace will showcase this wonderful artwork while offering museum visitors the opportunity to better understand and appreciate New Mexico's cultural legacy.”

Dr. Frances Levine, Director of the Palace of the Governors, New Mexico History Museum says; “The Frank Collection represents the works of masters of the New Mexico *santero* tradition. Our commitment is to make this work accessible to the public through exhibitions, public programs, and on-line educational resources.”

Josef Diaz, Curator of Southwest and Mexican Colonial Collections, the Palace of the Governors, New Mexico History Museum says; “Visitors will find *Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción* a rare view of the cultural heritage and a visually dramatic documentation of New Mexico’s cultural history. The Palace of the Governors is privileged to offer the public this opportunity to see this outstanding collection of devotional art.”

The reception for *Treasures of Devotion/Tesoros de Devoción* was Sunday, July 20, 2008 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. hosted by the Women’s Board of the Museum of New Mexico.

Activities are planned for the opening. Entertainment will be provided by Los Trinos with Chuy Martinez and Otis Ruiz from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.; a retablo making demonstration by santero Gabriel Vigil from 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.; and, a bulto making demonstration by santero Jerome Lujan from 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Media Contacts

Josef Diaz, Curator of Southwest and Mexican Colonial Collections
505-476-5082
josef.diaz@state.nm.us

Steve Cantrell, PR Manager
505-476-1144
505-310-3539 – cell
steve.cantrell@state.nm.us

###

The Palace of the Governors, built from 1609 to 1610, is the state history museum for New Mexico and is housed in the oldest continuously occupied public building in the United States. The museum’s collection of more than 17,000 historical objects documents the Spanish Colonial, Mexican, American Territorial, and recent eras in New Mexico history. Items date from the time of the earliest Spanish explorations in the 16th century and chronicle 223 years of Spanish administrative control, 25 years as part of Mexico, 66 years as a territory of the United States, and from statehood in 1912 to the present. The Palace also administers the Fray Angélico Chávez History Library and Photo Archives, The Palace Print Shop & Bindery, and the Portal Program.

The Palace of the Governors is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Information for the Public: The Palace of the Governors is located on the Plaza in Santa Fe at 105 West Palace Avenue. Call 505-476-5100 for more information, or visit www.palaceofthegovernors.org

Summer Hours Memorial Day through Labor Day:

Monday through Sunday, 10:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. Open Free on Fridays, 5:00— 8:00 P.M., with the exception of major exhibition openings.

Admission Prices: School groups free. Children 16 and under free. New Mexico residents with ID free on Sundays. New Mexico resident Senior Citizens (age 60+) with ID free Wednesdays. Museum Foundation members free. Students with ID \$1 discount. Single visit to one museum: \$8.00 for non-state residents; \$6.00 for New Mexico residents. Four-day pass to five museums including state-run museums in Santa Fe plus The Museum of Spanish Colonial Art \$18.00. One-day pass for two museums (Museum of International Folk Art and Museum of Indian Arts and Culture OR New Mexico Museum of Art and Palace of the Governors) \$12.00. Group rate for ten or more people: single visit \$6.00, four-day pass \$16.00.