

## **Bonfils-Stanton Foundation to Present 3 Leadership Awards for Outstanding Contributions to Colorado's Arts Community**

*Colorado artist Carlos Frésquez, Colorado arts philanthropists/volunteers Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld, and Executive Director for Downtown Aurora Visual Arts Susan Jenson named as 2018 Honorees*

**DENVER, CO (May 1, 2018)** – Bonfils-Stanton Foundation is set to present three awards to Coloradans who have helped make Colorado's art and culture scene vibrant, transformative, and unique. The Foundation's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards Celebration on June 1<sup>st</sup> will applaud the extraordinary contributions of Carlos Frésquez, Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld, and Susan Jenson.

Among them, the [2018 Annual Awards Honorees](#) have given the opportunity of creative arts programming to underserved youth, made an impact on the visual arts through powerful works, exhibitions and classes, and have been instrumental in building our city's cultural infrastructure.

### **Artist Award**

Artist and educator [Carlos Frésquez](#) is this year's honoree for his impactful art works that explore social issues of our time while communicating his cultural roots and values.

### **Community Service in the Arts**

Denver natives, [Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld](#), have a long and unwavering history of commitment to support arts and culture in Colorado through their extensive leadership and generous philanthropy.

### **Arts and Society Award**

As Executive Director for Downtown Aurora Visual Arts, or DAVA, for more than 15 years, [Susan Jenson](#) believes the arts personalize learning for all young people.

Bonfils-Stanton Foundation believes extraordinary arts and leadership are essential to building a vibrant Colorado. The Annual Awards Program recognizes significant contributions by remarkable Coloradans as Artists, through their Community Service in the Arts, and who foster positive social change through Arts and Society. This year's honorees will receive a \$35,000 award for their exceptional work, inspiration to others and dedication to driving Colorado's arts and culture to new heights.

"We can't say enough about the 2018 Awards Honorees. Each of them have contributed so much to Colorado through their tireless work and devotion to the arts," says Gary Steuer, Bonfils-Stanton Foundation President and CEO. "It's an honor to present their awards at the Annual Awards Celebration. Each of them are truly inspiring those around them and creating opportunities for others in our communities."

**For the media:** Colorado is ready to hear about the amazing 2018 Annual Awards Honorees. Everyone loves stories about individuals who devote their lives to helping others and sharing their passions. There are plenty of angles to run with in your coverage. Want to chat with Carlos Frésquez about his colorful and impactful work? How about doing a package on unsung superhero, Susan Jenson's efforts in changing the lives of tens of thousands of kids through transformational arts programs? Or how about a look at the lives of Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld and their extraordinary contributions to the arts through community leadership? Reach out to Erica Boniface to get a story on the books: [Erica@ColoradoMediaNetwork.com](mailto:Erica@ColoradoMediaNetwork.com) or call 303-717-8246.

**About the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation:**

Every day, Bonfils-Stanton Foundation strategically invests in imagination and innovation, because cultivating the creative spark is vital to making our community an exciting place where people want to live, work and thrive. Since its founding, the Foundation has distributed over \$69 million in charitable contributions. Learn more at [Bonfils-StantonFoundation.org](http://Bonfils-StantonFoundation.org).

**Get to know the 2018 Annual Awards Honorees Now:**

**Carlos Frésquez** has exhibited his work in more than 30 U.S. states and in 10 different countries, but perhaps it is his enduring mark on his hometown of Denver - through the creation of his art around the city over the last 40 years - that has made the greatest impact. A dedicated artist and educator, Carlos has spent his career offering a unique perspective on culture in Denver and the Chicano community's impact on the city's evolution. His early artistic vision was inspired by the Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960's that endeavored to achieve Mexican American empowerment. Today, his works explore significant issues of our time while maintaining his cultural roots. From the muraled walls at Su Teatro depicting the feathered serpent "Quetzalcoatl," to the iconic image of St. Cajetan's Church on the Auraria Campus, Frésquez carries on the historic and educational tradition of Mexican muralists. His influential and prolific works also include painting, collage, and theater set design.

Carlos received his BA from Metropolitan State College and MFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He returned to his alma mater to teach in 1989 as an adjunct professor and became a full-time professor in 2005. He shared, "I try to inspire and engage my students, enabling them to produce meaningful works of art. I am humbled watching them participate in what I feel is the spiritual act of painting." As an educator, Carlos puts an emphasis on advising his students by providing open office hours, feedback on students' paintings, and introductions to opportunities post-graduation to succeed in the art world. Seeking to support future artists and former students, Carlos teaches a course called *Community Painting: The Mural*, that allows students to work collaboratively to create a work of public art. To date, the course has led to more than a dozen murals throughout Denver created by his students.

Over the course of his career, Carlos has made history as an artist. In 1992, Frésquez's work was included in the Smithsonian American Art Museum's first exhibition of Chicano art. He's exhibited in The Bronx Museum, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, La Bellas Artes in Mexico City, and The National Museum of American Art in Washington DC, among others. Most recently, his work was lauded in *Sangre Colorado: Carlos Fresquez Mid-Career Survey* at Metropolitan State University's Center for Visual Art. Carlos' numerous recognitions include the Civil Right Award from NEWSED Community Development, Spirit of Tlatelolco from la Escuela Tlatelolco, and the Lena Archuleta Award from the Denver Public Library.

Denver natives, **Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld**, have a long and unwavering history of commitment to support arts and culture in Colorado alongside other causes. What has set them apart and made them role models in our community is their unabating passion and kindness that are the driving forces behind their philanthropy. The Hirschfelds are truly a dynamic duo of Denver.

Since graduating from the University of Denver, Arlene has worked tirelessly to make a positive impact on the lives of others through public high school teaching, volunteering, and serving various causes. She is a member of the boards of the Denver Art Museum, MDC Richmond American Homes Foundation, Children's Diabetes Foundation of Denver, The Women's Foundation of Colorado as honorary trustee, and the Colorado Governor's Residence Preservation Fund among many others. Arlene also served as the first Jewish president of the Junior League of Denver, the fourth woman board chair of the Allied Jewish Federation of Colorado (Jewish Colorado) since its founding in 1946, and the first woman board chair of Rose Community Foundation. Arlene's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness are present in all her work. She supports women in leadership roles as a member of the Dean's Council at The Harvard University Divinity School. Her passion and skill have also made Arlene a noteworthy fundraiser. As campaign co-chair she succeeded in helping raise \$47 million for the Denver Art Museum's Hamilton Building in 2002-2006 and is currently on the committee for Vision 2021 to complete the museum's campus – a \$150 million campaign. Arlene shared, "No matter who you are, or what your financial situation is, there is always a meaningful way to contribute – not only with money, but equally so with your time, ideas and talent."

Barry's story is woven into the fabric of Denver's history. His business career and philanthropic support in the city run deep. "I was exposed at an early age by my grandfather to help others. He said you need to do something more than just business, something for a greater good," Barry shared. In 1988, he helped establish the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, a unique sales and use tax statute that currently distributes more than \$50 million a year to some 300 arts and cultural organizations and, since its inception, has dispersed just over \$1 billion. His commitment was once again demonstrated during the renewal of the SCFD tax in 2016. His numerous business activities and contributions to the state's tourism industry through Visit Denver led to his induction into the Colorado Business Hall of Fame and the Colorado Tourism Hall of Fame.

Barry has been a leader in many initiatives including the Toyota Elephant Passage at the Denver Zoo, the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, the Hamilton Building, the Denver Public Library, as well as the expansion of the Colorado Convention Center. He serves or has served on the boards of Xcel Energy, Colorado Concern, Clyfford Still Museum, Denver Art Museum (where he served as board chair and founded the Latino Advisory Committee), Denver Area Council of the Boy Scouts, Cherry Creek Arts Festival, National Jewish Health, and the Boettcher Foundation among others.

Arlene and Barry's passion, caring, and enthusiasm for the arts in Denver have been shown time and time again. Their leadership and compassion have inspired many others. As a team, their continued support over the last five decades has made and continues to make a lasting and positive impact on the Denver community.

**Susan Jenson** has passionately dedicated her career to engaging the community and transforming lives through her commitment to the arts in the Denver region. For more than 15 years, she has served as the Executive Director for Downtown Aurora Visual Arts, or DAVA, which in 2018 will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Susan believes the arts personalize learning for all young people. She helped design on-site art classes and art-based job training that connect young people from underserved communities to creative arts programming. Susan's emphasis on excellence in the arts combined with positive youth development, encourages students to engage with issues and concepts that impact them personally and build the 21st century skills they need to succeed. As a champion of the arts, she uses all mediums to spark an artistic fire within youth in an environment where they feel safe, included, and inspired. Because of her tireless work to ensure kids have access to these resources, 99% of DAVA participants go on to careers in business, technology, the sciences, and education.

Susan's work at DAVA has not gone unnoticed, meriting the organization local and national distinction. In 2014, former First Lady Michelle Obama awarded the program with a National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award. Each year, NAHYP recognizes 12 of the country's best creative youth development programs for using engagement in the arts and humanities to increase academic achievement, graduation rates, and college enrollment. Under Susan's tenure, DAVA was also the recipient of National Exemplary Award for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices, and Policies, the Aurora Civic Excellence Award, and an El Pomar Award for Excellence.

Beyond helping Denver's youth, Susan has dedicated her time to serving individuals and communities outside of DAVA. She served on The Denver Foundation's Arts and Culture Committee and is a member of the foundation's Community Legacy Society. Her teaching experience includes lecturing at University College at University of Denver, Metropolitan State University, and the University of Colorado Boulder where she has led courses in Modern and Contemporary Art and Best Practices in Cultural Arts Organizations. Susan's community service



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**Media Contact:** Erica Boniface

**Phone:** 303-717-8246

**E-mail:** [Erica@ColoradoMediaNetwork.com](mailto:Erica@ColoradoMediaNetwork.com)

has been carried out with the same enthusiasm; she worked on SCFD's new Inclusivity Fund Advisory Committee, the Cultural Arts Plan for the City of Aurora, the Colfax Community Network's Board of Directors, and was a founding member of the Alliance for Creative Youth Development. Susan's passion for the arts and learning continues to fuel her commitment to serving others and enriching our community.

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