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**PIANOS ABOUT TOWN RETURNS TO OLD TOWN SQUARE  
TO CELEBRATE SEVENTH SEASON**

FORT COLLINS, Colorado, May 8, 2017 – On May 10 after months of indoor hibernation, painted pianos will emerge in outdoor locations across Fort Collins as part of the Pianos About Town project, a collaborative effort among [Bohemian Foundation](#), the [City of Fort Collins Art in Public Places](#) program and the [Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority](#).

Over the course of the year, local artists will paint 13 pianos donated by community members. Local artists and artist groups selected to paint pianos this year are Chris Bates; Edurado Casas; Chelsea Ermer; Carla Gamboa and Marina Avila; Jane Glotzer; Kris Grauvogl; Jana Leigh Hillstrom and Leisha Lawson; Pamela Kraft; Sarah J. Kuhn; Barbara and Rachel Lacerte; National Colorado Intertribal Powwow Association (NCIPA); Werner Schreiber; and Larry Tucci.

The Art in Action tent and summer painting will return to the south side of Fort Collins' Old Town Square. The public is invited to stop by to watch the work in progress. On May 10, local artists Marina Avila and Carla Gamboa will begin working on the first 2017 piano.

"We're excited to launch another colorful season of Pianos About Town in the community," said Tom Scharf, Bohemian Foundation's Music Programs director. "Bringing together visual art and music in a community that really embraces both art forms is special. This program has high visibility and great participation and continues to remind us that Fort Collins is a great place to be."

Since the program's start in 2010, 46 local artists have been employed to paint 80 pianos.

"Over the past several years of the program we've employed a wide range of artists: a high school student, Colorado State University students, as well as professional artists," said Ellen Martin, Visual Arts Administrator for Art in Public Places. "This season, 10 of the 13 artists are new to the Pianos About Town program."

**Pianos About Town at a Glance**

Pianos About Town is intended to be a fun, interactive art installation that creates an additional element of whimsy and surprise in Fort Collins. The project is a public art initiative that provides paid work to local visual artists, that gives the public the opportunity to observe these artists work in real time, that showcases the work of these artists throughout town, and that brings opportunities for spontaneous musical expression to the streets of Fort Collins.

The original inspiration for Pianos About Town comes from British artist Luke Jerram, who created a 60-piano installation that toured the world, stopping in New York City in June 2010. Pianos About Town was also inspired by a similar project on Denver's 16th Street Mall. The first pianos were placed in Downtown Fort Collins during the 2010 holiday season and were an instant hit. This is the seventh season for Pianos About Town.

Pianos are acquired through donations made by community members looking for a new home for

their used instruments. Pianos are picked up, free of charge, from their previous homes and brought to a storage area where they are cleaned, tuned, prepped for painting, and readied for the outside elements. After that, the painting begins. Selected local artists spend approximately two weeks painting their piano in downtown Fort Collins, outdoors in a public location when weather permits. Once painted, each finished piano enters into rotation at Pianos About Town locations throughout Fort Collins. Area businesses play a key role in the success of the project by “adopting” the painted pianos and covering them during inclement weather.

### **Artist Profile: Marina Avila and Carla Gamboa**

Carla Gamboa originally hails from Mexico, but now lives in Fort Collins with her daughter, Marina Avila. Gamboa holds a bachelor’s degree in graphic design and two master’s degrees in business administration—one carries a specialization in green marketing.

“I moved to Fort Collins almost two years ago,” said Gamboa. “The first thing I noticed when we visited Old Town was the colorful pianos. I saw people playing them and kids dancing around them. I felt happy to be here—even when I was away from home, I felt hope in my heart, and I knew everything was going to be ok. This project is the perfect way to celebrate life and express its importance. I feel fortunate and grateful to be a part of this program.”

Last summer, Gamboa completed a piano called “Sisters by Heart,” which depicts two mermaids joined in friendship. This year, she submitted a new proposal with the artist who inspired “Sisters by Heart.”

“Last year I had the chance to paint a piano, I felt the joy of being part of a community that appreciates art,” said Gamboa in her proposal. “It was a special theme for me as it was inspired by my daughter and she was key to the execution of the mural. But she was sad at the end, because even though she did amazing work, she didn’t sign the piano, as I applied as a solo artist ... We would be honored to paint this piano that not only shows an amazing part of our culture that we are proud to share with the community that embraces us, but also because this would be the first time that mother and daughter will be teaming up as equal artists.”

### **Piano Title: “Día de Muertos”**

Artist Description: “The Day of the Dead (*Día de Muertos*) is one of the most important and deepest traditional celebrations of Mexican culture, and it has a long history. It is a combined celebration from the Spanish conquerors and the indigenous people; a moment of gathering with friends and family to honor the lives of our deceased beloved ones. It is a very spiritual celebration.” The piano will depict a colorful altar (*ofrenda*), “which needs to have lots of food, hot chocolate, mezcal, tequila, pictures and all kinds of memorabilia from the beloved ones. Every single item on the altar has a special meaning, and helps to guide the spirits on their way down and their way back. The *ofrenda* is a bridge between life and death, a way to stay close, like the memory of a loved one that never fades.” — Carla Gamboa and Marina Avila



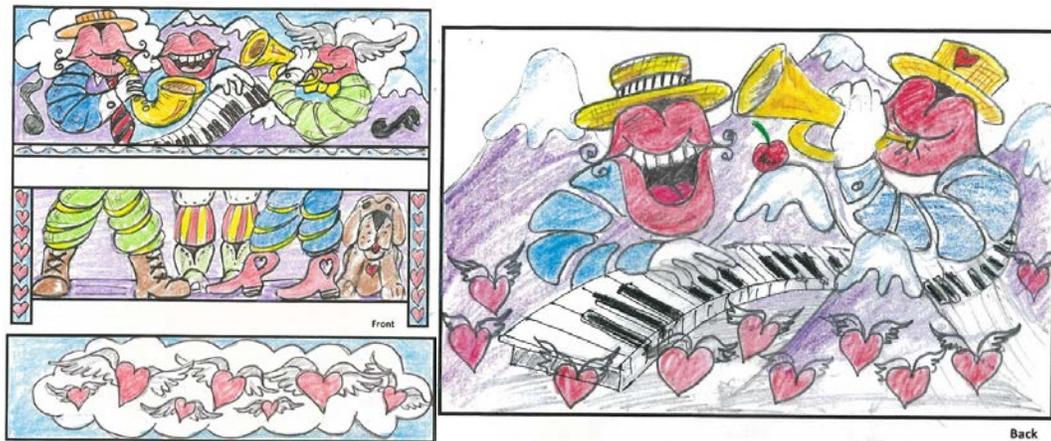
**Group Profile: Northern Colorado Intertribal Powwow Association**

This group is made up of [Northern Colorado Intertribal Powwow Association](#) (NCIPA) members led by mentor-artist Dr. Peter Jacobs, professor emeritus and chair of CSU's Department of Art and Art History. The NCIPA organization, which provides a highly visible testimony to Fort Collins' commitment to celebrating diversity in the community, holds an annual powwow to support its mission. The artist honorarium from this piano will go directly toward supporting NCIPA's 2018 Powwow.

"There are many teachings involved in the powwow circle, and [the NICPA] powwow serves as a tool in educating our community about the various cultures that coexist in this community," said the organization in its proposal.

**Piano Title: "A Whimsical Band of Characters"**

Artist's Description: "Our piano is based on a whimsical, colorful depiction of musical characters playing in a Rocky Mountain setting. The design, created by Peter Jacobs, will be laid out by him and painted under his supervision." – Northern Colorado Intertribal Powwow Association



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