

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART COMMISSIONS SECOND INSTALLATION TO
ACTIVATE OUTDOOR PIAZZA**

*Interactive and site-specific installation on Woodruff Arts Center campus
follows successful “Mi Casa, Your Casa” pilot project*

*Recent grant from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation
to support piazza activation program through 2018*

ATLANTA, Jan. 29, 2015 – In spring 2015, the [High Museum of Art](#) will unveil the second large-scale, interactive design installation by contemporary Mexican designers Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena on the Woodruff Arts Center’s Carroll Slater Sifly Piazza.

The site-specific work, titled “Los Trompos” (“The Spinning Tops”), continues a multi-year initiative to activate the outdoor space and engage visitors in a meaningful art experience upon entering the campus of the Woodruff Arts Center (of which the Museum is a partner). The installation builds on the success of 2014’s “[Mi Casa, Your Casa](#)” commission, for which Esrawe and Cadena dotted the piazza with three-dimensional open frames shaped like houses that invited visitor interaction. Originally planned as a two-year project, the Piazza activation program is extended for three more years with funding from a recent grant to the Woodruff Arts Center from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation.



On view April 24 through Nov. 29, 2015, “Los Trompos” (“The Spinning Tops”) will create a destination outside the Museum where patrons can enjoy recreation, social interaction, performances, art-making activities and special events co-organized with local partner institutions.

As a blank canvas for community engagement and programming, “Los Trompos” draws its inspiration from the form of a spinning top, a toy popular with children around the world. The project will feature more than 40 three-dimensional, larger-than-life tops in a variety of colors and shapes installed throughout the piazza. The colorful surfaces of each “top” will be created in part by fabric woven in a traditional Mexican style. By working together, visitors will be able to spin the tops on their bases as they interact with the structures. “Only through this interaction and collaboration will the work come to life and be complete,” said Cadena.

“We have been delighted by the response to this initiative, and we are very grateful to the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation for their support to continue this important work,” said Michael E. Shapiro, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. director of the High. “Artistic engagement and enjoyment should begin as soon as visitors set foot on the Woodruff Arts Center campus, not just

when entering its buildings. Having the opportunity to work with our Woodruff Arts Center partners and organizations throughout Atlanta to create these experiences for our community has been invigorating.”

As part of its [Friday Night Lates](#) series, the High will present evening programs on the first and third Friday of the month featuring artistic pairings and collaborations, live music, and other performances, which will take place both inside the Museum and on the Piazza during the run of “Los Trompos.” These programs will be collaborations with artists and performers across the Atlanta arts spectrum, from colleagues at the other Woodruff Arts Center partners (Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Arts for Learning) to Atlanta arts groups including Atlanta Ballet’s Wabi Sabi, The Atlanta Opera, local musician and sound designer Ben Coleman, Dad’s Garage, The Institute of Mexican Culture, The Object Group, Theater Argo and T. Lang Dance. For more information and an evolving schedule of programs and performances for “Los Trompos,” visit www.high.org.

In addition to installing the tops on the Sifly Piazza, the High has partnered with Midtown Alliance to bring this interactive design installation from the Woodruff Arts Center campus to the streets of Midtown. Seven locations for the tops are currently planned throughout the district. To date, Midtown Alliance as well as its members including Bank of America Plaza, Cousins Properties, Franklin Street Properties, The Office of the Arts at Georgia Institute of Technology and Selig Enterprises, Inc. have agreed to contribute space and sponsor the extension of the project. A full list of locations will be available at www.high.org.

About the High’s Piazza Activation Initiative

Co-curated by Sarah Schleuning, curator of decorative arts and design, and Virginia Shearer, the Eleanor McDonald Storza director of education, the High’s piazza activation initiative was launched to explore how engagement with art and design can extend beyond the museum’s walls through dynamic installations, enlivened by a variety of programs, art-making activities and other interactive features.

The High commissioned Esrawe and Cadena to design the first two installations for the project, building on a partnership established in 2013 with the designers for the exhibition “[Frida & Diego: Passion, Politics, and Painting](#).” For that exhibition, the design team created two [contemporary reading rooms](#) within the galleries. Based on visitor reactions to those installations, the High asked the designers to return to create a new intervention for its piazza space, which resulted in their creation of “Mi Casa, Your Casa.”

On view July 18 through Nov. 30, 2014, “Mi Casa, Your Casa” featured 36 three-dimensional, vibrant red frames shaped like houses installed in a large grid on the piazza. Hammocks and swings offered daytime leisure and recreation options, and the High also worked with local arts organizations and Woodruff Arts Center partners to present live performances and art-making activities in the houses. This pilot project was enjoyed by more than 100,000 visitors.

About the Designers

Two of the leading designers in Mexico today, Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena currently serve as designers-in-residence for the High. More than five years ago, they established their interdisciplinary design firm E+C. **Esrawe** is an award-winning industrial designer as well as a

celebrated furniture, interior and product designer. Inspired by traditional Latin American design, architecture and folk art, Esrawe's works are playful, sometimes humorous, and organic. Winner of the Bienal Iberoamericana de Diseño (2010) in the Interior Design Spaces category, Esrawe designed glassware for Nouvel Studio, with products available at Barneys New York, Saks Fifth Avenue and the Walker Art Center. Like Esrawe, **Cadena** also is creative director of his own firm, Cadena+Asoc. Branding. Cadena's collaborative designs explore the boundaries between art and science. Cadena has said of design that it "is not a luxury anymore, it is a necessity. Everything around us is design and should revolve around the direct and aesthetic benefit of humans and planet earth." To this end, his designs focus on visual concepts influenced by the world around us.

The High Museum of Art

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern U.S. With more than 14,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography, folk art and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists. For more information, visit high.org.

About the Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is one of the largest arts centers in the world, home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Arts for Learning. Each year, these arts organizations play host to over 1.2 million patrons at the Woodruff Arts Center's Midtown Atlanta location, one of the only arts centers in the U.S. to host both visual and performing arts on a single campus. Through its work with educators and schools, the Woodruff Arts Center serves over 300,000 students annually and is the largest arts educator in Georgia.

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