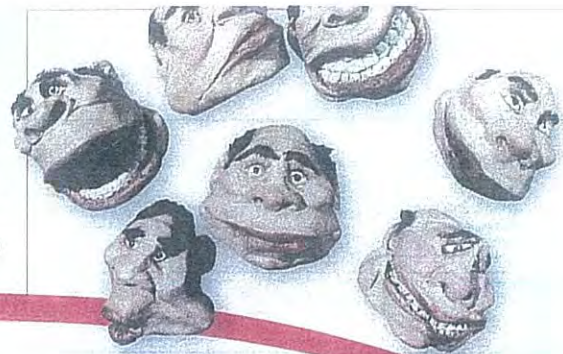


Casey Sanchez  
The New Mexican



**CLOACAS WITH FLYING WALL STUDIOS**  
Feature-length puppet film

Over their careers, Damon and Sabrina Griffith have custom-crafted thousands of puppets as part of their Flying Wall Studios (formerly Puppet Meat Market). Now the husband-and-wife team are blending their puppetry with the music they perform as part of Cloacas, a Santa Fe band with a warbled, rusty Americana sound of banjos, mandolins, and saws. Together, the artists are creating a feature-length puppet film based around Wide-mouth Mason, a fictional vaudeville-house stagehand who has been beaten and tossed around by life while struggling to raise his family. Dubbed an "old-fashioned multimedia" project, the film will be shown in screenings accompanied by a live musical performance in the tradition of silent film. The team will use SPREAD money to shoot and edit the film and to prepare a local screening for the film's debut.

This weekend, SITE Santa Fe launches SPREAD, a new initiative that provides "micro-grants" for works-in-progress by New Mexico artists. The method of awarding the money is direct and simple. On Friday, March 18, diners arrive at the Santa Fe Farmers Market and pay a cash sliding-scale fee of \$15 to \$50. Fifty tickets are available at the door — 150 tickets were sold beforehand at SITE. Over dinner, catered by Whole Hog with drinks provided by Second Street Brewery, eight project proposals will be pitched

**DECENT PROPOSALS** SITE'S NEW INITIATIVE

by artists in brief, five-minute presentations. At the conclusion of the meal, diners vote, and the artist who receives the most ballots gets all of the funding raised by the dinner. SITE director Irene Hoffman says that her plan was influenced by FEAST in Brooklyn and inCUBATE in Chicago, projects that build community and provide micro-grants for working artists. This crop of projects ranges from a camera obscura installed inside a vintage Airstream trailer to recordings of Japanese sacred music to a feature-length film acted by handmade puppets. Here's a look at the art and the artists vying for the SPREAD cash.



**WILLIE RAY PARISH**  
Mobile camera obscura

Sculptor Willie Ray Parish began working with classic travel trailers 10 years ago, deciding that the recreational vehicle was the most uniquely American form to emerge out of the 20th century. Parish said that his newest project — a collaboration with photographer Scott McMahon — turns a 1955 Airstream into a pinhole camera obscura, using a lens apparatus that projects the landscape from outside into crisp, inverted images on the trailer floor. The trailer will be used in a rural context on land owned by the Border Art Residency in Mesilla Valley, but it is also mobile and can travel to gallery/museum sites elsewhere in New Mexico. Parish said he would use the funds to defray the considerable costs of rehabbing the trailer, which includes new wiring, tires, and bearings as well as refitting the interior.



**MEOW WOLF**  
The Due Return

Members of Meow Wolf, an experimental art collective, will begin building The Due Return, a 70-foot long ship, inside the Center for Contemporary Arts on Tuesday, March 22. The vessel will feature a lounge, in which drinks will be served to guests, cave dwellings with glowing tree-like structures, and a bevy of knobs, dials, and joysticks that control video surveillance systems. Every weekend, during the show's duration, the decks will be fully manned by Meow Wolf artists, portraying crew members from different eras, both real and imagined. Thirty-five volunteers are currently contributing more than 30 hours a week to realize the project. With a total slated budget of \$20,000, Meow Wolf would use the money to purchase lumber and tools to build the ship.

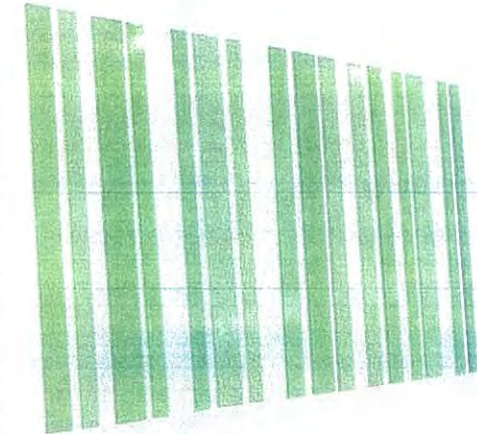


**CONRAD SKINNER**  
A history of the Paolo Soleri Amphitheater

The possible demolition of the Paolo Soleri Amphitheater at the Santa Fe Indian School has been in the news for months. The history of this unusual structure is complicated, believes architect and writer Conrad Skinner. Skinner said that the amphitheater is a convergence of the imaginative futurist design of Soleri, the Italian-American architect whose buildings conform to the local environment, and the pioneering efforts of the Institute of American Indian Arts to birth a home for Native American drama and stage works. The history will be written using the University of New Mexico archives and interviews with key players in the construction of the amphitheater. Skinner said he would use the grant to cover travel and research expenses to write both a popular and academic history of the theater.

**NEAL AMBROSE-SMITH**  
Nontoxic printmaking at a local school

Nearly every school has suffered cuts in arts funding. This project looks to patch the gap by teaching monotype printmaking to children. Neal Ambrose-Smith (center), who has taught printmaking to kids for more than 10 years, says that the process is ideal for introducing students to theories of color, composition, and line techniques. He emphasizes that the ink used in the process is not only nontoxic and soy-based, but any leftovers can be scraped off a table and reused at a later date. Ambrose-Smith said he would use the funds to buy a press, ink, and paper for use in his workshops.



**REBECCA HOLLAND**  
Candy Lawn

Rebecca Holland specializes in site-specific work that invites viewers to consider overlooked parts of their built environment. For her new project, she will take roughly 600 pounds of beet sugar and melt and harden it into green-dyed candy which will be cast into a block. This block will then be installed at a Santa Fe location during the driest parts of summer, until the first rain dissolves it. As candy is an unique art material, Holland hopes the project's unlikely appearance in a public location will elicit a range of reactions in passersby. Holland would use the SPREAD funds to purchase several hundred pounds of beet sugar.

**BEN HAGGARD**  
Faces Santa Fe

Ben Haggard is currently in the process of painting portraits of 200 to 600 Santa Feans, a feat that will take two years to pull off. The subjects are painted in 90-minute sessions; and these *alla prima* portraits will be exhibited in diverse venues. The artist is carrying out a similar project in Berlin and will do the same in New York and San Francisco over the summer. One participant said the experience was "like a painted Facebook." Haggard said that early participants recruited friends and family for other painting sessions, allowing many people to experience the artistic process firsthand. He would use the funds to cover the cost of paint, canvas and brushes along with a brochure explaining the project to newcomers.



**MADI SATO**  
Return to the river

Madi Sato (third from right) directs the Santa Fe Women's Sacred World Music Choir, an ensemble that performs spiritual music from around the world. She has recorded two albums of her compositions. Her new project is an album of original songs and traditional Japanese music. Sato draws on her Japanese heritage for this record that will be produced by Santa Fe jazz pianist John Rangel. "It's been a long, seven-year journey to put the project together, working with traditional Japanese musicians," Sato said. "Some of the music has already been recorded at a Japanese Zen monastery." Sato would use the funds to help pay for mixing, mastering, and reproducing the CD.

**details**

- ▼ SPREAD dinner
- ▼ 7 p.m. Friday, March 18
- ▼ Santa Fe Farmers Market, 1607 Paseo de Peralta
- ▼ \$15 to \$50 (cash only) at the door; 989-1199

Future SPREAD dinners are scheduled for June 24 (submissions due April 2) & Oct. 28 (submissions due Aug. 26)