2018 Annual Governor’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts Artists and Major Contributors Celebrated
Awards Program New Mexico’s Highest Artistic Honor
Famed glass artist Dale Chihuly to Receive Special Leadership in the Arts Award

(Santa Fe) – Governor Susana Martinez and Department of Cultural Affairs Secretary Veronica Gonzales will recognize the recipients of the 2018 Annual Governor’s Awards for Excellence in the Arts on Friday, September 14, 2018. Famed glass artist Dale Chihuly will receive a special leadership in the arts award, in conjunction with the 2018 Governor’s Arts Awards, for his significant contributions to the arts in New Mexico and beyond.

“I am honored to pay tribute to these artists and arts supporters who have made such important contributions to our culture, our economy and our quality of life,” said Governor Martinez. “Through their extraordinary talents, creativity and community spirit, these recipients enrich the lives of all New Mexicans and bring even more acclaim to our great state.”

The 2018 Governor’s Arts Awards recipients are: Bruce Dunlap of Santa Fe, Artist, Music; Curtis Fort of Tatum, Artist, Sculpture/Bronze; Jody Naranjo of Albuquerque, Artist, Ceramics/Bronze and Glass; Jerry West of Santa Fe, Artist, Painting/Other Media; Lucy Lippard of Galisteo, Major Contributor to the Arts; Meow Wolf of Santa Fe, Major Contributor to the Arts; and Dan and Ashlyn Perry of Santa Fe, Major Contributors to the Arts.

The 2018 awardees will be celebrated during the 2018 Governor’s Arts Awards ceremony beginning at 5:15 pm on Friday, September 14, 2018 at St. Francis Auditorium in the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe. The ceremony is preceded by an afternoon reception and exhibition opening from 3:30 pm to 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 45th 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, Patrick Oliphant, 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.

Here are short bios of awardees of this year’s Governor’s Arts Awards:

Bruce Dunlap is a virtuoso on the guitar and as a composer. His uniquely complex compositions place him among America’s top jazz musicians. Dunlap, who has lived in Santa Fe for more than 34 years, was raised in a musical family. His father was a frequent conductor for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and his sister was an accomplished pianist. Dunlap took up the guitar at age 3 to show his sister what she was doing wrong. This fascination with the guitar led him to practice up to eight hours a day, something he continues today, some 56 years later. In his career, Dunlap has played and recorded with major international jazz figures including Kenny Werner, Bob James, Fred Hersch, and Herbie Mann. He has recorded numerous solo albums, which have received wide acclaim, and he has performed in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Hollywood Bowl and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Dunlap is committed to making music accessible to all. In 2000, Dunlap founded the Santa Fe Jazz & International Music Festival, which over the next five years presented hundreds of internationally renowned jazz and world music artists, who provided free workshops for thousands of Santa Fe students.

Curtis Fort has been called a “Storyteller in Bronze” for his realistic portrayals of the west, particularly cowboys and ranch life, both contemporary and historic. Fort grew up on the Dickinson Cattle Company ranch in Lea County, and has been a working cowboy most of his life. “Mr. Fort has established himself as one of the most highly regarded bronze sculpture artists in the nation,” said Frank Dubois, New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture from 1988-2003. “His depictions of cowboys, Native Americans, wildlife, livestock, and western landscapes are things of remarkable beauty and faithfully represent the history of the West.” Fort is credited with pushing the boundaries of his genre. “It is the subtleties, especially the attention to detail that is most prized in his works,” Dubois said. Fort wrote stories of his life as a cowboy for New Mexico Stockman Magazine from 2010 to 2014. He is currently consolidating those stories into an illustrated book for publication. Fort was one of the founders of the Will James Society, serving as the first president of the group, which is dedicated to preserving the art and books by Will James, as well as to promoting the values shared by working cowboys and their families.

Jody Naranjo, who comes from a long tradition of Tewa potters and artists from Santa Clara Pueblo, knew from the time she was eight years old that a life as an artist was for her. “She honors tradition through much of the process, yet she does not let that tradition keep her from freely expressing herself creatively,” said Leroy Garcia, owner of Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe. Naranjo herself said: “Tradition is always going to be evolving.” Many potters would be finished after the firing but for Naranjo that is just the beginning. About 80 percent of her work is in the intricate carving that takes place post-firing. She gets a feel for the piece at that point, treating it as a blank canvas for etching symbols, geometric designs, and the gestural animal and human forms for which she is recognized. “A lot of us are discovering ourselves in our art,” Naranjo said. “Moreover, Jody has maintained her connections with her home community,” said Dr. Robert Martin, president of the Institute of
American Indian Arts, which Naranjo attended in the late 1980s. Naranjo “embodies IAIA’s mission of art as a traditional pathway to creativity and leadership,” Martin said.

Jerry West is one of the most significant contemporary artists rooted in the landscape of rural New Mexico. Born in 1933, West grew up in the hardscrabble New Mexico countryside before World War II. “In his paintings I can hear the croak of the raven and smell the desert after a rain,” said writer William deBuys who received a Governor’s Arts Award in 2017. “I can taste the dust on the wind in the midst of drought. When I look at his work, I feel envy. I want to write with as much heart and conviction as he can paint.” The son of a WPA artist who eked out a thin living in the hard days of the Great Depression, West has maintained studios in Las Vegas, Bernal, Roswell, and at his home on the prairie near Cerrillos, close by the ranch where he grew up. “I do not think of him as a ‘Santa Fe artist,’” deBuys said. “He belongs to New Mexico all of it. And his work expresses the depth and breadth of the state, as much as any artist has managed to do.” Collector and arts patron Ray A. Graham III of Albuquerque said: “West has become a New Mexico iconic treasure for painting and interpreting New Mexico culture and landscapes.”

Lucy Lippard is a writer, activist, and sometime curator who had already established an international reputation as one of the foremost critics of contemporary art when she moved to New Mexico 25 years ago. “Lucy R. Lippard is a brilliant example of a person whose life and work demonstrate the highest values of scholarship, engagement and support for the creative sector from pre-history through to the present,” said nominator Diane R. Karp, president of the Nancy Holt-Robert Smithson Foundation and former executive director of the Santa Fe Art Institute. “She is an asset to the state of New Mexico and the world at large.” Lippard has written 24 books on contemporary art, feminism, multicultural art, cultural criticism, history, and archaeology, as well as regular columns on art and politics for the Village Voice, In These Times and Z Magazine. She is a contributing editor emeritus to Art in America and co-founder of several activist artists’ organizations. A longtime resident of Galisteo, Lippard has volunteered with the village’s planning committee, fire department, and water board and for 21 years has edited the monthly community newsletter El Puente de Galisteo.

Meow Wolf is a Santa Fe-based arts and entertainment collective that creates immersive, interactive art experiences to transport people of all ages, backgrounds and tastes into fantastic realms of story and exploration. Meow Wolf was started 10 years ago by a group of young artists who were seeking venues to create, display and perform their art. The art collective now operates a multimillion dollar, multi-faceted enterprise that employs more than 300 people. In the past two years, Meow Wolf has donated about $500,000 in grants, sponsorships, reduced admissions and free tickets. The Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce named Meow Wolf Small Business of the Year in June 2016. In addition to attracting visitors from all over, Meow Wolf “has breathed new and exciting creativity into Santa Fe’s world-renowned art scene, said Tim Harman, president of the Santa Fe Gallery Association. Meow Wolf demonstrates that “young artists with a kernel of an idea can create something entirely new that is sustainable, economically successful and boundary-blurring,” Harman said. Meow Wolf’s presence in a re-purposed bowling alley in midtown Santa Fe has positively impacted the entire area, helping initiate growth in housing, entertainment, restaurants and nightlife.

Dan and Ashlyn Perry’s community involvement is marked by their joyfulness in contributing to the betterment of the lives of their fellow New Mexicans. Ashlyn serves as an arts commissioner for the City of Santa Fe and together they have become cornerstones of The Santa Fe Opera. Their willingness to embrace a challenge led the Perrys to accept the position of co-chairs for the New
Mexico Museum of Art Centennial Campaign, a $12.5 million endeavor of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation, on which Dan Perry currently serves as vice president. The Perrys have been generous to the state museums in Santa Fe: the Museum of Art, the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, the History Museum/Palace of the Governors, and the Museum of International Folk Art. Their charitable foundation supports children’s charities, the arts, and conservation efforts. They have fortified many educational, artistic, and child welfare organizations in New Mexico, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern New Mexico, the Institute of American Indian Arts, and SITE Santa Fe. The philanthropic and artistic landscape of New Mexico changed for the better with the arrival of Dan and Ashlyn Perry, who moved here permanently in 2011 after being longtime visitors.

Leadership in the Arts -- Dale Chihuly’s Impact on New Mexico: Dale Chihuly’s legacy in New Mexico began in 1974 when Lloyd Kiva New, a founder of the Institute of American Indian Arts, asked him to establish a glass program at the school. The lives Chihuly impacted teaching at IAIA were numerous, and today many of their names are also well-known. Chihuly returned to IAIA in 2013 for a public lecture and has continued to be a generous supporter of IAIA’s annual scholarship dinner and auction. The landscape and culture in New Mexico gave life to a deep creative reciprocity with the artist. In 1974, he created *Santa Fe Desert Furnace*, an experiment with molten glass which broadened his thinking about installation. Fascination with the patterning of Native American blankets was the inspiration for Chihuly’s *Navajo Blanket Cylinders*. In the village of Alto, north of Ruidoso, the Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts houses several glass installations commissioned from the artist to complement Antoine Predock’s architecture. Chihuly is known for revolutionizing the Studio Glass movement over his 50 year career and is renowned for his ambitious architectural installations around the world, in historic cities, museums and gardens. Chihuly’s work is included in more than 200 museum collections worldwide including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Corning Museum of Glass. The last recipient of a leadership in the arts award in New Mexico was Robert Redford in 2010.

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 Las Cruces; and Terri Salazar of Los Ranchos, as well as Michelle Laflamme-Childs, director of the Art in Public Places Program (AIPP) at New Mexico Arts. New Mexico Arts Executive Director Loie Fecteau 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 and the Museum of New Mexico Foundation 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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