



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HARWOOD ANNOUNCES MAJOR GIFT OF CONTEMPORARY ART
Collection will transform museum**

Taos, N.M. — Susan Longhenry, Director of the Harwood Museum of Art, announces today that Gus Foster has pledged to give the Museum his collection of 341 works by 86 contemporary artists including Ken Price, Larry Bell, Ron Davis, Lynda Benglis, Ron Cooper, Robert Ray, Lee Mullican, Earl Stroh, Emil Bisttram and Vija Celmins. This remarkable gift, comprising one of the foremost collections of contemporary art in the Southwest, was unanimously accepted, approved and celebrated at the University of New Mexico's Harwood Museum of Art Governing Board meeting yesterday.

The Gus Foster Collection, distinguished by its quality, focus, and depth, includes 44 works by Ken Price, 42 works by Larry Bell, 10 works by Ron Davis, plus work by 83 additional prominent artists. The collection is unsurpassed in the number of iconic works created by contemporary artists working in the acclaimed art colony of Taos, New Mexico. In particular, the collection explores in depth the Taos-Los Angeles contemporary art connection. With the perspective of a former museum curator, a collector and an artist, Foster is an extraordinary connoisseur whose collecting over the past 40 years is culminating with this gift.

With a vision to “bring Taos arts to the world and world arts to Taos,” the Harwood Museum of Art – home of the acclaimed Agnes Martin Gallery - serves as an important venue for exhibiting work by prominent contemporary artists who have worked, or are working, in Northern New Mexico. The Harwood's existing contemporary art holdings will be made even stronger with this gift.

The many prominent East and West Coast artists represented in this gift speak to the strong connection that Taos has long had with the national and international art worlds. Artists Ken Price and Larry Bell moved permanently from Los Angeles to Taos in the 1970s, followed by Ron Cooper, Gus Foster and—later—Ron Davis. Other artists such as Lee Mullican spent part of each year in Taos. Price, who died in 2012, is currently being honored with a major retrospective on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art through September 22, 2013.



One of the 341 works gifted to the Harwood Museum of Art: Ken Price's "Death Shrine I" from the "Happy's Curios" series.

“This is a stunning, transformational gift to the Museum,” states Longhenry. “In one stroke, the Harwood’s collection becomes critical to an understanding of just how important and relevant Taos, New Mexico has been, and remains, to the national and international contemporary art world. This is a carefully curated collection that has been shaped by Gus Foster’s connoisseurship, with the Harwood Museum of Art in mind. It’s a tremendous gift to both the Harwood, and to Taos.”

“Gus Foster is one of a handful of people who have had the greatest impact on the Harwood Museum of Art,” adds Harwood Museum of Art Governing Board Chair Linda Warning. “This gift will represent one of the largest - if not THE largest - gift of works of art to the Museum. The Harwood's collection now includes approximately 4,300 works of art—most of which have come to the Museum as gifts over the past 90 years. I can't express how lucky we are to have such a passionate and committed patron.”

Foster started working with the Harwood Museum of Art in the early 1990s and has been a dedicated volunteer, board member and patron for the past two decades. He has made numerous gifts of art, started the museum’s Art Acquisition Endowment, and provided tremendously generous gifts to the 1996 and the 2010 capital expansions.

Highlights from this major gift will be exhibited at the Harwood Museum of Art May 17-September 7, 2014. The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated catalogue featuring an essay by Evan Maurer, Director Emeritus of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

This announcement coincides with the Museum’s 90th anniversary celebration, which runs September through December 2013.

Where: The Harwood Museum of Art of UNM, 238 Ledoux Street, Taos, NM. 575-758-9826
www.harwoodmuseum.org

Video: <http://vimeo.com/69911175>

**COMPLETE COLLECTION LIST, IMAGES AND INTERVIEW
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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