

# First Enduring Vision Award Winners Announced

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### For additional information

Media Contact: Victoria Tirrel

(651) 379-2238

[vtirrel@bushfoundation.org](mailto:vtirrel@bushfoundation.org)

## **\$100,000 Grants Given to Frank Big Bear, Janel Jacobson and Walter Piehl**

**(St. Paul, MN — June 9, 2008)** — The Bush Foundation today announced the first three recipients of its Enduring Vision Awards, focused on propelling the artistic investigations of mature artists. **Frank Big Bear, Janel Jacobson** and **Walter Piehl** each will receive \$100,000 over the next three to five years to encourage their continued influence on present and future generations of artists, audiences and their chosen field of work. The Enduring Vision Award is one of three initiatives of the Bush Artist Program supporting individual artists.

**The Enduring Vision Award is the only award of this size and intent in the country.** Up to three awards will be given annually to artists in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota who have at least 25 years of experience as working artists. The 2008 awards were considered in the visual and media arts categories; 2009 awards will focus on performing and literary arts. These awards significantly expand the Bush Artist Program, which since 1976 has annually provided 15 artist fellowships.

The decision to expand the Bush Artist Program grew out of an evaluation that found a dearth of financial opportunities for artists at the later stages of their careers. While older artists may have found more consistent income at this confident and productive stage, fewer funding opportunities exist. This situation is compounded by the fact that artists rarely retire.

“The Bush Foundation knows from ample research that investing in artists benefits our communities in myriad ways,” said Bush Foundation President Peter Hutchinson. “These Enduring Vision Awards—the first of their kind in this country—not only ensure the Foundation is supporting artists of all ages and stages, but they also mark a doubling of our investment in the courageous and vibrant artists shaping our communities.”

The Enduring Vision Award recipients were chosen through a multi-step process. A regional panel of seven artists and curators reviewed nominations of 93 artists, selecting 10 finalists from this pool. The final three were chosen by a national interdisciplinary panel of six visual artists and curators who considered the breadth and depth of the finalists’ work, their promise of continued future artistic excellence, the importance of their influence on their communities, and their interest in pursuing deeper investigations and/or new explorations to inform and enrich their work. (*More information about Panel participants is available at [www.bushfoundation.org](http://www.bushfoundation.org).)*

## **About the Award Winners**

Painter **Frank Big Bear** (Minneapolis, Minnesota) was born in Detroit Lakes and spent his early years on the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. Though largely self-taught, he began his art in earnest while a student at North High School in Minneapolis and later studied with George Morrison at the University of Minnesota. His colorful, intricate, Prismacolor pencil works provide a personal account of both the recent history and present-day experience of American Indians. Big Bear’s works have been seen at the Bockley Gallery in Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts,

Heard Museum in Phoenix, and Institute of American Indian Arts Museum in Santa Fe. His drawings are in the collections of the Walker Art Center, the British Museum in London and the Frederick R. Weisman Museum, among others. In September 2008 the Tweed Museum in Duluth will show a retrospective of Big Bear's work.

**Janel Jacobson** (Harris, Minnesota) is a wood carver whose exquisite works are collected and exhibited by many of the major museums in the country, including the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery and New York's Museum of Art and Design. During more than ten years as a potter, she began carving in stoneware and porcelain clay. Her work eventually evolved into carving very small porcelain sculptures and then to carving hardwoods. Today her works have grown in scale and scope from small netsuke (functional, miniature sculptures used to suspend a pouch or small container from kimono sashes) and ojime (sliding beads on cords that hold the pouch or containers closed) to stand-alone small sculptures. She has received top awards in many of the premier craft shows in the country, including those of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Smithsonian.

**Walter Piehl** (Minot, North Dakota), using acrylic on canvas or paper, treats Western Americana themes with modern art influences and interpretation. He combines an expressionistic style with literal and interpretive investigations of many facets of Western American life. His work is often large in scale (48 inches or more), in series, abstract, and saturated with color and contrast. His work has been exhibited at places as diverse as the Plains Art Museum in Fargo, the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame and Museum of the American Cowboy in Colorado, Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art in Indianapolis and the Palm Gallery in San Diego. He has been a professor in fine arts at Minot State University since 1970.

Complete bios and photos of the recipients are available at [www.bushfoundation.org](http://www.bushfoundation.org).

### **About the Bush Foundation**

The **Bush Foundation** was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Granville Bush and his wife Edyth. In 2007, the Foundation made grants of approximately \$40 million to support programs and efforts to sustain communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. With a mission to improve the quality of life in this region, the Foundation aims to be a catalyst to shape vibrant communities by investing in courageous and effective leadership that significantly strengthens and improves the well-being of the region's people. The Bush Artist Program, one of three programs to support individuals in the Foundation's region, was established in 1976. Since then, 447 grants have been awarded to 392 different artists.

The Bush Artist Program (BAP) creates opportunities for artists to advance their work, stimulate dialogue and contribute to deeper community engagement by providing them financial and professional development support. The BAP consists of three grant initiatives: 1) the Enduring Vision Awards; 2) the Bush Artist Fellowships, which provides a total of \$50,000 in grant support annually to 15 artists and is one of only three open-application artist fellowships in the country to provide unrestricted grants at this financial level; and 3) Dakota Creative Connections, providing artists in North and South Dakota with project and professional development grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$6,000.

## **Panelists for the Enduring Vision Awards**

### **Preliminary Regional, Interdisciplinary Panel**

**Roger Cummings**, Artistic Director, Juxtaposition Arts, Minneapolis, MN

**John Davis**, Executive Director, Cornucopia Art Center, Lanesboro, MN

**Troyd Geist**, State Folklorist, North Dakota Council on the Arts, Bismarck, ND

**Ann Ledy**, Executive Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Visual Arts,  
St. Paul, MN

**Lori Lea Pourier**, (Oglala/Mnicoujou Lakota), President, First Peoples Fund, Rapid City, SD

**Angela Strassheim**, photographer, Bush Artist Fellow 2006, Minneapolis, MN

**Va-Megn Thoj**, filmmaker, community activist, and mayoral policy aide, Bush Artist Fellow 2005, Bush Leadership Fellow 2004, St. Paul, MN

### **Final National Interdisciplinary Panel**

**Nick Cave**, artist and Department Chair, Fashion Design, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL

**Brian Knep**, new-media artist, Boston, MA

**Yong Soon Min**, artist and independent curator, Professor, Department of Studio Art, University of California, Irvine, CA

**Lori Lea Pourier** (Oglala/Mnicoujou Lakota), President, First Peoples Fund, Rapid City, SD

**Lynne Spriggs**, Curator of Special Projects, C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, MT

**Namita Gupta Wiggers**, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland, OR