

MEDIA RELEASE

For more information contact:
Deborah M. Colton 713.869.5151
info@deborahcoltongallery.com

Deborah Colton Gallery
Bert: Back and Beyond

February 1 to March 8, 2014

Opening Reception and Fundraiser: Deborah Colton Gallery, Saturday, February 1st, 2014, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

February 1st, 2014 marks the anniversary of Bert Long's passing to Beyond, but he is still with us always ... and his presence will come back in full glory for this joyful event of his works and life!

A celebration of Bert L. Long Jr. and a fundraiser for his book, *Riding the Tiger: The Art and Life of Bert L. Long Jr.* and the Bert Long Foundation

Host Committee

The Art Guys John Alexander Blazek & Vetterling LLP Cyndy Allard Catherine D. Ansporn
George Barnstone Joan Batson Dr. William Camfield Jereann Chaney
Deborah M. Colton Sara Balinskas and Jeff Debevec Jim Edwards Dr. Carolyn Farb, hc
Joe Havel Melanie Lawson and John Guess Jr. Kirk Hopper Toby Kamps
George O. Jackson de Llano Sharon and Gus Kopriva
Rick Lowe Dr. Penelope and Lester Marks Poppi Massey Tatiana and Craig Massey
Star and Jack Massing Angelbert Metoyer Robert Morris Valerie Cassel Oliver Marilyn Oshman
Erin and Adrian Patterson Diane Rudy Manny Sanchez Linda Shearer
Charmain Locke and James Surls Cynthia Toles Dr. Alvia Wardlaw Clint Willour

Complimentary valet, cocktails and delectables.

Music: Blues Legends, Texas Johnny Boy & Milton Hopkins

Master of Ceremonies: The Art Guys

\$25 donation at door to Houston Artists Fund to benefit Bert's book. <http://houstonartistsfund.org>

The Houston Artists Fund is a §501 (c)(3) tax-exempt public charity that serves as an umbrella organization for the Houston arts community. It was created to fiscally sponsor art-related projects and organizations that intend to raise funds from individuals, foundations, and corporate donors, but do not have their own tax-exempt status. During the past twelve years, the Houston Artists Fund has sponsored projects for publications for Lucas Johnson, Charles Schorre, MANUAL, James Surls, George O. Jackson and Bernard Brunon. Current projects include a book about Bert L. Long Jr., and a biography of John and Dominique de Menil by William Middleton

Artwork sales are through Deborah Colton Gallery where a portion of the sales will be used to start the Bert Long Foundation. The exhibition is in conjunction with Kirk Hopper Gallery, Dallas.

More details on *Bert: Back & Beyond* can be found on www.deborahcoltongallery.com, under Artists section and Future Exhibitions.

Bert L. Long Jr., was self-taught artist, was born in 1940 in Texas, grew up the Houston's historic Fifth Ward and received his formal education from UCLA. Following a career as a master chef Long decided to devote himself entirely to art in 1979. He began to explore folk art and assemblage to create a unique body of work, attracting the attention of Jim Harithas, then Director of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and artists John Alexander, Salvatore Scarpitta and James Surls. His life spanned an era of radical change in the American social climate, the influence of which can be seen clearly in his work.

Long's paintings and sculptures incorporate a high level of skill and sophisticated knowledge of art history, along with complex philosophical and social issues. Long describes the philosophy behind his work as "a quest to help people diagnose their inner self," believing his art to be "the vehicle to help facilitate the process."

"As artists we have the obligation to provide the world with art which communicates as truth. I believe that art has the power to heal our souls of their afflictions. I try to create art which helps to diagnose the prevalent conditions within our societies, hopefully providing an insightfulness which will help us all become brothers and sisters united in equality and compassion"

- Bert L. Long, Jr.

The late Peter Marzio, former Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, said of Bert Long:

"Bert Long does not avert his gaze from that which is painful, but as [his artworks] testify, he also brings a spirit of joy and redemption to his art. We can all learn from this great artist."

Over Long's 33-year career as a painter, sculptor, and photographer, he was awarded several significant awards including the National Endowment for the Arts Grant in 1987 and the prestigious Prix de Rome fellowship in 1990. Other notable awards of Long's include the Texas Accountants and Lawyers for the Arts Artist of the Year Award in 2009, the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Emergency Assistance Grant in 1997, The Rome Prize Fellowship, 1990-91, the Houston Art League Texas Artist of the Year in 1990, the NEA Visual Artists Fellowship Grant, 1987 and the Bemis Foundation Residency in 1998. His work can be seen in over 100 private and public collections worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, Houston Museum of Fine Art, Blanton Museum of Art, the El Paso Museum of Art and the Instituto de Bachillerato in Spain.

Though the Houston art community suffered a great loss at Long's passing last February, his life's vision and work continue to make a huge impact in the art world of today.

Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance, conceptual future media and public space installations. The Gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.