

Media Contact:

Casey Blake

480-644-6620

casey.blake@mesaartscenter.com**For immediate release:**

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**spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity
Friday, Mar. 17 - Saturday, Mar. 18, 2017**

Mesa, AZ – spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity today announced its lineup of immersive arts experiences for the 2017 event. The free festival will be presented by and at Mesa Arts Center over two days, Friday, March 17 and Saturday, March 18, noon-10 p.m., and offers interactive and collaborative arts experiences for people of all ages. spark! will celebrate the imaginative spark in all of us, by showcasing Arizona artists and performers and inviting visitors to explore and enjoy live music, performances, hands-on experiences, live art-making, installations, demonstrations, a variety of foods, beer & cocktail area and more.

FESTIVAL FEATURES**The Narrative Nest**

By Cyndi Coon

Visitors will be invited to explore a treetop space installed in the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum's Courtyard and explore storytelling, turned upside down, in The Narrative Nest. Outside the large scale nests, participants are invited to share their stories written on leaves or drawn on pigeon grams. Collaborating artists include Cyndi Coon (curator), Brett Eichmann (3-D Artist), Sarah Spencer (2-D Artist), Natalie Andrews (Lead Actor), Miguel Cardona (Graffiti Artist) and Nick Rascona (Graffiti Artist).

We are all Musical

By Evan Tobias

Visitors will be invited to build and experiment with electric instruments, perform in a drum circle, create music with contemporary apps and controllers, sing and move in a musical garden for young children and families, interact musically with the MAC campus itself, and (in the evening) make Hip Hop. Collaborators include Samuel Pena, Michael Ferraro, Melita Belgrave, Dean Bacalzo, Arizona State University Music Education and Therapy Division, The Consortium for Innovation and Transformation in Music Education (CITME), AZBeatLab, AZ Rhythm Connection, Arizona Society for General Music, Oh My Ears and Shining Soul.

#WeAreAllMusical <http://evantobias.net/weareallmusical-spark-2017/>, <http://arcg.is/2l9eJbv>

Homage to Yayoi Kusama

By Kyllan Maney

Mesa Arts Center's campus will be transformed with Kusama-style "camouflage," created by Kyllan Maney. The camouflage pattern designed by Maney has been inspired by a combination of southwestern cactus cross-sections and colorful Arizona sunsets. Many features of Mesa Arts Center campus will be activated by this pattern, including 20-foot palm trees, a large stepped platform area and will also feature large hanging orbs. There will be several areas to interact with the art, a camera camouflage zone, wear a patterned shirt that matches the installation. Along with this, add to the installation by applying fuzzy colorful pom poms to the trees and create patterned orbs that can be added to the installation. Artists and Collaborators: Kyllan Maney and patterned shirts designed by Martha Pena.

Community Clay Collage

By Jesse Armstrong and the Mesa Arts Center Ceramics Studio

spark! attendees can learn ceramic techniques from MAC's ceramic teaching artists, and will be invited to make items such as flowers, prickly pear cactus pads, expressive faces and favorite dogs. Work created by both artists and participants will be composed onto a large sculpture which will evolve and grow throughout the two-day event. Guest artists include Jesse Armstrong, Larron Lerdall, Sandy Blain, Jenneva Kayser, Diane Watkins, Darshana Patel, Rob Kolhouse and more.

Dress is Structure

By Polly O'Dette and the Mesa Arts Center Jewelry and Metals Studios

Statuesque metal dress forms created by Mesa Arts Center jewelry and metals studios will stand along MAC's main thoroughfare, inviting festival attendees to step inside the pieces, take pictures with them and continue to contribute to them over the course of the two-day event.

Pipe Organ Cactus

By Michael Krzyzaniak

Pipe Organ Cactus is an interactive musical sculpture where the arms of the cactus sculpture are actual, working organ pipes that play music autonomously. The pipes also have sensors embedded within them so that the music played by the sculpture responds to the number and location of people in its vicinity.

The Bucket List Project

By Creative Catalysts

This installation, shaped by and for the community, will invite attendees to share their bucket list wishes for Mesa and beyond. Visitors will adorn colorfully painted galvanized steel buckets with their ambitions and dreams, and then the buckets will be hung from the Pergola on the north end of MAC's campus. Lead artists include Chris Russell, Gretchen Bickert and Jennifer Gastelum.

Plein Air at Mesa Arts Center

Lead artist: Agustin Vargas

Artists will live-paint the activities, momentum and spirit of the spark! event on panels during the two days of the festival. The festival attendees are also welcome to contribute and add their own touch of creativity to the piece. Collaborating artists include Chia Ortegon, Ludmila Demich and Ewa Kobacka-Bugala.

[nueBOX] Performance Environment

[nueBOX] will showcase artists in the fields of composition, dance, animation, performance art, and sculpture, through interactive, collaborative, and experimental art works.

www.nuebox.org/spark

Roda-Viva

Jenny Gerena (choreographer), Chazmier Tyler (musician) and Rossitza Todorova (visual artist) were commissioned by [nueBOX] to create a new collaborative work that explores metaphors of transformation by unifying form, dance and sound.

www.nuebox.org/roda-viva

This is me, trying to remain vertical

By Julie Akerly & Matthew Mosher

This interactive audiovisual installation draws awareness to the natural reflexes that occur in the body while standing. www.jamovement.com/vertical

Duality: neither (Here) nor >>>There

By Anthony Obr & Juan "Coel" Rodriguez

This project explores intentionality as it relates to both empathy and the negotiating, reflective state of self. The audience is invited to witness the performance but are also given the opportunity to create the performance space throughout the day.

Uncertainty Index

By Casey Farina & Jen Urso

Housing, census and weather data will be used to create two simulated moving landscapes. Jenniferursoart.com | caseyfarina.net | <https://vimeo.com/110612111>

Move and Explore: Roda-Viva Workshop

Allyson Yoder will be designing interactive and engaging activities centralized around a pliable sculpture in the center of the [nueBOX] area designed by Rossitza Todorova.

www.ajymovement.com

To Sleep to Dream

By Earfilms*

By using an advanced 3D sound system and blindfolding their audience, Earfilms create immersive, audio-only storytelling experiences, designed to empower and engage listeners' imaginations without sight prompted visual imagery. Their "film," *To Sleep to Dream* will be presented in the Piper Theater with two show times available each day of the festival.

<http://bit.ly/2jqFslj> *Please note: This is a ticketed event.

LIVE MUSIC

Headlining bands include **The Swing Set** (Phoenix, AZ) on Friday, and **Guitarras Latinas** (Phoenix, AZ) on Saturday. Live music by local bands, including Devon Bridgewater and Nuance (swinging jazz), Los Waukis (sounds of the Andes), Noemy Esparza (singer/songwriter), Jan Sandwich & Friends (jazz) and more will fill the festival hours.

ACTIVITIES

Visit The Store

The Store, Mesa Arts Center's Artists' Cooperative Gallery is open and will feature artist demonstrations throughout the festival.

Visit Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum

The Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum is open throughout the festival and features five galleries of contemporary art exhibitions. The Museum always offers free admission.

Art Studios Samplers

Festival goers will be able to try their hand at studio art classes with affordable (\$5-10) one-hour workshops led by Mesa Arts Center teaching artists. Workshops include: Flame worked Beads, Nature's Design Drawing Demo, Watercolor, Scientific Glassblowing, Improv, Ink & Watercolor Botanical Drawing, Enameling on Metal, and Acrylics. Registration is available now.

Mesa Arts Center is located at 1 E. Main Street in downtown Mesa. There is no charge to attend **spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity** and parking is free. More information can be found at MesaArtsCenter.com.

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About Mesa Arts Center

Mesa Arts Center, owned and operated by the City of Mesa, is an architecturally stunning facility located in the heart of downtown Mesa. Arizona's largest multidisciplinary arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries in the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum, and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons, and students come to Mesa Arts Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment, performances and festivals, world-class visual art exhibitions, and outstanding arts education classes. The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.