

CHANDLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

For Immediate Release
480-917-6859

Contact: Candee Lewis

The Chandler Cultural Foundation Presents **Merrill Mahaffey the Artist's Perspective:** **50 Years in the West**

The Chandler Cultural Foundation presents: *Merrill Mahaffey the artist's Perspective: 50 years in the West.* Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Mahaffey grew up in Colorado, completed his formal art education in California and Arizona, and has explored and painted the American west the whole time. Starting out at Sacramento State, Mahaffey was counseled by a slightly older artist to go to the Bay Area if he wanted to be a painter more than a teacher.

After a year in this cutting- edge environment, Mahaffey returned to Sacramento State. He made periodic museum and gallery excursions back to San Francisco. Mahaffey considers this period and these places the source for his philosophy as a painter. Later, as an art teacher at Phoenix College, Mahaffey defined the goal of his first sabbatical succinctly: "I will learn how to draw." Disciplined study and practice of penmanship, straight lines, circles, and the representation of three dimensions on the two-dimensional plane during this phase gave him the mastery to merge realism with his modernist spirit. "Why not do real paintings of real places with these new skills?" he asked.

Now some four decades later, a partial listing of Mahaffey's institutional collectors includes the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Art, the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, the Denver Art Museum, the Phoenix Art Museum and the Utah Museum of fine Arts. His corporate collector's include companies like Exxon, Phillips Petroleum and Phelp's Dodge, all entities with intense interest in geology, and, partly because of artist's like Mahaffey, an ever increasing awareness of the need to respect what is sacred about the land in all of our involvements with it.

Mahaffey's oeuvre is a link between aesthetic and environmental concerns. He bridges realism with fractal modernism in an ever-evolving style that reflects the highest standards of craftsmanship, exploration and invention. The viewer in search of beauty, intelligence, relevance and originality in both concept and technique will find it all and more in Merrill Mahaffey's powerful vision.

Merrill Mahaffey the artist's Perspective: 50 years in the West is on exhibit at the Chandler Center for the Arts from September 3rd through October 30th, with an artist's reception on Friday, September 10th, from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Admission to the gallery and both events is free.

Where: Chandler Center for the Arts, 250 N. Arizona Ave., Chandler

What & When: Merrill Mahaffey the Artist's Perspective: 50 years in the West, Artist Reception, Friday, September 10th, 7:00 – 9:00 PM
Admission is free

Hours: Monday through Friday, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Saturdays, Noon – 4:00 PM

Information: Call 480-917-6859