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Media and Public Contact:

Enrique Fernández Cervantes,
BHCC - Visual Arts Coordinator / Curator
(214) 670-8723 enrique.fernandez@dallascityhall.com



Office of Cultural Affairs
CITY OF DALLAS



Bath House
CULTURAL CENTER

The Heart takes center stage in art exhibition at the Bath House

The Bath House Cultural Center presents

21st annual El Corazón art exhibition

Curated by Jose Vargas

February 7-March 7, 2015

Opening Reception with the Artist: Saturday, February 7, 2015 (7-9 PM)

DALLAS - The Bath House Cultural Center presents the 21st installment of its popular *El Corazón* annual exhibition, a passionate and eclectic show that features diverse creations inspired by the heart (El Corazón), an important and inspiring symbol in art. Jose Vargas, a Dallas Curator and visual artist, organized the exhibition.

Visual artists have always gravitated toward a vast number of symbols while looking for inspiration and ideas for their works of art. It is easy to see why an artist would succumb to the allure of working with symbols. The human aspiration to find the meaning or explanation of an object or thing encourages artists to perceive and depict their personally decoded interpretation of a symbol. Often, this natural attraction to decipherable meaning leads the artist to invent new codes and symbols of their own as well.

It is true that the number of symbols that have moved and inspired artists throughout history is immense and diverse. But it is also true that very few of those symbols have stirred the imagination of artists as passionately as the symbol of the human heart. The image of the heart is a recurring symbol that appears in works of art

that date back to antiquity. Some renditions of the heart are present in talismans and amulets from Ancient Egypt. The heart also appears in ornamental patterns surrounding Greek mosaics from the Byzantine era. Roman Catholicism and other religions adapted the symbol of the heart to represent divinity and love through the arts. Other examples of the predominance of the heart in art are the heart-shaped masks by the Kwele people in Africa, the fresco paintings and stone carvings found in Mesoamerican ruins, the choice of the symbol for body tattoos in modern times, the proliferation of heart-inspired illustrations revolving around the celebration of St. Valentine, and all the other many appearances of the heart in contemporary art. All of these interpretations of the heart—love, passion, devotion, protection, disillusion, etc.—are clear evidence that when it comes to a multiplicity of assignation of meaning, the heart is truly a fascinating and enduring symbol.

The artists from this show have created works of art inspired by the heart (El Corazón). Jose Vargas, who got the inspiration for the name of the exhibition from a deck of Mexican Loteria cards that had the picture of the heart with its name in Spanish, has curated this exhibition since 1993.

Artists: Diana Almand, Carley Blackman Yonkman, Kim Carothers, Paul Carranza, Gabrielle Castañeda-Pruitt, Vicki Charlotta, J R Compton, Debi Cox, Linda DuBose, Lori Dudley, Jacque Forsher, Rebecca Guy, Robert Hamilton, Bobbie Howard, Jenny Keller, Joanna LaGrone-Headrick, Mike Mahler, Marcela Mihaloglou, Pavlina Panova, Carlos Alberto Quadra, Christina Ramirez, Janet Reynolds, Gail Roberts, Alfredo Rodriguez, Eloy J. Rodriguez, Jose Balmore Salazar Campos, Ruth K. Sanchez, Joe Sarate, Evan Sartin, Kate Schatz, Sabine Senft, Cece Skeith, Pam Stern, Sammy Thomason, Diane Torres, Mary Ann Turner, Jose Vargas, Tina Weger, and Kim Worthington.

About the exhibition curator:

Jose Vargas is an independent exhibition curator and a visual artist from Dallas. He has displayed his photographs and mixed media art extensively in local and regional art venues. Mr. Vargas is known for starting the annual tradition of the El Corazón and Virgen de Guadalupe exhibitions, two popular gallery shows in Dallas. He has organized both shows for the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs since 1993 and has received praise for his curatorial work.

Please visit www.bathhousecultural.com for more information and to preview selected art pieces from the exhibition in the Photo Gallery.

Press Photographs: To download print-resolution (300 dpi) JPEG press photographs of this exhibition, please visit the online Press Room at <http://enriquefernandezcervantes.com/bhccpress/>

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The Bath House Cultural Center is a division of the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs. The center is dedicated to fostering the growth, development and quality of multi-cultural arts within the City of Dallas. The center emphasizes innovating visual and performing arts as well as other multi-discipline events throughout the year. Funding for the Bath House Cultural Center is provided by the City of Dallas, with additional support from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Location and hours: The Bath House Cultural Center is located on the eastern shore of White Rock Lake at the end of Northcliff Dr. off of Buckner Blvd. at **521 E. Lawther, Dallas, TX 75218**. Hours of operation are Tuesday-Saturday, 12:00 noon to 6:00 PM. The center is open until 10:00 PM on nights with theatre performances. For general information about cultural programs at the Bath House Cultural Center, please call (214) 670-8749 or visit the center's website at <http://www.bathhousecultural.com/>

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