

20
YEARS



MESA ARTS CENTER



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum Fall 2024 Exhibitions Opening Reception Friday, Sept. 13 | 7–10 p.m.



Image credit: Brandi Kole, “Fabricated,” 2023, Thread and acrylic on canvas, 56 x 42 inches. Additional high-res images [here](#).

Mesa, AZ – **Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum** celebrates the opening of five new exhibitions featuring artists **Ben Venom, Bethany Larson, Susan Allred** and

Stephanie Metz, along with two group exhibitions: **“Safety Blankets: Discourse on Neurodivergence”** and **“Mending Stories: Fiber Art Invitational.”** This season is curated by **Mary-Beth Buesgen**, the museum’s new curator, and highlights artists who explore how fiber art can reveal invisible stories through wearable art, fashion, crafted textiles and innovative materials.

“We are excited to welcome Mary-Beth Buesgen as our new curator at Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum,” said Mandy Tripoli, deputy director of visual arts and engagement/education. “Under her visionary guidance, this season promises an array of exhibitions that highlight the transformative power of fiber art.”

The free opening reception on **Friday, Sept. 13, 2024, from 7–10 p.m.**, includes musical entertainment, light refreshments and a cash bar. Highlights of the evening include **“Fabric and Space II,”** an otherworldly, avant-garde fashion show experience created by **Chris Loomis** and **Galina Mihaleva** at 7:30 p.m., and **“Sonic Textiles,”** a performance by **Kristen Miologos** within the “Mending Stories” exhibition at 8:30 p.m.

“Use It or Lose It”

Ben Venom

Sept. 13, 2024–Jan. 12, 2025

Working with repurposed materials to create textile-based pieces, Ben Venom contrasts the often menacing and aggressive counterculture components of gangs, punk/metal music and the occult with the comforts of domesticity. This collision of traditional quilting techniques with elements tied to the fringes of society re-envision the story of the material through a softer lens.

“Antifunction”

B. Jean Larson and Susan Allred

Sept. 13–Dec. 1, 2024

B. Jean Larson and Susan Allred’s artistic processes are repetitive and meditative, and as such, they reflect on traditionally undervalued “women’s work,” reimagining labor-intensive crafts that are typically seen as merely decorative or functional. By transforming everyday items like rugs and quilts into non-functional sculptures, they create visually captivating and conceptually profound artworks that challenge the distinction between craft and fine art.

“Mending Stories: Fiber Art Invitational”

Sept. 13, 2024–Jan. 19, 2025

A group invitational exhibition featuring textiles, fibers and woven art highlighting lived experiences and exploring themes of identity, transcending tradition and how humans interact with the environment around us.

Artists: Tamara Scott Anderson, Melissa Cody, Amber Doe, Shannon Downey aka Badass Cross Stitch, Sam Fresquez, Adia Jamille, Saskia Jorda, Brandi Kole, Kristen Miologos, Galina Mihaleva, Abbie Miller, Mark Newport, Rebecca Padilla-Pipkin, Philip Gabriel Stevenson and Denise Yaghmourian.

“InTouch”

Stephanie Metz

Sept. 13, 2024–Jan. 26, 2025

Stephanie Metz's grouping of fiber sculptures invites physical touch by viewers. White cocoon-like hanging pods each offer intriguing opportunities for connection with the art — and with other viewers.

“Safety Blankets: Discourse on Neurodivergence”

Curated by Charissa Lucille

Sept. 13, 2024–Jan. 26, 2025

Safety Blankets: Discourse on Neurodivergence gathers textile artworks by 16 artists depicting their lives and experiences as neurodivergent people. Initially a Phoenix-area solo exhibition by Charissa Lucille, the project transformed when Lucille invited artists from Arizona and beyond to collaboratively expand on the show's ideas, keeping with the ethos of encouraging conversation and community. Through expressions in fabric, this exhibition aims to disrupt misconceptions, spark connections and discourse and challenge the meaning of neurodivergence.

Artists: Phoenix Alvarado, Chris Leon Armarillas, AmyLou Bogen, Yolie Contreras, Alice Costas, Aaron Davis, Michelle Dawn, Charissa Lucille, Alistair Malone, Maira McDermott, Layla Nieves, Janelle Novotny, Ari Rendon, vivd schisms, Sheena Cly Wahid, Caroline Wilson.

Museum hours:

Mon: CLOSED

Tue–Sat: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sun: Noon–5 p.m.

For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com/mcam or call 480-644-6560.

Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum is located at 1 East Main Street in downtown Mesa, AZ. Admission is always free.

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. Mesa Arts Center's mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible and relevant. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.

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