For Immediate Release:

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Immersive Full Dome Experience at Museum Hill Featuring Ai Weiwei and Bert Benally’s Pull of the Moon

Santa Fe, NM, July 17, 2014 – An exceptional interactive full dome event for Pull of the Moon occurs this Friday and Saturday on Museum Hill in Santa Fe. TIME-Pull of the Moon is an unprecedented collaboration between acclaimed Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei and Navajo artist Bert Benally that resulted in the creation of a temporary, site-specific art installation on June 28, 2014 in a remote part of Coyote Canyon on the Navajo Nation. New Mexico Arts is the only state arts agency that owns this type of exquisite mobile geodesic multi-media dome. It allows the greater public to step inside the dome and be transported to Coyote Canyon through 3D film magic and feel the pull of the moon.

Pull of the Moon is part of Navajo TIME (Temporary Installations Made for the Environment), a unique partnership between New Mexico Arts and the Navajo Nation Museum. The installation features earth-based drawings using sand. Bert Benally said of Pull of the Moon, “The concept is based on Navajo aesthetics, the idea that for the Navajo, art is more about the process rather than the finished product.”

An exciting immersive full dome experience featuring 3D digital footage captured by xRez Studios of the Pull of the Moon installation is not to be missed at Museum Hill on Friday, July 18 from 5:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday, July 19 from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. New Mexico Arts intends to tour this state-of-the-art dome regionally and nationally.

“New Mexico Arts is at the forefront of redefining public art,” said Chuck Zimmer, Deputy Director and Public Art Manager of New Mexico Arts. “With these large scale temporary projects and our dome’s ability to virtually recreate the installations anywhere we are changing the landscape of public art.”

A documentary film entitled Bert and Weiwei:TIME 2014 by Daniel Hyde and Blackhorse Lowe highlighting the collaboration between Ai Weiwei and Bert Benally at Coyote Canyon opened at MoCNA on July 16 and runs through October 16, Wednesdays through Fridays. Also, an interactive 3D digital landscape film by xRez Studios can be viewed in either 2D or 3D formats at MoCNA from July 16-October 16.

Pull of the Moon signifies the transformative power of art through international collaboration and is a reminder of the immense challenges faced by many cultures and the capacity for growth and healing from very impactful events. “Cultural landscape is very important to this project. That is why Coyote Canyon was chosen with its rich history and traditions. When it is travels to different locations it will carry the power of the initial place with it. One of the objectives of this project is to connect art with cultural landscape,” said Navajo Nation Museum Director Manuelito Wheeler.

Despite being unable to travel outside of China, Ai Weiwei’s boundless spirit and creativity still touches many around the globe. Pottery shards from past projects were ground down to a fine powder and used in the installation at Coyote Canyon.

“The shards were intentionally placed there as evidence of the powder’s origin,” explained Ai Weiwei, “I think this is an interesting idea because we can only see ourselves, our past, through material evidence such as these shards. It
is important to pass on to future generations where we are from and to give a glimpse of the mind and soul of the people living in that time."

“I am very excited about this unparalleled partnership between the State of New Mexico, Navajo Nation and Ai Weiwei that we have been able to create,” Zimmer said. “From the beginning our intention has been that the land itself be the starting point, a blank canvas for artists to transform through their creative process into something larger, something that can bring healing and harmony to the land and to the community. With this as our goal, I cannot think of more appropriate artists to create this installation than Bert Benally and Ai Weiwei.”

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*New Mexico Arts is the state arts agency and a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. The 15-member governor-appointed New Mexico Arts Commission serves as our advisory body. Our primary function is to provide financial support for arts services and programs to non-profit organizations statewide and to administer the 1% public art program for the state of New Mexico. The mission of New Mexico Arts is to preserve, enhance and develop arts in New Mexico through partnerships, public awareness and education, and to enrich the quality of life for present and future generations.*