

Chagoya exhibit now showing in Pendleton

Artist's work 'provides an entry point to talk about difficult subjects'

By **ANTONIO ARREDONDO**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For years, the Pendleton Center for the Arts has brought in notable artists from around the world; but later this week, they're slated to unveil one of their most impressive showcases yet.

The solo art of acclaimed Mexican-born American artist Enrique Chagoya runs through Oct. 6.

PCA Executive Director Roberta Lavadour said she is over the moon about having Chagoya's work at the center. This is the fifth year the PCA has welcomed an exhibit of this nature.

"(Chagoya's) work is so yummy," Lavadour said, "his sense of satire and humor provides an entry point to talk about difficult subjects."

Born and raised in Mexico City, Chagoya's works have been featured in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art among others.

His art is known for his inclusion of pop icons, such as Superman and Mickey Mouse, to juxtapose secular, popular and religious symbols from both United States and Latin American culture. Chagoya's style is based on painted books — codexes — that many indigenous peoples in Mexico and Central America used to record history, and many of those paintings will be on display in Pendleton.

Chagoya attended the opening reception via Zoom. While he may be featured in larger cities around the nation, the artist said he is grateful to have his work in any city.

"I feel humbled by the experience of sharing my imagination, perspective on society and humor present in my artwork at the Pendleton Center for the Arts," Chagoya said. "It is my privilege to have a solo exhibition there."

Chagoya's artwork may be one of the bigger exhibits the PCA has received, but it is by no means the first big showcase. The center has featured pieces from artists such as Chuck Close, Louise Bourgeois and Kara Walker. All of those exhibits have been in partnership with the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

Schnitzer is one of the most prominent developers in Portland and has a passion for art. He began collecting in 1988. His foundation's collection exceeds 20,000 works. He has worked with the Pendleton Center for the Arts on numerous occasions, including the Kelly and Bourgeois exhibits.

As part of the collaboration, Lavadour and her staff are sure to carefully inspect each item, noting its condition before and after its time in Pendleton. Lavadour said she had to receive curatorial training at the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland to gain access to the artwork.

"We go over every inch, document everything," she said. "Even the dust collecting on the top of things."

Schnitzer's connection

After attending his first Round-Up in 1987, Schnitzer grew close to the area thanks to its hospitality and friendships made there. "I feel like it's my second home," Schnitzer



Pat Mazzer/McEvoy Foundation for the Arts
Mexican-born American artist Enrique Chagoya poses for a Portrait at McEvoy Foundation for the Arts in San Francisco. The Pendleton Center for the Arts is hosting Chagoya and an exhibition of his works starting Friday, Aug. 5, 2022.



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Journey Hahn, left, and Roberta Lavadour hang Enrique Chagoya's work "Aliens San Frontiers" on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, at the Pendleton Center for the Arts in Pendleton. Lavadour, the arts center's executive director, said this may be one of the center's biggest exhibitions to date. Hahn is the arts center's program assistant.



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
Mexican-born American artist Enrique Chagoya's works hang on the wall Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, at the Pendleton Center for the Arts in Pendleton. Chagoya's exhibition will through Oct. 6.

said in 2019. That connection has given Pendleton a larger voice in the art community than most towns its size, something that Pendleton Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director Cheri Rosenberg noted. The center is known for punching above its weight in terms of its showcases. "As we've heard said so often, for a community the

size of ours, there is truly such large-scale work taking place," Rosenberg said. "It's impressive to see."

The hard work that Lavadour has put in has not

gone unnoticed by community members either.

"These types of worldwide artists don't just stumble across us on the map," Rosenberg said.

"Roberta and her team should be commended for their hard work and dedication, to not only the community but the passion behind what they do."

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IF YOU GO
The Pendleton Center for the Arts is on the banks of the Umatilla River at 214 N. Main St. and is open Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday 12-4 p.m.