

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**March 16, 2017**

**TO:** Editors, Feature Writers and Event Listings

**SUBJECT:** Special Exhibition & Awards Banquet

**CONTACT:** Sara Bogosian, President and Executive Director

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**Whistler House Museum of Art to Honor U. S. Ambassador  
James Costos with  
The James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award**

**James  
McNeill  
Whistler**  
DISTINGUISHED ART  
AWARD  
2017



LOWELL, MA. - This spring, the Whistler House Museum of Art will honor internationally known U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra, James Costos, with the *James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award*. In his honor, the Lowell Art Association, Inc. will premiere a special exhibition for his return to Lowell. The event and exhibition, *Lowell: A Homecoming*, will present photographs and works of art on canvas and will take place at the UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center on Wednesday, April 19, beginning at 4:00 p.m. with the exhibition. A cocktail reception will begin at 5:00 p.m., with a celebratory award dinner at 6:00 p.m. A banquet and dance will follow at 7:00 p.m. Entertainment for the evening will be provided by Sabrina Aviles and Flamenco Dance Project and music by Champagne Toast.

The award recognizes the contributions, achievements and talent of an individual or organization that has consistently demonstrated the highest level of excellence in his or her work; promoting, enhancing and educating, while advancing the world of art for the citizens of today and tomorrow. "Ambassador James Costos is a deserving recipient of this award. His talent in diplomacy is undeniable and his ability to promote art and culture is quite extraordinary," said Sara Bogosian, President and Executive Director of the Whistler House Museum of Art. The Whistler House worked with Costos on the lending of 6 Whistler etchings to the U. S. Embassy in Madrid, Spain as part of the U. S. Department of State Art in Embassies program.



2017 James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award Recipient James Costos

Ambassador Costos was born in 1963 and was raised and educated in Lowell, Massachusetts, where he grew up with his parents, Katherine and Charles Costos, and two siblings, sisters Elaine and Maria. He earned a degree in political science from the University of Massachusetts Lowell in 1985.

Ambassador Costos has dedicated himself to building the important relationship between the United States, Spain and Andorra since being sworn in on August 22, 2013. High-profile visits to Spain by President Obama, The First Lady, and other top-ranking officials have helped advance the U.S.-Spain relationship. Additionally, King Felipe, Queen Letizia of Spain, and Prime Minister Rajoy have visited the White House since Ambassador Costos arrived in Spain, and he continues to serve the relationship as a private citizen.

The Ambassador received many awards during his tenure, including the Sorolla Medal for Excellence and Contribution to Hispanic Arts and Culture, the Medalla de Oro de Canarias, and the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award from Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus. He was also named Honorary Chairman of the Spanish Film Commission.

Prior to his life as ambassador, Costos was a corporate leader and executive in the international retail and entertainment industries, most notably at HBO and Tod's. His responsibilities included global positioning, external relations, marketing and communications. He is a passionate supporter of humanitarian and art organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign and the Santa Monica Museum of Art. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Humane Society of the United States.



WHMA President and Executive Director Sara Bogosian with Ambassador James Costos in his Embassy Office featuring the Whistler Etchings on loan to the Art in Embassies program

When in the United States, Costos splits his time between Los Angeles and New York with his partner of 16 years, award-winning interior designer to the White House, Michael S. Smith and their four dogs Sport, Lily, Greco, and Whistler.

James McNeill Whistler, for whom the award is named, was one of America's

premiere nineteenth-century artists. He created and developed new techniques in painting and print making, which had a major impact on the art world. The recipient of the James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award follows in the footsteps of this inspiring artist. As Joseph Pennell, biographer of Whistler, wrote in *Life of Whistler*, "His name and his fame will live forever."

"Like Whistler, James Costos, the James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award recipient, will also be remembered for his extraordinary contributions to the community and to the international world of art," said Sara Bogosian, President and Executive Director of the Museum, "Ambassador Costos is a strong advocate for cultural institutions and diplomacy, as reflected in his one-of-a-kind "Art in Embassies" collection in the Ambassador's residence in Madrid, Spain, lauded all over the world. The Whistler House Museum of Art is proud to present the *2017 James McNeill Whistler Distinguished Art Award* to Ambassador Costos for his efforts to promote the humanities, and specifically for his participation in the Art in Embassies Program and the promotion of the Whistler House Museum of Art."

The event is open to the public. For more information please contact Brooke Baerman at the Whistler House Museum of Art at 978-452-7641 or visit our website at [www.whistlerhouse.org](http://www.whistlerhouse.org).

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## EXHIBITION & AWARDS BANQUET INFORMATION

Wednesday, April 19, 2017	4:00 PM	Exhibition Opens
	5:00 PM	Cocktail Reception
	6:00 PM	Dinner and Program
	8:00 PM	Dancing

UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center  
Lowell, Massachusetts

Donation:                \$150.00 per person for admission  
                              \$140.00 for WHMA members

For reservations/more  
information contact:

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*The Whistler House Museum of Art, located in Lowell, Massachusetts, is the historic birthplace of the famous American artist, James McNeill Whistler. Established in 1878 as the Lowell Art Association Inc., it is the oldest incorporated art association in the United States. The WHMA is known internationally for its distinguished collection of 19th and early 20th century New England representational art, including works by Whistler, Gorky, and Sargent. The historic home hosts many exhibits, lectures, concerts, educational and community programs, and an array of social events in the residence, Parker Gallery, and adjoining Victorian park. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday from 11 am - 4 pm.*



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