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## Art's Center Opens New Exhibits

**(Pueblo, Colo.- January 29, 2021)** The Sangre de Cristo Arts and Conference is pleased to announce four new exhibits: Dystopian Fictions by Bob Benvenuto, Frank Howell's Photographs and Prints; Robert Wands: A Retrospective and Unabashed by Deigo Riviera. The exhibits will open January 30, 2021. The Arts Center is open to walk-up guests. Reservations are also accepted. Contact the Arts Center at 719-295-7200 for more information.

### About the artists:

#### Bob Benvenuto

Bob Benvenuto was born and raised in New York City. Bob attended the School of Visual Arts in New York City and completed a Masters Degree in Expressive Therapies at Lesley College in Cambridge Massachusetts in 1980. He moved to Pueblo in 1988 and opened an artisan textile printing studio called Mesa Shadow. He started using digital photography in 1996 as a design tool which evolved into his current means of expression. His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in Boston and Santa Fe as well as at Colorado State University Pueblo, The Colorado State Capitol Building, Kadoya and BloBack Galleries in Pueblo. He has also been selected three times to exhibit in the annual Representing the West exhibit at the Sangre De Cristo Arts Center. The artist has been featured on [photoplacegallery.com](http://photoplacegallery.com), [zealous.com](http://zealous.com), [artistaday.com](http://artistaday.com) and [risunoc.com](http://risunoc.com). His work is in the permanent collections of Colorado State University, Pueblo and The Crawford Hotel in Denver as well as private collections nationally.

**Artist Statement:** Is our vision of the world around us skewed in this advancing age of technology against a backdrop of decaying cultural and physical infrastructure? In this age of information overload it is increasingly difficult to distinguish the authentic from the fake. With so many contradictory images that stare at us from our personal devices, we are deprived of being able to rely on our most elemental senses to validate our experience. An orchestrated narrative, artificial of course but they are not illusions. These composite images record the world of appearances seen through a veil of conjecture and contrivance.

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### ***About the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center:***

The cultural hub of Southern Colorado, the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center gives visitors the tools to think and act creatively through a three building complex including seven galleries offering the best in historic and contemporary art by artists of local, regional and national renown. The Arts Center offers the Buell Children's Museum, recognized as the second-best for art by Child magazine, a 500-seat theater featuring a variety of performing arts programs, both local and national, and two gift shops. Over 100 fine arts, dance, and leisure classes are available quarterly providing unique offerings to everyone from children to adults of all skill levels. Admission to the Arts Center is \$10 for adults, \$8 for children, seniors 65+, and military. For more information, please call 719-295-7200; stop by the Arts Center located at 210 N. Santa Fe Ave., just off of I-25, exit 98B, or visit online at [www.sdc-arts.org](http://www.sdc-arts.org).

## Frank Howell (1937-1997)

Frank Howell was a successful painter, printmaker, sculptor, writer and gallery owner. His paintings, prints and drawings are often characterized by finely rendered, flowing lines of portraits. Howell and his critics usually described his work as tending toward the mystical.

Exhibit Overview: This exhibit is the first time Frank Howell's photographs have been in a public gallery setting. They were never exhibited during his lifetime. For five years, from 1992 until his death in 1997, Howell photographed with black and white film at Dalton Canyon beaver ponds. His camera moved in quite close to his subject matter, focusing on lines present in the ice, water, shadows and reflections of the landscape. He experimented with extreme close-ups of leaves and feathers, creating meditative patterns, lines and textures. "Portal to Spirit" will feature several new acquisitions of Howell's work to the Arts Center's permanent collection. Donated by Charles and Jeanette Gilchrist White, 12 black and white drawings and lithographs will be exhibited for the first time at the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center. The viewer will be able to see Howell's strong emphasis on line throughout all the works in the exhibit.

## Robert Wands

Robert Wands currently serves as a professor emeritus with Colorado State University in Pueblo, where he started as an art professor in the early-1960s, teaching drawing and painting for 33 years. Additionally, he has worked as director of Wands Art Studio and Gallery since 1978.

Wands was raised in the home of his artist father, the "Dean of Colorado landscape artists", Alfred Wands, who taught him to paint "En Plein Air" (open air) from the age of 12. Wands went on to receive his B.F.A. and Masters in painting from the University of Denver with additional graduate work at Case Western Reserve University and The Cleveland Art Institute. His Masters thesis dealt with "Atmospheric Conditions in Paint" and he became known as a cloud painter. He also spent five years as a seasonal ranger in Rocky Mountain National Park, which added greatly to his interest in landscape painting. Wands retired as Professor Emeritus of Art from Colorado State University-Pueblo, where he taught drawing and painting for 33 years. He now maintains two studios, one in Pueblo, Colorado, from October to May, and another in Estes Park, Colorado, from June to September.

## Diego Bueno

Diego Bueno is an 18 year old self-taught artist. He's a native of Pueblo and graduated from South High School (class of 2019) where he received a lot of guidance from his art teacher, Mr. Trimble. He began drawing in elementary school and never stopped. He has received awards including 3 Best of Show for drawing and an award from the Superintendent of Schools. He hopes to be a full time artist. Bueno says, "My art has been influenced by many other artists. My style, when it comes to ink in particular, is heavily influenced by artists such as Alphonso Dunn and Franklin Booth, seeing their work was what made me want to start working in ink. As far as subject matter goes I've never been a fan of drawing portraits or landscapes. They can be beautiful, but I personally have always been fascinated with the surreal aspect of art."