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**Mesa Arts Center kicks off 2021-22 season with free community celebration: WONDERLAND
Friday, September 10**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mesa, AZ – Mesa Arts Center will launch its 2021-22 season with a free, family-friendly festival titled **WONDERLAND** on **Friday, September 10, 6-10 p.m.** The event invites the community to experience the MAC Campus as we open our studios and unveil four new visionary art exhibitions in Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum.

Festival highlights include live music by **Jerusafunk, Ponderosa Grove, Bill Davies** and **Prafula Athalye**; new art exhibitions in Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum; shopping in The Store, an artist's cooperative gallery, featuring items by Arizona artists; delicious food from local vendors including Paletas Betty, A Little Toast of Chaos, The Nile Coffee Shop, Majik Milkshakes & Classic Sodas, Sonora Sam's Hot Dogs and Mom's Bakery; and unique public art installations and projection art by local artists Emmett Potter, Danielle Wood, Erica Black, Katherine Simpson, Dr. Jnaneshwar Das and Matt Smith.

Also, don't miss the many fun hands-on activities:

- Embark on an animal scavenger hunt to find the hidden mystical creatures from our Wonderland artwork around the MAC campus.
- Meet critters from the Phoenix Zoo and Liberty Wildlife.

- Discover the desert wonderland with MABEL, Mesa Arts Center's very-own Mobile Arts-Based Learning Engagement Lab.
- Bring a blanket and enjoy a live screening of Nova Ami & Velcrow Ripper's 2018 film *Metamorphosis* on MAC's south lawn (8 p.m.).
- Enjoy crafty activities from our friends at Arizona Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum and Desert Botanical Garden.
- Explore our glow zone with face and body paint area
- Chill out with free yoga on the south lawn at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- Stroll through our art studios as they come to life with live demonstrations in glass, ceramics, welding, painting, drawing, printmaking and more!

Details of the Mesa Contemporary Art Museum exhibitions are below:

Divine Paradigm

Contemporary Visionary Art

September 10, 2021 – November 28, 2021

Through mystical and spiritual themes, Visionary Art transcends our physical realm and vividly conceptualizes a sublime state of consciousness. This exhibition brings together 16 national and international Visionary artists, who use a variety of mediums and subject matter to capture their own journey toward a deeper understanding and awareness. From sculpted mushroom embellished deities to dreamlike mandala paintings to metaphysical nods to nature through calligraphic writing, these forms of creative expression encompass a broad range of perspectives and provide new lenses for seeing a higher reality.

The Beyond Within

Alex Grey & Allyson Grey

September 10, 2021 – January 23, 2022

The paintings of Alex Grey & Allyson Grey were inspired by psychedelic mystical experiences of the 1970's. Their trailblazing work has empowered the field of Visionary Art, a worldwide movement of artists committed to transcribing glimpses of *The Beyond Within*. For forty-six years, the Grey's have shared a studio and produced art both collaboratively and independently. This exhibition represents a spectrum of work selected from phases of their explorations in painting, 3-dimensional art, animation and multi-media social sculpture.

Vision Seeds

Amanda Sage

Sept 10, 2021 – Jan 16, 2022

Colorado artist, Amanda Sage, is known for her transformative narratives that explore inter-dimensional realms of possibility. Based on early Renaissance painting techniques that were revived by Austrian Fantastic Realists during the 1950s, Sage's paintings push the limits of transparency, reanimating the medium while catalyzing a contemporary rebirth. This exhibition highlights works from the last ten years and provides a provocative vision for a more symbiotic relationship between earthly and spiritual planes.

Lucid Fate

Wiley Wallace

September 10, 2021 – January 2, 2022

Phoenix painter Wiley Wallace creates luminous and ostensibly radioactive worlds intersecting the real and imagined. Under a neon-hued glow, his realistic and surreal renderings of children and adults are placed amid Arizona landscapes, creating “near-magical” references of the supernatural. Through narratives of connection and communication, Wallace’s imagery suspends the viewer with a playful and macabre innocence.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown Mesa. There is no charge to attend the Season Kickoff Festival or the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum’s opening, and parking is free. For details visit MesaArtsCenter.com/seasonkickoff.

The season kickoff event is generously sponsored by SRP, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport and Crescent Crown Distributing.

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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.