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Houston Airport System, Southwest Airlines and Houston Arts Alliance Announce Major Art Installations at William P. Hobby Airport and New International Concourse

HOUSTON (December 15, 2015) – Seven new, large-scale, contemporary artworks created by Houston, regional and international artists especially for William P. Hobby Airport are now installed in the airport's new international concourse and at Southwest Airlines® ticket counters.

As Houston's newest gateway to Latin America, the concourse introduces international travelers to the city's vibrant arts and culture scene through presentation of these diverse paintings, drawings, collages and sculptures.

Hobby Airport is open for international travel thanks to a partnership with Southwest Airlines that funded the construction of a new, five-gate international concourse. Southwest Airlines regarded the inclusion of art by Houston artists in the design and execution of the new concourse.

"We are proud to showcase monumental works by local artists Libbie Masterson, Krista Birnbaum, Kia Neill (previously of Houston, now living in Denver), as well as works by San Antonio's Chris Sauter and internationally acclaimed artist Henrique Oliveira," said Debra Benton, Southwest Airline Director of Community Programs. Southwest has served Houston since its first flights in 1971 and has grown to offer up to 170 departures a day to 54 cities nonstop. More than 1,600 Southwest employees call Houston home.

As part of the overall project, Southwest Airlines funded five of the new works of art, partnering with Houston Arts Alliance to coordinate the requests for proposals, manage the selection panel process, and work with the artists during the creation of the art as well as at installation. Southwest Airlines has given those works to the City of Houston Art Collection.

The Houston Airport System (HAS) is building a new multi-level parking garage and a modified roadway system at Hobby to complement the new facility. Through the "Percent for Art" ordinance, which mandates 1.75% of qualified Capital Improvement Project monies be set aside for the City's acquisition of new artworks, HAS funded the monumental artwork *Cloud Room Field* by Christian Eckart and *Time in Motion*, a graphic/pictorial, historical timeline of Hobby Airport by Norman Lee and Shane Allbritton (known as RE:site).

"These vibrant and diverse pieces will enhance our visitors' experience at this new facility and introduce them to the dynamic culture of Houston," Houston Aviation Director Mario C. Diaz said. "They are part of the Houston Airport System's efforts to actively support the arts and provide passengers a compelling reason to stop and experience something unexpected and very special."

To document the installation of the new artwork, HAS commissioned visual artist Brandon Ray to create a film, which is on view in the new international concourse.

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“These works of art reflect the true dynamism of Houston — from commentary on our natural environment to displaying our tendency to have an eye toward the future,” stated Jonathon Glus, president + CEO of HAA. “Our artists truly reflect the city’s great commitment to the global sphere, making it just that more meaningful that these contemporary artworks literally bridge Houston with all of Latin America.”

The large-scale art installations are:

- Shane Allbritton + Norman Lee (*RE:site*), *Time in Motion*, 2015. Glass with optical film, LED, acrylic, stainless steel, artifacts, 7ft x 75ft. City of Houston Art Collection, Hobby Airport. Allbritton lives in Houston, and Lee lives in Dallas.
- Krista Birnbaum, *Roadside Attraction*, 2015. Inkjet print on aluminum panels; three sections, each complete size 36in x 20ft. City of Houston Art Collection, in Federal Inspection Services at Hobby Airport. Artist lives in Houston.
- Christian Eckart, *Cloud Room Field*, 2015. Dichroic glass with anodized aluminum armature and extrusions and stainless steel components, 120in x 720in x 17in. City of Houston Art Collection, Hobby Airport. Artist lives in Houston.
- Libbie J. Masterson, *Ethereal Sky*, 2015. Glass, Epoxy Resin, Mirror; 6ft 6in" H x 35ft W. City of Houston Art Collection, Hobby Airport international concourse ticket area. Artist lives in Houston.
- Kia Neill, *Language of Evolving Trails*, 2015. Digital collage of photography, drawing and painting; archival aluminum print approximately 4.5ft x 10ft framed. City of Houston Art Collection, in Federal Inspection Services at Hobby Airport. Previously in Houston, artist now lives in Denver.
- Henrique Oliveira, *Travessia*, 2015. Acrylic on linen, 236.22in x 133.858in. City of Houston Art Collection, main entrance of international concourse at Hobby Airport. Artist lives in São Paulo, Brazil.
- Chris Sauter, *Airport Seating (Somewhere Between Here And There)*, 2015. Cement, City of Houston Art Collection, outside Hobby Airport international concourse. Artist lives in San Antonio.

Other major works of art currently at Hobby include Paul Kittelson and Carter Ernst’s *Take Off*, Jim Love’s *Call Ernie* and Gorden Huether’s *Over Houston*. For more information, visit houstonartsalliance.com.

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About Houston Airport System

Houston Airports served more than 53 million passengers in 2014. Houston’s three airports — George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), William P. Hobby (HOU) and Ellington Airport (EFD) — contribute more than \$27.5 billion to the regional economy. IAH and HOU collectively provide nonstop flights to nearly 200 destinations worldwide.

HAS is fortunate in having one of the largest collections of public art in the state of Texas. Through a partnership with the City of Houston’s Civic Art Program, the airport system has collected nearly 200 commissioned and donated works of art. Carefully placed throughout the airport’s terminals, each artwork offers aesthetic and cultural value to the identity of Houston as a truly international city. Pieces include everything from sculptures to photographs and may be found both inside and outside of the airport.

About Houston Arts Alliance

Houston Arts Alliance (HAA) is a nonprofit, public-private initiative that invests in Houston's arts and cultural sector, advances Houston's reputation as an arts and culture destination, and works to elevate the quality of life for all Houstonians through arts and culture. The Alliance is the custodian of the city's art collection and takes permanent and temporary art to Houston's public spaces, including Houston's airports. Partnering with the Houston Airport System, HAA is developing a large collection of works by local, regional and international artists to reflect Houston's diversity and dynamism in welcoming visitors.

As the city's designated local arts agency, HAA provides programs and services for the arts and cultural sector and awards approximately 225 grants annually to nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and individual artists. The Alliance also nurtures up-and-coming arts organizations through its capacity building programs; connects the business community with the arts; convenes the field as necessary, and provides the latest information and research on cultural policy.

HAA's primary partner is the City of Houston. Approximately 55% of HAA's budget comes from Hotel Occupancy Tax and 30% from the City of Houston's Percent for Art Program, which supports commissions of new civic art projects as well as conservation of existing artworks. The remaining 15% of HAA's budget comes from private fundraising (grants/contributions/other revenue) for programs and special projects. HAA is committed to raising funds for only those projects and initiatives that the Arts Alliance is uniquely positioned to provide the community.

For more information, visit houstonartsalliance.com. For events in the region, visit Artshound.com.

About Southwest Airlines Co.

In its 45th year of service, Dallas-based Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) continues to differentiate itself from other air carriers with exemplary Customer Service delivered by more than 47,000 Employees to more than 100 million Customers annually. Southwest operates more than 3,600 flights a day, serving 95 destinations across the United States and six additional countries. Southwest service to Belize City, Belize, begins Oct. 15, 2015, and Liberia, Costa Rica, on Nov. 1, 2015, both routes are subject to foreign government approval.

Based on the U.S. Department of Transportation's most recent data, Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded. The Company operates the largest fleet of Boeing aircraft in the world, the majority of which are equipped with satellite-based WiFi providing gate-to-gate connectivity while over the United States. That connectivity enables Customers to use their personal devices to access streaming music provided by Apple Music or to view video on-demand movies and television shows, as well as nearly 20 channels of free, live TV compliments of our valued Partners. Southwest is the only major U.S. airline to offer bags fly free® to everyone (first and second checked pieces of luggage, size and weight limits apply, some airlines may allow free checked bags on select routes or for qualified circumstances), and there are no change fees, though fare differences might apply. In 2014, the airline proudly unveiled a bold new look: Heart. The new aircraft livery, airport experience, and logo, showcase the dedication of Southwest Employees to connect Customers with what's important in their lives.

From its first flights on June 18, 1971, Southwest Airlines launched an era of unprecedented affordability in air travel described by the U.S. Department of Transportation as "The Southwest Effect," a lowering of fares and increase in passenger traffic whenever the carrier enters new markets. With 42 consecutive years of profitability, Southwest is one of the most honored airlines in the world, known for a triple bottom line approach that contributes to the carrier's performance and productivity, the importance of its People and the communities they serve, and an overall commitment to efficiency and the planet. The 2014 Southwest Airlines One Report™ can be found at SouthwestOneReport.com.

Book Southwest Airlines' low fares online at Southwest.com or by phone at 800-I-FLY-SWA.

ARTISTS' BIOS AND ARTIST STATEMENTS

RE: site co-founders, artists Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee, explore notions of community, identity, and narrative within the context of public space. RE:site Studio creates dynamic, multi-layered works that exist somewhere between art, architecture and landscape. Shane and Norman begin their process by asking questions, exploring alternatives, and experimenting with new materials and methodologies. They draw on a site's cultural landscape to generate strong narrative concepts, which resonate with a community's local meanings, but also transform and transcend the familiar.

With a degree in fine arts and 18 years of extensive work designing interpretive spaces and interactives for numerous museums and visitors centers, **Shane Allbritton** bridges the disciplines of visual communication, art and experience design. Her collaborative work spans a range of projects from comprehensive environmental graphics to art installations, including large scale murals, donor recognition systems, wayfinding, media design, suspended art, sculpture and painting. As a visual storyteller, Shane is interested in creating integrative public art that uses narrative placemaking to enhance the quality of civic space. Her work has been featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Bellingham Herald*, *Texas Monthly*, *GD USA*, *SEGDdesign*, *Icograda*, *Houston Press* and *Texas Architect*. Shane was recognized by the prestigious CoD+A awards for her piece *Memory Cloud* as a "Top Project for 2013."

Norman Lee began his career as a designer of interpretive environments. In 2003, Norman was named a finalist in the World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. In the largest design competition in history, his concept *Votives in Suspension* was selected from an international field of 5,201 submissions. Norman has also been honored with a SEGD (Society for Environmental Graphic Design) Jury Award for his work on the Billboard Earthbag Project, a concept to reuse commercial billboard vinyl towards the construction of temporary disaster relief shelters. His piece *Memory Cloud* was recognized by the prestigious CoD+A awards as a "Top Project for 2013." Norman holds Bachelor and Master degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied art history, psychology, and museum studies. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Houston Chronicle*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Appeal*, *SEGDdesign*, *USA Today*, *Architectural Record*, *Art in America*, *ARTnews*, *Imagining Ground Zero* and *Texas Architect*.

Artist Statement on *Time in Motion*

A sweeping wall light sculpture evokes an abstracted motion blur pattern, continually changing color in a moving gradient. At a distance, the piece is a work of public art, drawing in the viewer with a bold, dynamic visual gesture that is integrated with the vestibule site. On a more intimate scale, the work reveals an interpretive timeline exhibit that tells the story of Hobby Airport.

The effect of a "timeline in motion" is made possible by an optical film applied to the glass, that is transparent when viewed at certain angles and foggy at others. The foggy distortion creates a motion blur effect with the interpretive exhibit behind the glass. The work features text, images, and small artifacts that become visible only when standing directly in front of them, prompting viewers to walk the length of the wall to see the entire exhibit. This creates a sense of dramatic self-discovery: as viewers walk along the timeline, they are progressively rewarded as it reveals itself before them.

The movement of visitors allows the work to be in perpetual flux, in a shifting continuum between abstraction and figuration. From the upper level, the work is a sweeping, sculptural wall of color and pattern. As viewers descend the escalators, their angle of view changes to the wall sculpture, and sections of the timeline exhibit are dramatically revealed. The Lumisty glass evokes curiosity, drawing viewers into the lower vestibule to discover what is behind the glass.

There is a conceptual unity between this visual gesture and the narrative of the timeline. Air travel is a rich metaphor for how we move together in a modern world, physically, culturally, and socially. The history of Hobby Airport is a history of people in motion—both individually and collectively. Throughout its 75-year history, Hobby Airport has played a critical role in the development of Texas and the nation, fostering both individual mobility and the common good. The history of Hobby speaks to the wisdom of its namesake: that our lives are interdependent, that we must all move together and we must all keep together.

Krista Birnbaum is an interdisciplinary artist currently residing in Houston. Her images and sculptures reflect issues of control over nature. She received an MFA from Syracuse University in 2007. She has recently exhibited in the Houston area at the Galveston Fine Arts Center, Lawndale Art Center, Box 13 and Gensler Architecture. Other exhibitions include the ASU Art Museum in Tempe, Ariz.; ROY G BIV Gallery in Columbus, Ohio; 516 Arts in Albuquerque, N.M., and Arlington Arts Center in Arlington, Va.

Artist Statement on *Roadside Attraction*

I created unique plant imagery that is wall mounted and stretches along 80' of the horizontal wall in the CBP Primary Inspection area. In this new site-specific work, I mixed plants native to the Gulf Coast region with other plants commonly used in Houston landscape design, but not native to the region. In this way, it will be a subtle reference to the diverse cultural climate of our metropolitan area. This reference may be especially appropriate considering the multicultural group of travelers passing through the customs area of the international terminal. This body of work reflects my ongoing interest in the human desire to own, control and tailor nature.

To create this new work, I used 3D models of plant life made specifically for architectural renderings as raw material. These models were placed into a virtual environment and rendered as photographic images depicting a landscape lush with a variety of green leaves and colorful flowers softly lit against a morning Texas sky. The landscape stretches across 25 panels, mounted seamlessly together to create a panoramic view.

Christian Eckart is an international artist born in Canada (Calgary, Alberta, 1959, dual Canadian/American citizenship since 1995). He was formerly based in New York (1984-2003) and settled in Houston with his wife, Gillian Davies, at the beginning of 2003. During 20 years living in New York and up to the present, Christian Eckart's work has been the subject of over 60 solo exhibitions, including many museum surveys, and has been included in over 150 group exhibitions. Christian Eckart's work is represented in many important private and public permanent collections including those of The Guggenheim Museum, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna; The Chicago Art Institute; The Detroit Institute of Art; the Eli Broad Family Foundation, and The Art Gallery of Ontario as well as many others throughout North America, Europe and Asia. He split his time between New York and Berlin, 1996/1997, and then New York and Amsterdam, 1997 - 2002. Christian Eckart was an instructor at The School of Visual Art, New York, from 1994 through 2002, the Glassell School of Art of the Museum of Fine Art, Houston, 2003 – 2005, and he held visiting professorships at both the University of Houston and Rice University in Houston. He has lectured extensively throughout North America and Europe and realized many private commissions, organized group exhibitions and published a number of essays and articles.

Artist statement on *Cloud Room Field*

Most of my work extends from painting, and this work is no different from other works insofar as its final state being characterized as a painting/sculpture hybrid. The material of choice here in terms of the work expressing itself as a painting is dichroic glass. Dichroic glass is a material that is one color in transmission and a complementary color in reflection. Beyond that, the material has tendencies to express secondary and even tertiary color effects as one moves about in relation to it. The result will be a subtly color shifting "painting" perpetually changing as the viewer moves and also as the local light conditions shift in the surrounding environment. It will never be the same work twice for any one viewer or upon multiple viewings.

Libbie Masterson is an artist living and working in Houston. She has a background in painting and sculpture and is now working in photography and photographic installations. She has created several large commissioned stage sets for Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre, HGO co. and in collaboration with filmmaker Ford Gunter, a video performance for the Houston Symphony. With the help of a crowd of volunteers and a Kickstarter campaign, she also created a temporary site-specific installation in Hermann Park, Houston, of large floating waterlilies that lit up at night. She is represented by the Catherine Couturier Gallery, Houston.

Artist statement on *Ethereal Sky*

The theme is the sky, with a pattern of clouds, between horizon lines, realized in a glass mosaic. The glass used in the mosaic varies in texture and color, and has reflective background, taking advantage of the natural light in the space. Set in panels of 3ft x 5ft each, 14 in number, the pieces installed measures at about 6.5ft by 35ft.

Kia Neill is native to Chicago Illinois, received her BFA from The Columbus College of Art and Design in Columbus, Ohio, and her MFA from The University of California, San Diego. She has recently relocated to Denver from Houston, where she was full-time faculty of seven years at the Glassell School of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston while also teaching adjunct at Houston Community College. Neill moved to Colorado to explore her deep attraction to the mountain landscape. She is establishing herself in the Denver art scene while teaching in the Brackenridge Arts District, as well as teaching snowboarding for Vail Resorts. She will teach at Denver University beginning this fall 2015.

Artist Statement on *Language of Evolving Trails*

Language of Evolving Trails is an abstract landscape, collaged from my original drawing, painting and cell phone photographs taken in extreme winter mountain terrain of Colorado. With this work, I aimed to hint at an experience of the landscape that is not seen, but only felt. For me, personally, this work is not only about the physical and spiritual challenges and conversations I have had with the Rocky Mountain landscape, but also about the feelings of isolation and yet completion while living between two extremely different cities (Houston and Denver); or, for that matter, any traveler who is constantly having to reestablish what his/her home base is. Having your home or what you believe your path is to be, to constantly change, I believe can cause you to feel separated from the world in one way, and yet in another, more connected. I guess this is why I am drawn to abstraction. In a way it is more real to me.

Henrique Oliveira was born in Ourinhos, Brazil, in 1973. He received his Bachelors of Fine Arts in Painting in 2004 and his Masters in Visual Poetics in 2007—both from the School of Communication and Arts at the University of São Paulo. He has received grants and residencies ranging from SAM Art Projects and Cité internationale des arts in Paris to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. and The Fountainhead Residency in Miami. In addition to numerous solo exhibitions in Brazil, Oliveira has had solo shows in Paris; Linz, Austria; Monterrey, Mexico; Boulder, Colorado; Miami, Florida; Charlotte, North Carolina, and Houston. This year he has upcoming solo shows at McClain Gallery, Houston, and Galerie Georges-Philippe & Nathalie Vallois, Paris. His work has been included in 16 group exhibitions from Frankfurt, Germany, to Brisbane, Australia. Oliveira's work is included in such institutional collections as Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia; Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia; Museu de Art Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; Museum Afro-Brasil, São Paulo, Brazil, among others. Oliveira now lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil.

Artist Statement on *Travessia*

Travessia is the title of one my favorite Brazilian songs, made in the 60's. It's sung by Milton Nascimento, who composed it with Fernando Brant, who wrote the lyrics. Fernando died when I was making the painting, so I wanted to call it "Travessia." I think it translates to "Crossing" in English.

Listen to the song here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjn0xsKIUIIM>

Chris Sauter lives and works in San Antonio. He exhibits nationally and internationally with exhibitions in New York; Houston; Dallas; Miami; Sheboygan, Wis.; Los Angeles; Paris; Limerick, Ireland; and León, Mexico. His works has been featured at many institutions such as the Musee d'Art Moderne Saint-Etienne, France; The Drawing Center, New York; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art; the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston;

the Dallas Museum of Art; and PS1, New York. He decorates cakes and designs and builds theatre sets in his spare time.

Through the juxtaposition of disparate materials and images, extreme scale shifts, and the transformation of common objects into other recognizable objects Sauter's work explores the links between nature and culture, the present and the primordial, the personal and the universal. In the process, popular dichotomies are recognized and then collapsed into multifaceted wholes. www.chrissauter.com

Artist Statement on *Airport Seating (Somewhere Between Here And There)*

Airport Seating (Somewhere Between Here And There) makes physical the language that describes both the nature of the space the piece inhabits and airports. Located just outside the airport between the terminal and the elevated drive, partially covered by a large overhang and partially exposed to the sky, the sculpture literally sits "somewhere between here and there." The piece comprised of three dimensional letters which spell out that phrase function as a place for people to sit and wait until they continue to their final destinations. Airports, too are in-between places. They are the edges of one's destination, neither here nor there. Rather they serve as conduits between two locations and are rarely an actual end point. *Airport Seating (Somewhere Between Here And There)* is about both waiting and travel, a monument to transition.