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**City of Mesa announces series of free artmaking workshops as part of Water=Life Project**  
*Workshop series celebrates the past, present, and future of water as part of the Arizona Water Public Art Challenge*

**August 20, 2019 (Mesa, AZ)** – The City of Mesa today announced a series of free artmaking workshops and demonstrations as part of the Water=Life public art project. The series of workshops are led by a team of artists collaborating to create a nine-day installation in Mesa's Riverview Park November 16-24, 2019. Participants in the workshops will have the opportunity to contribute through ideas, personal reflection or artmaking to the creation of the culminating installation.

The Water=Life temporary public art installation will consist of visual, storytelling and interactive components and visitors to the installation will be encouraged to explore a "stream," guiding them to an inner circle where a soundscape and story walk highlight the relationship we have with water in all stages of our lives and the legacy of the ancient canal system that is the foundation for the modern system in use today.

The list of workshops, which are free and open to the public, is below. Those interested in participating are encouraged to register in advance, but some spaces will be available on-site at each workshop. Registration is available at [www.mesaartscenter.com/waterlife](http://www.mesaartscenter.com/waterlife) or by calling 480-644-6500.

**WORKSHOPS**

**Wednesday, Aug. 21, 6-8 p.m., Mesa Arts Center's Ceramics Studio**  
**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Ron Carlos and Rich Littlefield**

Acclaimed traditional artist Ron Carlos, a member of the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, will talk about and demonstrate traditional Native American pottery techniques. Participants will work with local ceramic artist Richard Littlefield to add their own designs to ceramic pieces that will be used in the Water=Life installation

**Sunday, Aug. 25, noon-2 p.m., i.d.e.a. Museum Atrium Classroom**  
**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Tony Duncan, Danielle Wood and Rich Littlefield**

Five-time World Champion Hoop Dancer Tony Duncan will demonstrate and teach hoop dancing techniques and share Native American flute playing, and ceramic artists Danielle Wood & Rich Littlefield will lead participants in adding their own designs to ceramic pieces that will be used in the Water=Life installation.

**Monday, Sept. 2, 6-8 p.m., Mesa's Artspace Lofts**

**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Tony Duncan and Toby Jose**

Native Voices: Water is Life is a workshop exploring the stories and significance of water in local indigenous communities with artists Tony Duncan and Toby Jose.

**Saturday, Sept. 7, 10 a.m.-noon, Save the Family Conference Room**

**Artmaking Workshop and History Presentation with Bruce Nelson and Travis Ivey**

Curator and film-maker Bruce Nelson will talk about the importance of water to the historically African-American Washington Park/Escobedo neighborhood in Mesa, and create a mini-exhibition of community water stories. Participants are requested to bring small items or photos related to their own history or relationship to water in any aspect of their lives to contribute to a community collage. Collage artist Travis Ivey will lead participants in creating their own collages to take home.

**Monday, Sept. 9, 6-8 p.m., Mesa's Artspace Lofts**

**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Therosia Reynolds and Katharine Simpson**

Music and spoken word artist Therosia Reynolds will lead a spoken word workshop and multidisciplinary artist Katharine Simpson will lead participants in creating small pieces out of different textiles to contribute to the Water=Life installation.

**Saturday, Sept. 14, noon-2 p.m., Arizona Museum of Natural History Auditorium**

**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Tony Duncan and Katharine Simpson**

Five-time World Champion Hoop Dancer Tony Duncan will demonstrate and teach hoop dancing techniques and share Native American flute playing. Multidisciplinary artist Katharine Simpson will lead participants in creating small pieces out of different textiles to contribute to the Water=Life installation.

**Wednesday, Sept. 18, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Mesa Main Library Saguaro Room**

**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Tony Duncan and Toby Jose**

Native Voices: Water is Life is a workshop exploring the stories and significance of water in local indigenous communities with artists Tony Duncan and Toby Jose.

**Saturday, Sept. 21, 6-8 p.m., i.d.e.a. Museum Atrium Classroom**

**Artmaking Workshop and Demonstration with Danielle Wood and Rich Littlefield**

Ceramic artists Danielle Wood & Rich Littlefield will lead participants in adding their own designs to pottery pieces to contribute to the Water=Life installation.

**Tuesday, Sept. 24, 6-8 p.m., West Mesa CDC**

**Storytelling Workshop with Liz Warren and Martha Ludlow-Martinez**

Liz Warren, Director of the South Mountain Community College Storytelling Institute, and Martha Ludlow-Martinez, singer and spoken word artist, will lead participants in a storytelling workshop around the role of water in our lives.

**Saturday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m.-noon, Mesa Arts Center's Music Studio  
Storytelling Workshop with Liz Warren and Martha Ludlow-Martinez**

Liz Warren, Director of the South Mountain Community College Storytelling Institute, and Martha Ludlow-Martinez, singer and spoken word artist, will lead participants in a storytelling workshop around the role of water in our lives.

**Sunday, Oct. 6, noon-3 p.m., i.d.e.a. Museum Atrium Classroom  
Armaking Workshop with Katharine Simpson**

Multidisciplinary visual and performance artist Katharine Simpson will lead participants in creating small pieces out of different textiles to contribute to the Water=Life installation. Participants are invited to drop-in and come and go during the session.

**Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m.-noon, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC)  
Garden**

**Armaking Workshop and Demonstrations with Jacob Butler, Tony Duncan, Danielle Wood and Rich Littlefield**

Learn about traditional and contemporary agriculture and gardening techniques and their impact on water use, experience and create ceramic art and a shell pendant, enjoy hoop dancing and Native American flute playing, and explore the importance of water within the SRPMIC history and community.

"The project installation is intended to be symbolic of collaboration, with people coming together to share stories and memories of water," said Tony Duncan, lead artist on the project. The installation will be commemorated in an opening celebration free to the public, Saturday, November 16, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Activities and events will include performances, an interactive chalk art installation, mobile screen-printing by Jared Yazzie, live painting by TaLisa, hands-on artmaking activities/demos, and food trucks.

The project is made possible by the Arizona Water Public Art Challenge, presented by the Arizona Community Foundation, Republic Media and Morrison Institute for Public Policy. The project is also supported by a National Endowment for the Arts Art Works grant. The City of Mesa is one of five winners of the Arizona Water Public Art Challenge.

The project is presented by the City of Mesa and several of its departments, including the Department of Arts and Culture (Mesa Arts Center, i.d.e.a. Museum and Arizona Museum of Natural History), Department of Environmental Management & Sustainability, Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, and the Department of Water Resources.

**END**

**About Mesa Arts Center**

Mesa Arts Center, owned and operated by the City of Mesa, is a unique, architecturally stunning facility located in the heart of downtown Mesa. Arizona's largest arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries, and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons, and students come to Mesa Arts

Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment and performances, 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](http://mesaartscenter.com).

**About the artists:**

Descended from both Pima and Maricopa tribes, **Ron Carlos** produces paddle and anvil pottery that is constructed from all-natural materials. All his clays and pigments are hand dug and hand processed into a workable paste and he fires his vessels in an open wood fire pit using mesquite and/or cottonwood bark.

**Richard Littlefield** is an art educator with a background in archaeology. Richard creates vessels inspired by early southwestern culture techniques, such as the coil sculpture method and the corrugated pinch method.

**Tony Duncan** is a five-time World Champion Hoop Dancer and Native American flute player. He's released ten albums and toured the world to entertain audiences of all ages.

**Danielle Wood** is an art educator and exhibitor raised in Tempe, AZ. Her work involves abstract forms inspired by introspection, ocean life, nature, shapes, and color found in the surrounding desert landscape and symbolic of the inner psyche.

**Bruce Nelson** was born and raised in Mesa's Washington Park/Escobedo neighborhood. Now an award-winning actor and filmmaker, Nelson has spent years creating a documentary history of his neighborhood.

Mesa Artspace resident and artist **Travis Ivey** employs an intuitive approach to composition and design using collected materials and varieties of tape to create "paintings."

Mesa Artspace resident and artist **Katharine Simpson** loves creating things out of every medium possible and likes to give her previous works new life as new art pieces to avoid waste.

**Liz Warren** is a fourth-generation Arizonan, is known for tales that reflect the heroic journey of life - whether they are stories of growing up in Arizona, folktales, or myths from ancient traditions. She is a storyteller, teacher, writer as well as one of the founders of the SMCC Storytelling Institute.

**Therosia Reynolds** is a multi-genre artist and Phoenix, Arizona native whose deep-held spirituality informs her life and work. She describes herself as growing up "between worship and war stories." Reynolds is a singer, spoken word poet, and painter.