

Media Contact: Casey Blake, 480-644-6620, casey.blake@mesaartscenter.com



spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity

Art in Motion, featuring art cars and interactive art
Saturday, Mar. 17 - Sunday, Mar. 18, 2017

February 21, 2018 (Mesa, AZ) – **spark! Mesa's Festival of Creativity today announced its lineup of immersive arts experiences for the 2018 *Art in Motion*-themed event.** The free festival is presented by and at Mesa Arts Center over two days, Saturday, March 17, noon-11 p.m., and Sunday, March 18, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and will feature an exhibition of 16 art cars, multiple hot rods, lowriders and motorcycles, and interactive arts experiences for people of all ages. spark! celebrates the imaginative spark in all of us, by showcasing both local and visiting artists and performers and inviting festival attendees to explore and enjoy live music, aerial dance performances, hands-on experiences, live art-making, installations, demonstrations, a variety of foods, a beer, wine and cocktail area and more.

FESTIVAL FEATURES

Art Cars and Art Cycles, Curated by Harrod Blank, Art Car World (Douglas, AZ)

The spark! Art Car display will include cars created by some of the leading art car artists in the U.S. Festival goers are invited to arrive by 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 17 to view the grand arrival of the arts cars and art cycles listed below.

Art Cars

Bohemian Rhapsody, by Rebecca Bass and high school students at Reagan High School in Houston, TX

California Fantasy Van, by Ernie Steingold

Camera Van, by Harrod Blank

Daisy Singer, by Philo Northrup

Dragon Car, by Austin College Art Department (currently being constructed)

Eye Van, by Rodney Wood

For the Birds Art Car, by Marilyn Dreampeace and Kelly Lyles

J Girl, by Diane Bombshelter

Madonna Car, by Jose Benavides

Miss Vicky, by Dean Pauley

Mondrian Mobile, by Emily Duffy

Namas'kar, by Rick McKinney

Nevada Car, by David Best

Owl Car, by Kate Pearson

The Ploppet, by Kyle and Claire Johnson

Wrought Iron VW, by Joe Gomez

Art Cycles

Copper Motorcycle, by Rusty Tidenberg

Copper V8 Motorcycle, by Rusty Tidenberg

Community Art Car Build: “Desert Marlin,” led by Harrod Blank and Kyllan Maney (Tempe, AZ)

Mesa Arts Center’s Art Studio teachers are collaborating with Harrod Blank, artist Kyllan Maney and community members to create an art car inspired by the flora and fauna of the Sonoran Desert. The exterior will be covered with cactus and succulents ranging in size and texture, created out of metal, glass and painted directly on the car. The interior, inspired by the “heart” of the Mesa Arts Center community, will be created by visitors to the festival. They will be invited to create and add a piece to the car during the event. The finished piece will be permanently installed in Art Car World in Douglas, AZ, currently under development.

Community Still-Life in Clay, lead artist Elliott Kayser, (Tempe, AZ)

A dining room table set in the style of a classical still-life painting, complete with ceramic service ware, will be created prior to the event. During the festival, colorful clay will be given out to festival participants with a prompt: **to make food that they associate with family tradition.** Performers dressed as waiters will compose and arrange the finished “food” within the still-life. Over the course of the spark! Festival, food will be piled high, overflowing from the plates and service ware.

Dance performances, by CaZo Dance (Mesa, AZ) and Dark Sky Aerial (Flagstaff, AZ)

CaZo Dance and Dark Sky Aerial will perform 14 times during the two-day festival, including aerial dance performances off the wall of the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum courtyard, in the courtyard and in special pieces created to be performed with several of the featured art cars.

Hello Lamp Post, by PAN Studios (London, UK)

Hello Lamp Post is a playful work of interactive digital art in the form of a platform inviting people to strike up conversations with familiar street furniture using text message functions or Facebook Messenger, bringing to life the hidden stories of their cities. With locations in the Mesa Arts Center campus and throughout downtown Mesa, people will be invited to have unique conversations with objects, including (but not limited to) lamp posts, benches, banner poles or sculptures. As conversations grow, the objects develop personalities and engage visitors around what they’ve heard from others. This will be the second installation of this work in the United States, the first having been in Austin, TX during SXSW.

Hot Rods, Lowriders and Motorcycles on display

Custom hot rods will be on display by Zane’s Rod and Custom, a custom car and hot rod builder located in downtown Mesa, AZ. Motorcycles from Desert Wind Harley Davidson and custom lowriders from Valley car designers will also be on display.

Interactive Chalkboard Car, by Kyllan Maney (Tempe, AZ)

A 1981 BMW 528 car will be pre-installed with chalkboard paint on the exterior and black lights in the interior. Festival goers will be invited to color the car within a pre-planned design, using chalkboard markers. Vinyl chalkboard shaped birds will be temporarily adhered to the ground creating pathways to the interactive art car, mimicking shadows of birds flying overhead.

JordonDanielsDance Premiere, presented by [nueBOX] (Mesa, AZ)

[nueBOX] will present two world premieres; “Eleanor” and “Installment 3:instinctually Human” by JordonDanielsDance. JDD is a contemporary performance art collective. The performance will take place in the Acting Studio at 7 p.m. on March 17 and is suggested donation of \$15.

Kinetic Sculptures, by Matt Smith (Mesa, AZ)

Six kinetic metal sculptures 7-10 feet in height will spin freely above a four-foot platform. The “dancers,” as they are referred to by the artist, brightly colored and inviting, will encourage people of all ages to interact by stepping onto the platform and playfully spinning the sculptures with their hands, becoming part of the dance.

Water, Wind and Solar: A Sculpture Garden, by lead artist Matt Smith and his students
Students in Mesa Arts Center’s welding and metalworking classes will also create and install sculptures inspired by and powered by water. The exhibition of kinetic metal sculptures by MAC metalworking students is intended to be complementary and installed adjacent to Matt Smith’s work.

Light Rail Plays, by Rising Youth Theatre (Phoenix, AZ)

Teams of youth and adult artists work together to create and perform original plays from a youth perspective and perform them near light rail stations. Mesa Arts Center is proud to be presenting the Mesa production of the Light Rail Plays at spark! Timing of performances TBA.

The Night Garden, by Jenneva Kayser, (Tempe, AZ)

A colorful, illuminated landscape inspired by bioluminescent plants and fungi will be created on site and will consist of sculptures made of woven recycled fabric and translucent porcelain clay. The artist invites visitors to “take a walk through the wild landscape—an underwater desert in outer space!”

Creative Catalysts, an initiative of Mesa Arts Center, will facilitate an interactive, hands-on component to The Night Garden, where festival goers will be invited to create fabric pom poms or flowers to connect to the The Night Garden installation.

LIVE MUSIC

Two stages of live music will feature local bands throughout the festival.

FOOD

Food will be available for purchase from Soundbite Food Truck, Firehouse Kettle Corn, CA Snowie, Molly’s Tamales, Life of the Party Catering, and Paleta’s Betty.

ADDITIONAL 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 is always free admission.

Art Studios Samplers

Festival goers will be able to try their hand at studio art classes with affordable (\$10) one-hour workshops led by Mesa Arts Center teaching artists. Workshops include: Ceramic Plates, Raku Ceramics, Flame-worked Beads, Fusing Glass Tile, Watercolor, Improv, 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.

###

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.