

Basic Detail Report



"Call Fred"

Date

2016

Primary Maker

Arthur López

Medium

wood, paint

Description

This sculpture was created by Arthur López for an exhibition about Fred Harvey and the rise of tourism and curios in New Mexico. He reimagined an item of Harvey

memorabilia in the form of an ashtray, topping it with the image of Zozobra, the multistory "puppet" that is burned each year in Santa Fe in order to purge the community's sorrows and glooms. "Zozobra" in Spanish translates to "anxiety," and colloquially it suggests a sense of being unsettled or unmoored. Zozobra was first created by artist Will Shuster in 1924, and has now for 100 years become an established Santa Fe tradition that coincides with the Santa Fe Fiesta celebration. With "Call Fred," López invites us to imagine a moment suspended in time, as if a conversation between Fred Harvey and another individual has just ended, the cigarette in the ashtray still burning in the form of a wisp of smoke—a Gloom—from the Burning of Zozobra. A matchbook sits open on the table, indicating Fred's phone number, and the ashtray itself repeats the refrain that is heard repeatedly at the Burning of Zozobra: "Burn him, burn him." López brings together two distinct and influential figures in Santa Fe history, one real (Fred Harvey) and the other imaginary (Zozobra). Fred Harvey, after all, died in 1901, nearly a quarter century before Zozobra was conceived by Shuster. Regardless of the fictive nature of this imaginary meeting and timeline, López's "Call Fred" revisits two significant phenomena that have been formative in New Mexico's cultural history in a single humorous sculpture. To date, MOIFA has very few artworks that represent the image of Zozobra. As a result, in order to mark the 100th anniversary of Zozobra with a short pop-up in a lounge area of the museum, we had to borrow several works from lenders. "Call Fred" was one of those loans, and following the pop-up, Sheila and Kirk Ellis offered to donate the piece to the MOIFA permanent collection.

Dimensions

6 1/2 × 10 1/2 × 8 in. (16.51 × 26.6701 × 20.32 cm)