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**Museo Alameda In Affiliation With The Smithsonian Institution
Announces The Tobin Endowment Gift Of A Sculpture Garden -
Unveils First Public Art Exhibit**

San Antonio, TX - The much anticipated opening of the Museo Alameda in affiliation with The Smithsonian Institution is one step closer to becoming a reality today with the announcement of a major gift from the Tobin Endowment, the official naming of the Museo's sculpture garden and unveiling of the first public art installation affiliated with the museum.

Recognizing the important and active role the Museo will play in helping to bring public art and art education to the community, the Tobin Endowment has generously donated \$250,000 to the Museo Alameda. J. Bruce Bugg, Jr., Chairman and Trustee of the Tobin Endowment announced details of the gift at a news conference held in the soon-to-open Museo Alameda.

“The reason The Tobin Endowment is making this gift to the Museo Alameda is our strong belief that the Latino experience be properly reflected through the art, history and culture which will be presented at the Museo Alameda in our home of San Antonio, Texas,” said Bugg. “This will enable the Museo Alameda to educate today's and future generations with knowledge of the many contributions the Latino arts have made to our community. For these reasons it is our honor that the sculpture garden at the Museo Alameda will be named “The Tobin Sculpture Garden”, in honor and memory of its late founder, Robert L.B. Tobin.”

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“This gift of a public sculpture garden that can be enjoyed by the people who live in San Antonio and those who visit San Antonio is a symbol of the Tobin Endowment’s commitment to community development and a continuation of the Tobin family’s legacy of cultural activism,” said Henry R. Muñoz III, Founding Chair of the Alameda National Center for Latino Arts and Culture.

“We are privileged and honored that the sculpture garden will bear the name of such a great benefactor of the arts,” said Ruth Medellin, Executive Director of the Alameda National Center for Latino Arts and Culture. “This gift from the Tobin Endowment helps support the Museo’s mission of bringing Latino art, history and culture before a wider audience through public art exhibits as well as through the Museo’s educational initiatives.”

A plaque bearing the name of the garden was presented to Mr. Bugg at the news conference, and attendees were the first to see the installation of a large black and white granite sculpture by John Bautista Moroles entitled **Chess Table and Chess Set**, which is on loan to the Museo from the Tobin Collection.

Tracy Wolff, community volunteer and chair of the Museo’s Milagro Fund for Children & Families, stressed the importance of art education as an intergenerational learning tool shared among children, their parents and grandparents. “It is also important to note,” said Wolff, “many studies show that art can play a therapeutic role in the healing process of families dealing with difficult issues such as abuse and neglect.”

Also during the news conference, the Museo’s first community-wide art program was revealed for the first time to the public. **Untitled (for Jeff)** is a billboard/banner created by the late contemporary artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Designed by the artist to be presented in large multiple public sights, the artwork is a large scale photograph of an outstretched palm.

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Described as a monumental artwork, **Untitled (for Jeff)** is on long-term loan from the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. The piece is named after a healthcare worker who nursed the artist's friend. The billboard/banner will be displayed in a series of six installations strategically located around San Antonio and on hundreds of billboards throughout the city. The Hirshhorn's Director, Olga Viso, was on hand for the unveiling of **Untitled (for Jeff)** and talked about the importance of the exhibit.

"The hand brings out a number of meanings – welcome, reaching out, homelessness, and maybe reaching for help," said Viso. "Art's meaning can change with its context. We're hoping people see it and realize it's about art." Seeing the images repeated throughout the community is part of a "silent campaign," as Viso described it, to increase awareness of modern art and the different capacities for display. "It's really meant to be the power of the visual image."

The public can view **Untitled (for Jeff)** at Little Flower Cathedral, the San Antonio International Airport, San Antonio Blood & Tissue Center, Mission Drive-In, Friedrichs Building, and Pearl Brewery. The Hirshhorn will also loan Fernando Botero's **Reclining Figure (Eve)** and Pablo Gargallo's **The Prophet** to the Museo as well as other sculptures to be announced at a later date.

Mayor Phil Hardberger attended the news conference, expressing his thanks to the Museo, Tobin Endowment, Smithsonian and Hirshhorn Museum, and his excitement about the public aspect of Museo programming in bringing art to the community.

During closing remarks Mr. Muñoz recognized the contributions of the Perez Family of Fairways Landscaping.

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The Perez family donated landscaping for the Museo's Sculpture Garden. Muñoz also announced that additional details about the Museo's 2007 Season of Exhibits and grand opening plans would be unveiled at a news conference to be held February 16.

About the Museo Alameda in affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution

In 1997, The National Center for Latino Arts and Culture was presented with the opportunity to transform Centro de Artes, a historically relevant building at the front door of the famous Market Square, and develop it into a visual arts extension of the Alameda Theatre Complex. The Alameda National Center for Latino Arts and Culture became the first organization in the U.S. to sign an affiliation agreement with the Smithsonian Institution, setting the stage for cultural, artistic and educational dialogue between Latinos in the U.S. and the nation's museum. The concept of a cultural institution dedicated to fostering an understanding and developing an appreciation of the imprint of Latinos on our nation's history was born.

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