



INFORMATION:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**TOWN OF CAREFREE WELCOMES SAND AND STONE EXHIBIT BY WORLD
RENOWNED ARTIST RAY VILLAFANE**

The Perfect Art Storm of Thunderbird Artists, Ray Villafane and Tim Anderson

CAREFREE, Ariz., (March 16, 2017) – The Town of Carefree welcomes back world renowned artist and sculptor, Ray Villafane, to create sand art like no other within the Sanderson Lincoln Pavilion, Carefree Desert Gardens on March 17-19, 2017. Joining him will also be the Thunderbird Artists featuring 130 different fine artisans and wine vendors as well as professional rock balancer, Tim Anderson. Progress of the sculpture can be seen 24/7 by visiting the [LIVE SAND CAM](#). The exhibit will be on display through August.

The first life-size signature sculpture created by Ray Villafane and Sue Beatrice in the Carefree Desert Gardens was completed in May of 2016 titled, "Elephant playing chess with a field mouse," consisting of 24 tons of sand sourced from the Salt River in Arizona. The exhibit garnered world attention by the media who had never seen sand sculpting taken to that level. This year Nikolay Torkhov, professional sculptor from Moscow, Russia, will join Villafane in creating 24 tons of grandeur over the 2 week period. Torkhov was also commissioned by Villafane to carve pumpkins at the Enchanted Pumpkin Garden in Carefree October 2016.

For the first time Villafane has also invited professional stone balancer, Tim Anderson, a Pennsylvania native, to join him in Carefree the weekend of March 17-19 to transform the Gardens into an artistic stone stacking playground. Visitors can watch demonstrations, participate and ask questions as Ray and Tim defy the laws of physics without the use of any adhesives other than gravity and stones provided by Mother Nature to create unusual artistic formations in the Desert Gardens pools and around the scenic landscape. The Thunderbird artists will also be present in the downtown area for their Carefree Fine Art and Wine event that weekend, \$3 entrance fee for sand, stone and all the fine art you can consume.

Ray's been on the global scene for 10 years carving sand and says, "I love Carefree and glad to be back again for a second year within the beautiful Desert Gardens, it's a playground and inspiration and appreciate the Town allowing me to be a part of it."

*Exhibit is free except March 17-19, when the Thunderbird artists will join Ray Villafane, Tim Anderson and their 150 fine artists. \$3 entrance fee. Carefree residents are free.

About the Town of Carefree

Carefree is a scenic community of over 3,600 residents nestled in the Sonoran Desert Foothills. Incorporated in 1984, Carefree is regarded as one of the most inspiring and livable places to live in Arizona and centers its culture on desert lifestyle, architecture, culinary arts, health, wellness and community involvement. For more information visit Carefree.org or call 480-488-3686.

About Ray Villafane

Based in Arizona, Ray Villafane is an internationally acclaimed American sculptor who has traveled throughout the globe fashioning exceptional figures and scenes out of pumpkins and sand. Villafane has been called, “The Michelangelo of pumpkin carving,” by Martha Stewart, carved for the President at the White House, and has appeared on numerous national TV programs as well as holding two World Guinness Book of Records for carving the largest pumpkins in the world. He’s also known for his Food Network’s Pumpkin Challenges, which he won in 2008, 2009, and 2010. For more photos of Ray Villafane’s work visit VillafaneStudios.com.

About Nikolay Torkhov

Nikolay Torkhov lives in the countryside of Moscow, Russia. All his life he has studied academic sculpture. In 2012, he graduated from the Moscow State Academic Art Institute (Russian Academy of Arts). Originally starting out in street art, he evolved into being a globally sought after professional sculptor. His second love is horses and his gift of sculpting shows in his meticulous creation of a horse made of Manzanita wood at the Carefree 2016 exhibit. He is a fine art sculptor who prefers working and playing with sand, ice and pumpkins but will sculpt just about anything. Nikolay and Ray met at a sand competition in Russia a few years ago and Ray was so impressed with his abilities he decided Nikolay should represent Villafane Studios.

About Tim Anderson

KeyStone Balance is the artistic stone balance work of Pennsylvania native, Tim Anderson. His work began as a result of a climbing injury that sidelined him during the 2011 season. Spending time along the river, having an artistic back ground and being influenced by cairns (human-made pile of stones) he encountered during his winter travels in the mountains, Tim began his playful venture into stone balancing during the recovery process. While not traveling doing demonstrations, appearances and art shows, Tim spends the majority of his time in the creeks and rivers near home stone balancing and being part of the beautiful areas where he’s spent most of his life. See Keystonebalance.com for more information.

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Samples of Ray Villafane’s Sand Sculpting



“Elephant “Chessie Trunkston” playing chess with a field Mouse, “Hershel Higginbottom” in Carefree, Arizona, 2016.



This year professional rock balancer, Tim Anderson was invited by Ray Villafane to work with him on the Carefree Sand and Stone exhibit March 17-19.



