NORMAN -- For the fourth summer, The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art will focus on Native Artists and their work. Nineteen Native artists from Canada with 37 works of art will be presented in, "INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives," at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, 410 West Boyd Street. The exhibition will open Thursday, June 8th, starting with late afternoon and early evening special events, and followed by a free reception, open to the public, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The exhibition, "INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives," was organized by the Canadian Museum of Civilization in collaboration with the Society of Canadian Artists of Native Ancestry, with support from Indian and Northern Affairs of Canada, the Canada Council and the Canadian Native Arts Foundation. An unprecedented gathering of 19 artists of Indian, Metis and Inuit descent were selected by curators, Lee-Ann Martin and Gerald McMaster who spent two years visiting studios across Canada to invited artists of Indian, Metis and Inuit descent and whose art is informed by personal experiences and regional histories, to represent variations on themes of discovery, colonization and cultural criticism.

The INDIGENA exhibition offers this region an opportunity to explore multicultural character and Native perspectives. This exhibition enhances our awareness of the issues surrounding Native communities; Native and non-Native interaction over the past 500 years; and the validity of Native values and philosophies, independent of approval by Canadian and European ancestry.

Most of the works have been created exclusively for INDIGENA. The works are primarily large-scale paintings and mixed media installations, with one video installation, stone sculptures and whalebone sculptures. Several two-dimensional works consist of multiple parts. Two of the artists will assist in the installations which demand diverse materials and constantly updated references.

1990 Emmy-winning video, "Beyond Tradition," (based on the book of the same title) will be presented throughout the weeks of the exhibition. This video presents 300 examples of prehistoric, historic and contemporary Native American Indian art: carvings, paintings, sculptures, baskets, rugs, jewelry and pottery photographed by Jerry Jacka and is accompanied with flute and guitar Native music.
INDIGENA Exhibition (Continued)

To further expand the impact of the concepts presented through the exhibition, the catalogue, “INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives,” presents nine native writers, academics and curators in an effort to further explore the themes through essays, prose and poetry. Free gallery guides with profiles of the artists and a brief commentary by the curators, a quote by the artist and the image of one of the artist’s work will be provided to assist visitors in better understanding this contemporary art.

To accompany the exhibition, the Museum of Art has planned programs which will focus on Native Artists as individuals and serve as an arena to bring together important artists of the past with promising Native Artists of the future.

JUNE 8th, 3:00 - 5:00 p. m. (Invitational) “ARTIST TO ARTIST” EXCHANGE, will offer an opportunity for individual Native Artists to meet informally; project slides of their work and make professional contacts. Artists with questions regarding this event may call the Museum of Art at (405) 325-3272. The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art will provide a Shuttle from Red Earth Festival site to Museum of Art

This exciting chance for communication continues with an informal symposium of highly-recognized Native Artists and Native art authorities. 5:00 - 7:00 p. m.

SYMPOSIUM: (Free and Open to Public) Topic: “Individualism” within the Native American Indian art movement. The symposium will be led by the internationally-recognized Native American Artist and Professor of Art at OU School of Art, Edgar Heap of Birds, whose works of art are created from concepts and images that present a pulse of forms in action, reflecting the constructive and destructive politics of daily life. The works are based in a broad range of media: drawings, prints, non-objective paintings and textural messages deployed through posters, billboards and digital signs. He has exhibited and presented public commissions internationally and served as a visiting lecturer in numerous art programs including those at Yale University, the Whitney Museum Independent Studies Program, California Institute of Art and the University of Ulster in Ireland. In 1989, Edgar Heap of Birds was the recipient of the National Arts Award from the Tiffany Foundation in New York. He has been a faculty member since 1988 with teaching commitments in Painting, Drawing and Conceptual Workshops;

Symposium participants include: Dr. Rennard Strickland, a scholar of Osage and Cherokee heritage, who has written extensively about American Indian life, law and culture and has been involved for more than two decades in evaluating and collecting contemporary and historic Indian art.

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INDIGENA Exhibition (Continued)
Dr. Strickland was the co-curator of the Museum of Art’s 1994 summer exhibition *SHARING THE HERITAGE: American Indian Art From Oklahoma Collections*. He was Scholar-in-Residence at the Heard Museum of Native American and Primitive Art in Phoenix, Arizona, and organized for the Heard, *SHARED VISIONS*, an internationally-touring exhibition of masterworks of American Indian Art. He is co-author, with Jack Gregory, of the *American Indian Spirit Tales Series*. Among other books published by the University of Oklahoma Press are *Fire and Spirits*, and with Anne Hodges Morgan, *The Indians in Oklahoma*. He also served as the Editor-in-Chief of the revision of *Cohen’s Handbook of Federal Indian Law*. In April, 1995, Dr. Strickland became the Dean of the School of Law at Oklahoma City University, having previously served as the President of the Association of American Law Schools at the University of Oklahoma since 1994;

**Ms. Lee-Ann Martin, INDIGENA co-curator;** of Mohawk ancestry who has worked consistently in the area of Native arts as a curator in both the United States and Canada. Ms. Martin is currently serving in the Equity Office of the First People’s Secretariat, having previously worked with the Canadian Museum of Civilization first as a Curator in Residence in developing *INDIGENA*, and then as Associate Curator for the *INDIGENA* project. As a curator and specialist in Native arts, Ms. Martin has conducted research projects in Canadian institutions, received scholarships and grants and published a number of articles and reports, notably, “The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Contemporary Native Art and Canadian Art Museums,” submitted in 1991 to the Canada Council. She received a Masters degree in Museum Studies from the University of Toronto and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Maine.

**Dr. Mary Jo Watson**, an OU Assistant Professor of Art who teaches three courses she developed that cover Native American Indian art and aesthetics from prehistory to the present. As a consultant for the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities, serves on the boards of the State Arts Council of Oklahoma, the Red Earth Indian Festival, the Jacobson Foundation of Native American Art and Culture, and the Western History Collection. She has also designed and taught courses through the Red Earth Indian Festival and through OU’s Elderhostel and Elderlearn programs.

The Symposium will also include **Red Earth Festival and recognized Native Artists**. The public is invited to remain at the Museum of Art from **7:00 - 9:00 p.m. for the free INDIGENA opening reception**.

**During the period of SummerWind**, University of Oklahoma’s celebration of the arts, **JULY 4 - 9 INDIGENA DOCENT-LED TOURS** will be available every afternoon, free to the Public.

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A FORUM led by Edgar Heap of Birds (Free and Open to Public) will be held within the week of August 23 - 27, including several participating Canadian INDIGENA Exhibition Artists who will also address School of Art classes, offer critiques and review their professional activities. This Forum will be followed by an informal closing reception, free and open to the public, marking the conclusion of the INDIGENA exhibition’s three-year international tour.

The exhibition “INDIGENA: Contemporary Native Perspectives” will be on view through September 3, 1995 at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, 410 W. Boyd St., on the OU Norman campus during Museum of Art SUMMER HOURS 12:00 - 4:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Sunday. The Museum of Art is closed on Mondays. Free parking passes for use in reserved spaces on the north end of Parrington Oval, can be obtained at the museum’s security desk. For further information, to make arrangements for group tours, or accommodations on the basis of disability, please call (405) 325-3272.

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