LIBBY UNTTHANK TOWER ELECTED COMMISSION CHAIR; CHRISTOPHER ACEBO NAMED VICE CHAIR

Salem, Ore. – Libby Unthank Tower, a Eugene graphic design and marketing professional in her second term on the Oregon Arts Commission, succeeded Julie Vigeland as Commission Chair on Jan. 1. Christopher Acebo, Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, is now Vice Chair and Vigeland serves as Immediate Past Chair. Elections took place at the Dec. 4, 2015, Commission meeting in Portland.

Tower’s career spans public, private and non-profit sectors. Currently with Eugene’s Asbury Design, she previously managed marketing and public relations for the City of Eugene Cultural Services Division, overseeing institutional marketing and public relations for the Hult Center for the Performing Arts, Community Events and the Public Art programs Tower earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Oregon in 1977. She studied abroad at Waseda University in Tokyo, and attended the Yoshida Hanga Academy studying under Japanese Master Artist Toshi Yoshida.

“I am full of gratitude and pride,” said Tower. “We have a newly completed strategic plan to provide guidance and move us forward with work and initiatives designed to enhance the quality of life for all Oregonians. Our future is bright.” Tower’s term expires on Dec. 8, 2017.

Acebo’s work at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival includes collaborating on season planning, creative team selection, casting, strategic planning and producing the festival productions. He is a set and costume designer who designed the world premiere production of “All the Way” by Robert Shenkkhan, as well as its Broadway production that won the Tony Award for Best Play in 2014. He received his Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, San Diego and his bachelor’s in Political Science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. His first term on the Commission expires on March 19, 2018.

Vigeland, who led the Commission for three years, called being chair the capstone of her volunteer career in the arts. “Nothing can compare to the view from a statewide perspective,” she says. “What an amazing array of arts organizations we have in every corner of our expansive state. I only wish
that each and every Oregonian had the opportunity to learn about the richness of art throughout the state. It is breathtaking!

“We are so fortunate to have Libby Tower as our new chair,” Vigeland added. “She is experienced and ready to lead us to the next level. The Arts Commission is in great hands!” Vigeland’s second term expires July 26, 2017.

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 the Oregon Business 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 grant-making, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature, federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust.

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