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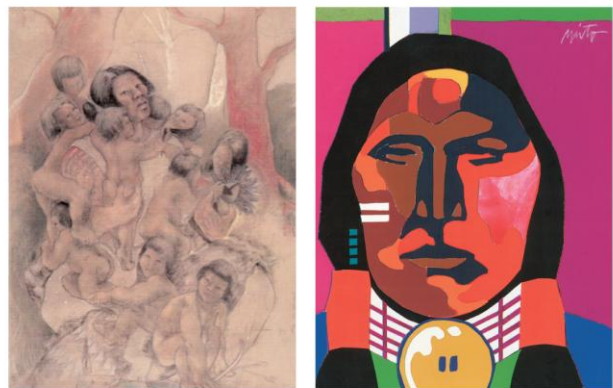
LENDING ARTISTS A HELPING HAND

SANTA FE, N.M. -- After a year's absence, the 11th annual Santa Fe Artists' Emergency Medical Fund Greeting Card Exhibit and Auction is back and will be held 5-7 p.m., Dec. 14, at the Riva Yares Gallery. More than \$20,000 is raised each year at this event.

The Santa Fe Artists' Emergency Medical Fund (SFAEMF) was founded in 1996 by artist Armond Lara and a group of individuals concerned about the problems faced by professional artists lacking medical insurance. Since its conception, the Santa Fe Artists Emergency Medical Fund has assisted many artists during times of medical needs through grants administered by the Santa Fe Community Foundation.

Some of artists that have utilized the SFAEMF funds during medical crises include Presley LaFountain, John Massey and CJ Wells. The SFAEMF defines a "professional artist" as at least 50 percent of their income is from art and/or that they've had at least one show in the past five years.

All of the artists produce and donate an original 6" x 6" piece of art, or donate a piece of sculpture for this event. Participation in the event is invitation only and this year more than 100 artists from the United States, France, China



and the Czech Republic will be in the auction. On the night of the event, the original art pieces are displayed for auction, the champagne bottles are uncorked and the fun begins.

Boxes of the one-of-a-kind greeting cards will be on sale and the proceeds will benefit New Mexico artists who face financial difficulties resulting from medical crisis.

"This organization grew out of the awareness that artists are a vital part of the economic state of New Mexico and the need to take care of one of the economic drivers of tourism: our artists," Lara said. "The business community, especially the galleries, recognizes the importance of honoring and caring for their main cash cow. This is such a great event and it's for an important cause," Lara adds. "We are looking forward to people opening up their wallets and supporting our artists. "

Past and previous artists include: Stuart Ashman, John Axton, Evelyn Boren, John Fincher, Diane Moon, R.C. Gorman, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Armond Lara, Jesus Morales, Carol Anthony, Doug Coffin, Doug Magnus, Gary Mauro, Dan Namingha, Elias Rivera, Paul Sarkisian, Ramona Sakiestewa, Fritz Scholder, John Nieto, Glenna Goodacre, C.J. Wells and Lael Weyenberg.

Administration of the funds are handled by the Santa Fe Community Foundation. Additional monies are underwritten by arts patrons and business partners including all of the artists that donate their work, the Valdez Framing and Art Supplies that mats all of the work, Tony Bonanno Photography, Linda Heath Foundation, Community Bank, Riva Yares Gallery, Osteria d'Assisi and the Marshall Plan.

The Riva Yares Gallery is located at 123 Grant Avenue in Santa Fe.

INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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