

The 2019 Governor's Arts Awards ceremonies will be held on Friday, September 20, at 5:30 p.m. in the St. Francis Auditorium at the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe. The ceremony is preceded by a public reception beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the museum courtyard. A hosted open house exhibiting the honorees' work will take place in the Governor's Gallery at the State Capitol from noon to 4 p.m. The awards ceremony and open house are free and open to the public.

The 2019 Governor's Arts Awards

Michelle Lujan Grisham celebrates her first round of art stars.

On June 14, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the New Mexico Arts Commission announced this year's recipients of the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts.

"Art is intimately woven into the fabric of our great state," Lujan Grisham said. "Artists uplift us, inspire us, and tell the stories that define us. I'm humbled to have the opportunity to celebrate the diverse and unique talents of these incredible artists and supporters of the arts. Their creativity and commitment to craft represent the very best of the Land of Enchantment."

The Governor's Arts Awards were established in 1974 to celebrate the extraordinary role artists and their work have played in New Mexico. A diverse and noteworthy list of painters, weavers, sculptors, dancers, musicians, storytellers, poets, actors, playwrights, and potters have been honored. Past awardees include Georgia O'Keeffe, Maria Martinez, Tony Hillerman, and N. Scott Momaday.

Roxanne Swentzell, *Special Girl*. Bronze, 11 × 8 × 8 in.

This photograph and Swentzell's portrait on page 27 by Phil Karshis.



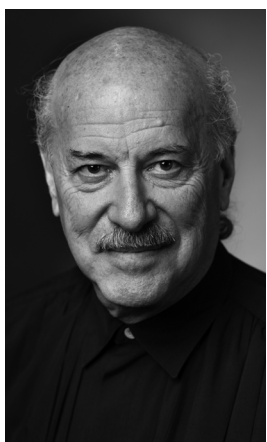
ARTISTS


Victor di Suvero of Santa Fe:
Artist, Poetry, Publishing

Victor di Suvero has participated in bringing poetry and literature to the people for nearly 80 years in his role as poet, publisher, and community organizer. His book *Spring Again* was awarded the Independent Publisher Book Awards Bronze Medal in 2007. He has edited several anthologies

including *¡Saludos!*, the first bilingual collection of the poetry of New Mexico, and *We Came to Santa Fe* (2009), which was awarded a 2009 Southwest Book Design and Production Award by the New Mexico Book Association.

Through his publishing company, Pennywhistle Press, which he established with his wife, the late Barbara Windom, di Suvero has consistently published the work of many New Mexico writers, including Joan Logghe, Renée Gregorio, John Brandi, Judyth Hill, and Luci Tapahonso. Di Suvero was a key force in founding several literary organizations and programs in New Mexico, including the Poetry in the Schools program, New Mexico Book Association, PEN New Mexico, New Mexico Literary Arts (formerly the Poetry Center of New Mexico), and the Live Poets Society. As the director of the National Poetry Association, he assisted in establishing National Poetry Week, which has now grown into National Poetry Month and is celebrated across the country.


Marc Neikrug of Santa Fe:
Artist, Pianist, Musical Composition

Marc Neikrug's musical career has spanned over fifty-four years as a globally recognized concert pianist, composer, and artistic director of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Since 1998, Neikrug has been the artistic director of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

Its annual season of forty-five concerts features nearly one hundred musicians from all over the world, and the festival's three-month series of radio shows is broadcasted by over 200 stations. He developed major educational components to the festival that brings curriculum, teacher training, and performances to 6,000 elementary students, as well as to pre-K students through the Music in Our Schools program.

As a pianist, he performed as a soloist, a chamber musician, and most notably as a duo partner with the violinist Pinchas Zuckerman for over thirty-five years. Together they performed in North and South America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. As a composer, he wrote major pieces commissioned by the Berlin Opera, London's South Bank Festival, the Frankfurt Festival, the Polish Radio Symphony, the Library of Congress, Lincoln Center, and the Atlanta, Houston, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Boston, Washington National, and Jerusalem symphonies.


Nicolas Otero of Los Lunas:
Artist, Painter, Retablos

Nicolas Otero began practicing the tradition of *santo*-making at just sixteen years of age by apprenticing with master artists. Otero produces *retablos*, *bultos*, altars, gesso reliefs, hide paintings, and *ramilletes* (paper flower adornments). He continues to use traditional methods in his work, such

as the production of natural pigments and hand-carved panels.

In his twenty-two years of practicing the *santero* tradition, he has garnered over forty-two awards, including the 2017 Grand Prize Best of Show for Traditional Spanish Market. Working within his community of artistic colleagues, he curated the exhibit *Ayer, Hoy, y Mañana/Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: An Exhibition of Traditional and Contemporary Arts* at the Los Lunas Museum of Heritage and Arts. Otero's work can be found in museum collections including the Denver Art Museum, Santa Fe's Museum of International Folk Art, and the Archive Collection of the White House.



Roxanne Swentzell of Santa Clara Pueblo: Artist, Sculpture, Clay

Roxanne Swentzell made her first piece of art at age four: a clay dog. After formal training at the Portland Museum Art School and the Institute for American Indian Arts, Swentzell began to create full-length clay figures that represent the complete

spectrum of the human spirit. She feels that many people are out of touch with their environment, and hopes relating to her expressive characters will help them get back in touch with their surroundings and feelings. Her figures represent a full range of emotions and irrepressible moods. Swentzell often focuses on interpretative female portraits, attempting to bring back the balance of power between the male and female inherently recognized in her own culture.

Though steeped in her own culture, Swentzell's work demonstrates an astounding universality, speaking to people of all cultures. Awards for her work include the Spirit of the Heard Award (Heard Museum, Phoenix), the Native Treasures Living Treasures Award (Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe), and awards for specific work from the Southwest Association of American Indian Arts' Indian Market and the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market. Her piece *E-wah-Nee-nee* was commissioned by the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian for its auditorium. Her work is continuously shown in the Tower Gallery in Pojoaque.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ARTS



New Mexico PBS/KNME ¡COLORES! of Albuquerque: Major Contributor to the Arts

Non-commercial, educational, and inspirational, ¡COLORES! is dedicated to telling stories about the remarkable creative spirit, the rich multicultural communities, and the extraordinary history found in the Land of Enchantment. This weekly art series

features local and national stories about film, performing arts, theater, photography, literature, painting, sculpture, poetry, and dance.

Since 1989, the staff has produced over three hundred programs. Featured artists include Rudolfo Anaya, Judy Chicago, Arlene Cisneros Sena, Nicholas Herrera, Elodie Holmes, Allan Houser, Peter Hurd, and Georgia O'Keeffe. Its programs have been included in museums across the country, at community events, and in classrooms from elementary school to college. ¡COLORES! has received a national Public and Community Service Emmy nomination, several Rocky Mountain southwest regional Emmys, and the Jury Prize at Telluride Mountainfilm.



Lee Gruber of Silver City, Major Contributor to the Arts

Lee Gruber has been a major force in her community by initiating ideas and following through to reach goals that promote contemporary visual art, foster an understanding of the history of New Mexico cultural arts, and nurture an environment that economically supports the business of art.

Gruber founded the Silver City tile business Syzygy with her husband, David del Junco, over twenty-five years ago. Though she recently retired, Syzygy continues to make architectural ceramics. The company's many actions as part of their community include donating an estimated \$50,000 of materials over twenty years to local organizations and projects.

As board president of Southwest New Mexico Arts Culture and Tourism, Gruber led the establishment of the Silver City Arts & Culture District. She also initiated the Silver City Clay Festival and the Southwest New Mexico Clay Arts Trail. The Clay Festival has evolved into a national event of exhibitions, workshops, and demonstrations. The Clay Trail, begun in 2013, now includes over sixty member sites in Luna, Hidalgo, Grant, and Catron counties. It also partners with historic sites related to clay such as the Gila Cliff Dwellings and the Mimbres Cultural Center. ■