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Santa Fe Show: Objects of Art Weekend to Culminate in the Raffle of a Native-Crafted Tipi by Renowned Artist, Billy Valenzuela

Thursday, August 18th marks the second opening weekend of the Santa Fe Show: Objects of Art benefiting El Museo Cultural de Santa Fe, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and promoting Hispano art and culture.

The fundraiser will run from 6 to 9 p.m. at El Museo Cultural, 555 Camino de La Familia in the Railyard. In addition to music, food and wine, guests will receive a sneak preview of magnificent contemporary, folk, American Indian, African and Asian art from around the world.

The art-rich weekend will culminate on Sunday evening with the raffle of an 18-foot tipi featuring Mayan sacred glyph created for El Museo Cultural by renowned artist, Billy Valenzuela.

“I believe that when most people see a tipi they think of the Plains Indians,” said Valenzuela. “But what I’m trying to say with my use of the iconic structure and Mayan images is that all tribes are related.”

Valenzuela, has been the creator, curator, designer and restorer for Ralph Lauren’s private tipi collection for over a decade. His experience with tipis comes from growing up in Arizona with indigenous people and visiting other tribes in the United States.

“As tipi painters, we are following in the ancient paths taken by specialists who were called upon by the tribe to interpret the symbolic dreams of the vision seeker,” said Valenzuela.

Two Mayan warrior profiles are prominently displayed on the sides of the El Museo tipi. “I chose the image of a warrior because a warrior was the provider of the society. So to me these two warriors are symbols of provision for the owner of the tipi...protection also but primarily provision.”

A Mayan universe symbol is featured in the back of the tipi to show how indigenous tribes were so connected to nature. “They were not trying to conquer nature. They were trying to cooperate with nature,” says Valenzuela

On the front and back of the smoke flaps he has chosen images of feather staffs. “Those were symbols of their authority...symbols of their power.”

Valenzuela says his decision to create a special tipi for El Museo dovetails with his philosophy of being able to give back wherever he sees a need. “El Museo highlights Hispanic culture and the root of Hispanic culture is indigenous. We need to raise money so El Museo can continue to serve the community. This is something I can do.”

Tickets for the benefit are \$50 per person and include two raffle tickets. Those who wish to purchase individual raffle tickets may do so for \$25. Tickets may be purchased at the door, reserved online at www.elmuseocultural.org or by contacting El Museo 505 992-0591.