



CENTER FOR
CONTEMPORARY ARTS
SANTA FE

1050 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87505 www.ccasantafe.org

Center for Contemporary Arts: The Future

Veteran arts advocate Stuart Ashman returns to Santa Fe to lead the Center for Contemporary Arts, bringing energy and experience to CCA's mission as a regional artist-centered venue for contemporary art and independent cinema

Santa Fe, New Mexico: January 2017— In a full circle moment, Stuart Ashman has come back to the city where he started his career in the arts in the late 1970s at the Armory for the Arts at 1050 Old Pecos Trail—the same compound where the Center for Contemporary Arts operates today. Ashman has been a fan of CCA's world-class exhibitions and events since its founding in 1979. Then a budding artist, he showed his sculptures in a CCA exhibition in 1986.

Today, with decades of wide-ranging leadership experience in the arts and cultural affairs, and broad personal connections in both local and global cultural communities, Ashman is passionate about CCA's visionary role in supporting emerging and established artists, and engaging the public in the vitality and diversity of contemporary art.

“CCA's extraordinary history is as a vibrant place of convergence for contemporary artists and independent cinema,” says Ashman. “My goal is to create a convergence of past, present, and future with projects and programs that honor CCA's past, address the needs of today's artists and audiences, and carry the organization to a creatively and financially sustainable future.”

A CENTER OF ART AND COMMUNITY: For Ashman, the “Center” in CCA's name defines the organization's primary importance as a hub of artistry and activity for all ages. “I'm less concerned with the definition of the genre of contemporary art than in the ways that people can be inspired to come together to learn and experience how and why artists make contemporary art,” he says.

With CCA's 37-year tradition of drawing people together through film, visual arts, public education programs, and collaborative community projects, Ashman has solid ground to build on. He plans to work to support and enhance CCA's signature offerings, while introducing initiatives that expand CCA's audience, impact, and especially opportunities for New Mexico artists.

As 2017 gathers momentum, Ashman is laying the groundwork for taking CCA to the next level as an inclusive and creative gathering place for Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico. Here's how:

SUPPORTING EMERGING AND ESTABLISHED ARTISTS: Continuing to position CCA as a platform for established and emerging contemporary artists is a priority for Ashman.

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This includes developing a robust calendar of shows featuring international artists who appeal to Santa Fe's experienced and knowledgeable art audience, and who also can inspire and educate young artists and new audiences. CCA will also feature Santa Fe and New Mexico artists of international renown, such as sculptor and MacArthur fellow Tom Joyce, who is slated to show at CCA in July 2017.

Another major priority is to nurture the next generation of New Mexico artists by finding new talent and offering exhibition opportunities they may not have elsewhere in the community. "We're going to be giving a lot of time and preference to young New Mexico artists, and let them know you don't have to live in New York or Chicago to make it as an artist," Ashman says. "We're willing to take the risk of saying, 'This person has promise.' In five years, thanks to CCA's support, maybe this young artist will have a major museum show."

CCA CINEMATHEQUE: Named one of the 23 best art house theatres in the country by the prestigious Sundance Institute Art House Project, the CCA Cinematheque shows over 200 films a year and initiates some of the most innovative programming in the country. Offering audiences films and talks with emerging film makers as well as hosting a number of noted guests including Al Pacino and Laurie Anderson. Under the longtime direction of Jason Silverman, Ashman says the CCA Cinematheque will remain a cornerstone of CCA's programming. The Cinematheque draws some 45,000 film buffs to CCA each year, hosting daily film screenings, special movie premieres, conversations with directors and actors, and collaborative film events with community organizations. Ashman says the Cinematheque is a point of entry to CCA for many visitors who may not know what else is happening there. "The Cinematheque is such a part of our history and identity," Ashman says. "And where else can you go to the movies and see an art exhibit at the same time?"

WORLD-CLASS EXHIBITION SPACE: The Muñoz Waxman Gallery at the Tank Garage is one of the best large spaces for contemporary art in Santa Fe. CCA also has three more intimate spaces for smaller exhibitions and diverse programming. Ashman says that CCA's small-scale exhibition spaces (totaling 6,000 square feet) allow for simultaneous shows by "emerging, emergent, and master artists" and frequently changing exhibitions. This provides artists—and the institution—the opportunity to respond quickly to current community and global issues through art and programs. "I want artists to know they can come to us as they express what's happening at home and in the world," he says.

THE LIVING ROOM: Creative dialogue and cross-pollination of ideas is key to supporting artists and engaging audiences, Ashman says. In 2017, CCA will launch "The Living Room," a comfortable space for conversations and presentations featuring international and local voices and visions. This will include a monthly "open mic" gathering where artists at all ages and stages can give informal presentations of their work in order to gain community feedback and interact with other artists and art-lovers.

SCULPTURE PARK: This spring, CCA will introduce an expansive outdoor sculpture park that creates a more inviting entrance to CCA, and provides a beautiful outdoor place for visitors to experience art and interact.

CONTEMPORARY ART IN NEW MEXICO: "Art is more important at this moment than ever," Ashman says. "In New Mexico's vital art environment, the future of CCA in supporting contemporary art for New Mexico, and contemporary art from New Mexico, is bright."

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Many community artists and art advocates agree, including Santa Fe painter Jared Weiss, whose exhibition *Jared Weiss: The Worst* was on view last summer at CCA's Cinematheque lobby gallery. "There was a great response to my show at CCA with very positive feedback," Weiss says. "I'm very excited for what Stuart Ashman will do for CCA and the art world in Santa Fe. I think the paradigm is shifting to places like this, where the arts community is small but very tight-knit, and you are afforded the space and time to create."

Internationally renowned contemporary art critic Lucy Lippard, who lives in Galisteo, is equally enthusiastic. "The Center for Contemporary Arts has long been home base for the Santa Fe creative community, and now that Stuart Ashman's back in town to take over the helm, all bodes well for local art and artists ¡*Que viva CCA!*"

About CCA

The Center for Contemporary Arts is a vibrant art space and cinematheque offering innovative exhibitions, films and performances that are socially relevant, provocative and inspiring. Founded in 1979, CCA is one of the oldest artist-centered organizations in the American Southwest. CCA draws more than 55,000 visitors annually for exhibitions, independent films, performances, and education/public programs.

Visit CCA

Location: Center for Contemporary Arts, 1050 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM

Cinematheque Hours: opens 45 minutes before the screening of the first film every day

Muñoz Waxman Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 12pm-5pm

Gallery Admission: \$5 and free for members

Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 930am-5pm

Website: <http://www.ccasantafe.org>

Phone: 505-982-1338

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