

For Immediate Release

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**EXPERIENCE “*THE POWER OF PLAY*”**  
**With Music, Dance, and Interactive Art & Science**

**AT UCROSS FOUNDATION’S BIG RED BARN LOFT AND ART GALLERY**  
**STARTING AT 1:00 P.M. ON SATURDAY, JULY 2**

June 15, 2016 – Ucross, Wyoming – Live performances of dance and music will open a very special artistic afternoon at the Ucross Foundation’s Big Red Barn loft and gallery on Saturday, July 2. The performances will begin promptly in the loft at 1:00 p.m. and run until 2:00, followed by an interactive art and science exhibition in the gallery from 2:00-3:00 p.m. The full event, which includes refreshments, is open to the public at no charge. During the afternoon, guests will have a chance to meet and talk with nearly twenty artists, writers, composers, musicians, singers and scientists.

Leading off the program for *The Power of Play* will be *Impinged*, a work that involves the poisoning of bees, inspired by the movement research of choreographer **Rachael L. Shaw** working in collaboration with biologist **Michael E. Dillon**. The dance will be performed by Shaw along with dancer Kristel Rose Tedesco. *Fractures*, *Powder River Aria* and *Duet* will come next – three pieces from a “rock” (think: geological) opera entitled *Clinker*, co-created by composer **Anne Guzzo** and geologist **Ron Frost**. The work will be performed by seven members of the Colorado Chamber Orchestra: violin, viola, cello, standing bass, percussion, and two vocalists. Thomas A. Blomster, who will be returning to Ucross for the first time since a residency in 1988, will conduct the ensemble.

The creators of these unique artistic works – and many more – are part of the group of four artists and four scientists from the University of Wyoming who first came together to work at Ucross in the summer of 2014. Northeastern Wyoming has seen their early efforts in a *Saturday U* program at Ucross in 2014, and in the documentary film *The Ucross Experiment* shown at the Mars Black Theater at the WYO Theater in

2015. *The Power of Play* reveals more of the group's discoveries as they have continued to collaborate.

**Jeffrey Lockwood** – writer, entomologist, past Ucross Fellow (2013), and current head of the UW MFA Program in Creative Writing – spearheaded the multi-year, multi-disciplinary project. UWTV documentarion **Ali Grossman** filmed the group's work that first summer. The eight University of Wyoming artists and scientists include:

- Sculptor **Ashley Hope Carlisle** works in drawing and sculpture and has exhibited both nationally and internationally in England and Italy. Carlisle is an Associate Professor of Art in Sculpture at UW and has degrees from the University of Southern Mississippi and the University of Georgia. She has been featured in *Sculpture Magazine* and has been awarded the Wyoming Arts council Visual Arts Fellowship.
- Biologist **Michael Dillon** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Zoology and Physiology and Program in Ecology at UW, and Director of the UW-National Park Service Research Station in Grant Teton National Park. He has worked and studied throughout the world, including in Panama, South America, the Pacific Northwest, and China. A main focus of research has been “how organisms live in and adapt to diverse environments from tropical rain forests to alpine meadows.”
- Geologist **Ron Frost** is a Professor Emeritus at UW, having retired this spring after teaching in the Department of Geology and Geophysics since 1978. His research uses the study of the mineralogy, chemistry, and structure of rocks to characterize the processes by which they formed. His work has taken him across the world to the Alps, Canada, Australia, China, New Caledonia and Greenland.
- Composer **Anne Guzzo** is an internationally performed composer and the founder of the New Frontiers celebration of contemporary music based in Laramie. Guzzo earned her Ph.D. at the University of California, Davis. Passionate about new music, she teaches composition, music history, and theory at UW. Her research interests include the cartoon music of Carl W. Stalling, silent movie music, and musical absurdism.
- Rangeland ecologist **Ann Hild**, the granddaughter of Wyoming homesteaders and Iowa farmers, earned a BA in Anthropology from the University of Iowa, and an MS in Agronomy, Horticulture and Entomology and doctorate in Range and Wildlife, both from Texas Tech University. Her research includes “the impacts of invasive species on shrubland and grassland ecosystems, wildlife

habitat, and restoration seedings on wildland fire and anthropogenic disturbance sites in the intermountain West.”

- Poet **Harvey Hix**'s most recent book is a collection entitled *American Anger* (Etruscan Press, 2016). Hix teaches in the Philosophy Department and Creative Writing MFA program at UW. He has also been a visiting professor at Shanghai University, and a Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer at Yonsei University. Among his numerous books, *Chromatic* was a finalist for the National Book Award.
- Choreographer and dancer **Rachael Shaw** is an independent dance artist and educator (formerly with UW) who earned her an MFA in in Modern Dance from the University of Utah, and holds BA and BFA degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2006 she founded R Squared Dance Company with Rachel Hunter. She has also danced professionally with several companies including inFluxdance, Uprooted Theater Company, and Miki Liszt Dance Company.
- Microbiologist **Naomi Ward** has a research focus on bacterial cell biology and ecology. Most of her research group's ecology work “is conducted within the human gastrointestinal tract, where we are examining the contribution of gut bacteria to pediatric health and disease.” Ward has a Ph.D in Biological Sciences from the University of Warwick, United Kingdom; and a B.Sc. in Microbiology from the University of Queensland, Australia.

We asked the group to describe what makes this exhibition different from other gallery shows. They said, “A typical approach of an art gallery is to feature the products of creative work, but our goal is to draw visitors into the process of radically novel creation. For two years, we have genuinely and deeply collaborated in exploring the natural world—particularly the wonders of the Ucross ranch. The crucial element that allowed us to take the sort of risks that experts (whether artistic or scientific) have learned to avoid through specialization is PLAY. We let down our guard and cultivated a vulnerable, childlike willingness to ask ‘why not?’, to wonder ‘what if?’, to say, ‘I don’t know,’ and to share our toys.”

Among other elements, *The Power of Play* will offer participants the chance to experience an interactive sagebrush sculpture, *Community Roots*; try haiku writing in *Microbestiary*, which encourages you to create your own species; eavesdrop on dinner

table conversation with the artists and scientists in *The table as a setting*, and much more.

*The Power of Play* will be on view in the Ucross Foundation Art Gallery from July 2 through December 2, 2016. Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday, and Saturdays from July 9 through September 3, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The exhibition has been supported in part by the Wyoming Arts Council, through funding from the Wyoming State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts; the Wyoming Humanities Council; the University of Wyoming College of Arts & Sciences; the University of Wyoming Departments of Art and Art History, Philosophy, Botany, Molecular Biology, and Zoology, and the University of Wyoming Biodiversity Institute.

For further information or group arrangements, please call (307) 737-2291 or email [tkikut@ucross.org](mailto:tkikut@ucross.org). The gallery is located ½ mile east of the intersection of Highways 14 and 16, 10 miles west of Clearmont.