FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2013

Contact:
Michelle Laflamme-Childs, Public Art Project Coordinator
505-827-6490, 800-879-4278 (statewide)
michelle.laflamme-c@state.nm.us

Navajo TIME 2013: Chaco Canyon
September 20

Interactive Sonic Demonstration
Raven Chacon and Robert Henke
Chaco Canyon Amphitheatre
3:00 p.m.

Santa Fe, NM – New Mexico Arts, a Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, Navajo Nation Museum, and the International Land-Sensitive Art Foundation (iLSAF) are pleased to announce the first sound installation at the ancient amphitheater at Chaco Canyon in modern times—an interactive sonic demonstration with artists Raven Chacon representing Navajo Nation, and Robert Henke from Germany and funded by New Mexico Arts' Art in Public Places Program.

Using the natural and Anasazi-made land features of Chaco Canyon, Navajo composer Raven Chacon and German sound artist Robert Henke present an evening of sounds, demonstrating the phenomena of the ancient Chaco Amphitheatre.

In following the work of archaeo-acoustician Richard Loose, Henke and Chacon will present an outdoor soundtrack which uses the ancient technology created by the Anasazi, a natural curve which acts as a concave amplifier formed in the wall between the Pueblo Bonito and Chetro Ketl sites. Called Tse’Biinaholts’Yałti (Curved Rock That Speaks) by the Navajo, the Amphitheatre consists of this semicircular arc and uses the Casa Rinconada mound, located opposite the canyon wall, to aid in reflection and resonance.

The soundtrack will include original solo compositions by Henke and Chacon, as well as a collaborative piece to be performed live that will use the canyon as a land-instrument in a manner similar to that which might have been employed by Anasazi musicians and orators.

Robert Henke’s Canyon Dust is composed out of millions of very small grains of sound, each slightly different, forming a slowly changing sonic landscape, like the sun and the dust in the air painting the sky in ever-changing subtle colors. The piece plays and interacts with the canyon, using its shape and dimensions to enhance and subtly alter the sounds depending on the position of the listener, shifting the experience of that vast space, unheard before and yet in concert with it, rather than overpowering its inherent beauty. The sound becomes
part of the canyon, as it has been there forever and as if it would never stop. The creation of the sound will happen at the very moment the listener experiences it, allowing the artist to adapt the pace and movement to that specific and unique event in time, leaving only the now with no references to the past and the future.

**Navajo TIME 2013: Chaco Canyon** serves as a sneak preview of the newest biennial in the world—**TIME: Navajo Nation**, officially opening in June 2014. This unique biennial will feature temporary installations created on the mythic land of the American Southwest, exploring a new relational and socially engaged public art through collaborations with established artists and members of the Navajo Nation.

**About Raven Chacon:**
Raven Chacon (born Fort Defiance, Navajo Nation, Arizona, USA) is a composer of chamber music, a performer of experimental noise music, and an installation artist. He performs regularly as a solo artist as well as with numerous ensembles in the Southwest. He is also a member of the American Indian art collective *Postcommodity*. Chacon’s work explores sounds of acoustic handmade instruments overdriven through electric systems and the direct and indirect audio feedback responses from their interactions. He was a student of many notable teachers, including James Tenney, Wadada Leo Smith, Morton Subotnick, and Michael Pisaro. Recent and ongoing collaborations are projects with Bob Bellerue (Kilt), William Fowler Collins (Mesa Ritual), John Dieterich (Summer Assassins), Robert Henke, Thollem McDonas, and the ETHEL quartet (Native American Composers Apprenticeship Project).

Chacon has presented his work in different contexts at Vancouver Art Gallery, ABC No Rio, REDCAT, Biennale of Sydney, Canyon DeChelly, Adelaide Festival, Ende Tymes Festival, and The Kennedy Center. He lives and works in Albuquerque, NM.

**About Robert Henke:**
Robert Henke, born in Munich, Germany, builds and operates machines to produce art. Henke explores new territories between musical composition, performance and installation. He admires the beauty in engineering, and develops his own instruments and algorithms as an integral part of the artistic process. Henke’s focus is the connections between spaces, structures, timbres and shapes. His materials are computer generated sound, field recordings, video, photography and light; transformed, re-arranged and modulated by controlled randomness, mathematical rules or real time interaction. The resulting works include music played in clubs, surround sound concerts, compositions in the tradition of academic computer music, video and laser installations, site-specific sound art, and publicly available software.

Henke is one of the main creators of the music software ‘Ableton Live’, which since its invention in 1999 became the standard tool for electronic music production and completely redefined the performance practice of electronic music. He writes and lectures about sound and the creative use of computers, and has held teaching positions at the Berlin University of the Arts and the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics at Stanford University.

Henke’s installations, performances and concerts have been presented at Tate Modern London, the Centre Pompidou Paris, Le Lieu Unique Nantes, PS-1 New York, MUDAM Luxembourg, MAK Vienna, and at countless festivals.

**About TIME (Temporary Installations Made for the Environment):**
Each year, New Mexico Arts partners with a local community to commission up to ten temporary, visually engaging, and conceptually rich environmental artworks to be displayed for a short term exhibition in that community. The opening of the exhibit is often tied to another important community event. The artworks relate to a designated theme, and New Mexico Arts challenges artists to create environmental pieces that inspire, question, engage visitors and members of the host community. New Mexico Arts is interested in interactive art that encourages an audience response and transforms participants into active contributors to
the creative process. The artworks are displayed for the length of the exhibit, and at the end of the exhibition they are disassembled and removed, leaving no trace of ever having existed.

TIME was inspired by the emerging public art trend to engage artists interested in creating more spontaneous and immediate artworks with short life-spans. New Mexico Arts hopes that this kind of project will engage both communities and artists in the public art process.

###

**About New Mexico Arts’ Art in Public Places Program:**
The Art in Public Places (AIPP) program enriches New Mexico’s public spaces through innovative and diverse public art.

Since its inception in 1986, the program has placed more than 3,000 works of art in all of New Mexico’s 33 counties. Our goal is to reflect the diversity of the arts in New Mexico, the Southwest, and the nation while building a dynamic public art collection for the State of New Mexico.

**About New Mexico Arts:**
New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the state arts agency. New Mexico Arts administers the state’s One Percent for Public Art program, awards grants to nonprofit organizations for arts and cultural programs in their communities across the state, and provides technical assistance and educational opportunities for organizations, artists, and arts educators throughout New Mexico.