



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**“Comeback Kitchen Table,” Celebrates the Kitchen Table through a Collaborative Public Artwork & Placemaking Project Created to Spark Community & Economic Development**

*City Arts Nashua and The Revolving Museum will involve thousands in the transformation, activation, and celebration of under-utilized public spaces in downtown Nashua. The project opens on May 6, 2017, as part of the Nu Muse Festival and will be on display until August 1, 2017*

Nashua, NH. – Once the centerpiece of family gatherings, meaningful conversations and healthy home-cooked meals, the kitchen table is becoming obsolete in our culture. Research indicates that today’s family rarely sits down at the kitchen table with their loved ones. Instead, they are mostly on the run eating fast foods or sitting in front of TV, cell phones, and computers. These changes threaten the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual growth of our youth and are contributing to the breakdown of the American family unit.

Led by public artist and Revolving Museum Director Jerry Beck in partnership with City Arts Nashua, “ARTventures: Comeback Kitchen Table,” has invited local artists and art teachers to create ten kitchen table and chair environments that respond to

matters of personal, social, cultural, ecological, health, and economic issues. Project participants include Nashua High School South, Pennichuck Middle School, Nashua Alternative High School Program at Brentwood, Academy of Science and Design, 2nd Nature Academy, Nashua Area Artists Association, Picker Collaborative Artists, Nashua Public Library, Gate City Charter School of the Arts, and Nashua Transit Authority.

“Comeback Kitchen Table” will provide a socially-relevant opportunity for the community to experience a wide-range of artistically-transformed kitchen tables to be located in under-utilized public space in downtown Nashua. These Placemaking public artworks will encourage the public to sit down, talk, eat, read, play games and investigate the diverse theme of each public art table.

“The project developed out of my constant struggle to get my family around the kitchen table. I didn’t want all this technology to dominate and segregate us any longer. I wanted to address this phenomena and use public art as a catalyst for family and community dialogue, health and quality of life concerns, urban revitalization and economic development,” said Jerry Beck.

Research has shown that our society is quickly moving away from the family-gather meals at the kitchen table to eating in front of technology without any connection to real people, authentic conversation or appreciation of the taste, smell, and ritual of food. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that students who do not regularly eat with their parents are significantly more likely to be truant at school. The average truancy rate is about 15 percent throughout the world on average, but it was nearly 30 percent when pupils reported they didn’t often share meals with their families. In addition, Children who do not eat dinner with their parents at least twice a week also were 40 percent more likely to be overweight compared to those who do.

City Arts Nashua Board President Kathy Hersh added, “Comeback Kitchen Table project continues City Arts Nashua’s efforts to support artists of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to get involved in making Nashua more vibrant, beautiful, safer, resourceful, and unified city. It is already proven that the arts are an engine for community and economic development. Many thanks to Mayor Jim Donchess and the City of Nashua and to the downtown community for their generous support of the “ARTventure’s,” public art program.

In support of this project, Nashua Public Library (NPL) and its graphic artist, Rachel Gualco, will collaborate with Gate City Charter School of the Arts, NHSS, library

visitors, and the public. Gate City Principal Karin Cevalasco, teachers and students will produce "A Bookish Banquet," an all-book table, chairs and reading area that will be on display near the entrance of the library. Additionally, NHSS English Teacher JoAnne DelGreco and students will create photo essays and assist in a city-wide campaign inviting Nashua residents to submit pictures and writings about the meaning of the kitchen table in their lives. This artwork will also be exhibited at the NPL.

"We are delighted to be participating in this dynamic public art project as a sponsor. The Nashua Public Library will offer staff time, indoor and outdoor exhibition space, and access to a diversity of resources focusing on the kitchen table in American and other cultures from around the world," said Jennifer McCormack, NPL Director.

Other "Comeback Kitchen Table," projects include:

- "Come Eat With Us" Pennichuck Middle School Art Teachers, Laura Dionne and Belinda Bodnar, will involve every student in this project. Students will design and construct a cozy kitchen table environment that will become a meeting place for students, families, and the community to see art, do school work, make crafts, play games and, most importantly, create good memories that will last a lifetime.
- "A Modern Kitchen Table" Nashua artist Madeleine LaRose and friends will focus on her family's history and family business "Modern Restaurant" formerly run by her late husband and Nashua Alderman Dick LaRose. Her tables and chairs will include a mixed media presentation including mementos, photos, recipes, illustrations, and testimonials from former patrons, celebrating family gatherings both at home and centered on mealtime at the table.
- "Basquiat's Table" Art Teacher Stephanie Sewhuk-Thomas and students from the Nashua Program at Brentwood will explore and honor the life of internationally-respected Haitian and Puerto Rican artist, Jean-Michel Basquiat. Students will create a life size portrait of Basquiat and feature his dramatic life story on placemats and chairs. This project will focus on the artist's childhood, introduction to art, creativity, genius, fame, success, drug addiction and ultimate demise by drug overdose. This project will have an anti-drug theme.
- "There's Room for Everyone At the Table" City Arts Nashua Board Member, Nashua Arts Commissioner, and artist, Bonnie Guercio, in partnership with Picker Collaborative Artists will honor the significance of coming together at the table to celebrate holidays. The tablecloth for this artwork will be painted using the trompe l'oeil technique. Table items such as place settings will be

photographed, printed and decoupage to the installation and three dimensional items will also be attached.

- "Sensory Connection" Academy of Science and Deign Art Teacher, Nicole Manning, and students will present an ecological public artwork featuring a table top garden with art made of silverware, recycled technology and interactive elements.
- "Home Is Where Art Is" Nashua Area Artists Association's table and chairs will feature a quilt/tile table top made from dozens of their members' artworks permanently sealed to the table. A chandelier and other sculptural elements showcasing diverse artistic talents and skills will be attached.
- "Diversity Through Dining and Dialogue" International and local artist, Dominique Boutaud, in collaboration with 2<sup>nd</sup> Nature Academy Principal, Debbie Gleeson, and students, and The Nature of Things, LLC will create a table environment using natural colored sand and fabric designs from around the world to represent the planet and multicultural themes. Food, recipes, poems, stamps and flags from different countries will form part of this artwork.
- Camille Pattison, Director Nashua Public Transit Authority and staff will collaborate with Jerry Beck and local artists on a mobile kitchen table that will integrate bus signs and bus stop seating honoring the theme of travel and transportation.

>>>>> Please find photographs attached <<<<<<<

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*The Revolving Museum is a nomadic nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to the creation of public art projects, exhibitions, educational programs, performances, and events that encourage collaboration, experimentation, and a meaningful dialogue between artists, youth, and community members. The Revolving Museum furthers its mission in the following ways: Revitalizes Abandoned and or Underutilized Public Spaces; Creates Innovative Educational Programs and Projects for Youth; Promotes Cultural Diversity, Collaboration and Social Change; Encourages Arts Advocacy and Activism; Integrates Ecological and Green Practices; Inspires Community Engagement and Economic Development*

*City Arts Nashua is a volunteer arts services organization with IRS non-profit designation. Our mission: enrich quality of life by providing leadership to support and strengthen arts and culture. Our vision: The Nashua area is a destination for the arts. Visitors come to participate in its wide variety of arts and cultural offerings; people see Nashua as a place where they want to work, play and stay.*