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Australian Artist's Giant Interplanetary Aliens to Invade Downtown Mesa

Mesa Arts and Culture Department to present U.S. Debut of *Fantastic Planet* by Amanda Parer

January 23, 2018 (Mesa, AZ) – Six gigantic inflatable humanoid figures will land in downtown Mesa May 4-13, 2018, where they will be installed for two large public events, a calendar of ancillary programming, and thousands of visiting museum professionals. The light installation *Fantastic Planet* will be viewable for free across several blocks in the heart of downtown Mesa. Timed to put Mesa's best foot forward for the opening night party of the American Alliance of Museum's (AAM's) Conference on May 6, the installation of the monumental inflatable sculptures by Australian artist Amanda Parer is expected to draw additional visitors from across the Valley and beyond.

The nine-day installation will kick off on Friday, May 4, 2018, with a free community celebration at several sites in downtown Mesa on a night coinciding with the monthly *Motorcycles on Main* event. Two days later, it will be the featured highlight of AAM's Opening Night Party, hosted by Mesa Arts Center/Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum, i.d.e.a. Museum and Arizona Museum of Natural History. AAM's annual national conference hosts more than 5,000 museum professionals from across the United States. The following Friday, May 11, Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum opens exhibitions of figurative work in all five galleries, which will be complemented by *Fantastic Planet*, and coincide with Second Friday in downtown Mesa.

Fantastic Planet was inspired by the 1973 Czech/French film of the same name, and the May event in Mesa will mark the installation's first time in the United States. Parer says of the work, "These giants from afar will give audiences the impression that they have just landed and are quietly and gently exploring our 'fantastic planet'." The six, giant illuminated humanoid figures will be strategically placed, in consultation with the artist, on buildings (and one on the ground) at Mesa Arts Center, i.d.e.a. Museum and in the heart of downtown Mesa.

Locations for the installation, along with details about the kick off and other related events, will be announced in the coming weeks.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown. More information can be found at MesaArtsCenter.com.

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About Mesa Arts Center

The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. Owned and operated by the City of Mesa, Arizona's largest arts center is recognized as an international award-winning venue. The unique and architecturally stunning facility is home to four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios and an artist cooperative gallery. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.