



OREGON ARTS
COMMISSION

For Immediate Release

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**Howard Fonda's "Les premiers seront les derniers"
to be exhibited in the Governor's Office Jan. 16-March 9**

Salem, Oregon – Portland artist Howard Fonda will exhibit a selection of works he calls “Les premiers seront les derniers*” in the Governor’s Office of the Capitol Building in Salem between Jan. 16 and March 9.

Fonda’s works, which often feature human, animal and other natural forms against colorful and loosely patterned dabs of bright colors and undulating lines, are both playful and serious, safe and perilous. He describes painting as “an articulate means of exposing a range of emotion, both rational and irrational.” Informed by philosophical underpinnings and direct experience, the paintings speak to our humanity while throwing us into life at full bloom.

“I’m interested in big questions about life and existence and the mysteries that lie within,” said Fonda.

An artist whose work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, Fonda was recently featured in the Portland2016: A Biennial of Contemporary Art. He has been the recipient of grants from a number of institutions including the Joan Mitchell Foundation. Previously an instructor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Fonda has lectured, served on jurying and critique panels and pursued curatorial projects at numerous universities and art centers. He lives and works in Portland.

The Art in the Governor’s Office Program honors selected artists in Oregon with exhibitions in the reception area of the Governor’s Office in the State Capitol. Artists are nominated by a statewide committee of arts professionals who consider artists representing the breadth and diversity of artistic practice across Oregon, and are then selected by the Arts Commission with the participation of the Governor’s Office. Only professional, living Oregon artists are considered and an exhibit in the Governor’s office is considered a “once in a lifetime” honor. Artists whose work has previously been shown in the Governor’s office include Henk Pander, Michele Russo, Manuel Izquierdo, James Lavadour, Margot Thompson, Gordon Gilkey and Yuji Hiratsuka.

*Translation from French: The first will be the last

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department) in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available online at: www.oregonartscommission.org