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‘FIESTA JARABE’ INSTALLED NEAR COUGAR WOODS DINING HALL

Houston, April 5, 2013 – Sitting at the northeast corner of Cullen and Wheeler is the University of Houston’s newest art addition.

The colorful 10-foot sculpture was made nearly 20 years ago by the late Luis Jimenez, a former UH faculty member. Named “Fiesta Jarabe” by Jimenez, but more commonly referred to as “Fiesta Dancers,” the piece depicts two middle-aged Hispanic dancers taking part in a hat dance.

The fiberglass sculpture was purchased by the university from a local estate. It had been on loan to Strake Jesuit High School in Houston, said Mike Guidry, the curator for the Public Art Collection for the UH System. After being cleaned up and restored, the piece was installed in March, not far from Cougar Woods Dining Hall.

Jimenez, a well-known artist who died in 2006, created works that sometimes stirred up controversy for the way he depicted Mexican-Americans.

“He was always very sensitive about how his culture was depicted, but he also wanted to challenge notions about how they were depicted,” Guidry said. “But at the same time he also wanted to be very realistic about a certain aspect of Southwest American culture and he wasn’t interested in making people look pretty.”

The sculpture was purchased through the Percent for the Art program, in which 1 percent of the construction budget for every new building goes toward funding art. The program was established in 1966. UH now has close to 300 diverse art pieces on display. System-wide, that number is closer to 450.
About the University of Houston

The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 40,700 students in the nation's fourth-largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.