

**LINDA PITTS CUSTARD RECEIVES DECORATION SANCTIONED BY KING OF SPAIN**

*Meadows Museum and SMU Benefactor Recognized for her Promotion of Spanish Art and Culture*

Dallas (SMU), May 19, 2016— In a ceremony held at the Meadows Museum last night, Mrs. Linda Pitts Custard received the Encomienda de la Orden de Isabel la Católica, a decoration sanctioned by King Felipe VI of Spain. This honor recognizes individuals who demonstrate extraordinary civil character and accomplishments that have benefited Spain. The decoration was bestowed on Mrs. Custard by The Honorable Enric Panés, Consul General of Spain, in recognition of her remarkable dedication in promoting Spain’s art and culture in the United States. Participants in the ceremony also included Dr. R. Gerald Turner, President of SMU; The Honorable Janet P. Kafka, Honorary Consul of Spain; and Dr. Mark A. Roglán, The Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair in the Meadows School of the Arts.



Above: Honorable Enric Panés, Consul General of Spain, decorates Linda Pitts Custard with the Encomienda de la Orden de Isabel la Católica.

Linda P. Custard is a businesswoman and benefactor for arts, education, and social services in Dallas, and the general partner of Custard/Pitts Land & Cattle Co. In 2001 Mrs. Custard chaired the opening events for the inauguration of the Museum’s new building, which included the Royal Visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Spain. Since 2009, she has been the Chair of the Meadows Museum Advisory Council, and from 2000-2012 served as a trustee of SMU. Over the years Mrs. Custard has accompanied

several delegation trips to Spain, and has been instrumental in supporting numerous exhibitions that have traveled from Spain to Dallas, including hosting a number of receptions to honor visiting Spaniards. In 2010 she co-signed the landmark agreement establishing a unique partnership between the Meadows Museum and the Museo Nacional del Prado in formal signing ceremonies in Madrid and Dallas. In 2013, she and her husband established and endowed the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair in the Meadows School of the Arts with a \$1 million donation. This past year she had an instrumental role in the planning of the Museum's 50th anniversary celebration.



Above: The Honorable Enric Panés, Consul General of Spain; Linda Pitts Custard; The Honorable Janet P. Kafka, Honorary Consul of Spain

The Order of Isabella the Catholic is a Spanish civil order granted in recognition of services that benefit the country. The Order was created on March 14, 1815, by King Ferdinand VII of Spain in honor of Queen Isabella I of Castile. Other members of the SMU community who have received this recognition include Dr. Mark A. Roglán (2010), director of the Meadows Museum, and the late Dr. David Weber (2003), former professor of history at SMU.

**About the Meadows Museum**

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. institution focused on the study and presentation of the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings, as well as funds to establish a museum, to Southern Methodist University. The museum, which opened to the public in 1965, today is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The collection includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters. Through the years, The Meadows Foundation has continued to provide generous support for the Meadows Museum and Meadows School of the Arts at SMU.

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Photos by Tamytha Cameron

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