FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gallery Talk and Un-Symposium Offered at OU Art Museum

(Editor’s Note: heather ahtone’s preference is to spell her name all in lower-case letters.)

NORMAN – Identity and open dialogue are integral to programs occurring in conjunction with PHOTO/SYNTHESIS, an exhibition at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art at the University of Oklahoma. Upcoming programs include a gallery talk featuring the exhibition curator at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 7, and a non-traditional symposium program from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 11.

PHOTO/SYNTHESIS is an exhibition of photography by Will Wilson that extends the body of portraiture of Native Americans in Oklahoma. The gallery talk will be led by exhibition curator heather ahtone, the museum’s James T. Bialac Associate Curator of Native American and Non-Western Art.

Exchange: An Un-Symposium offers an inclusive discussion about art-making and identity. Collaborators include contemporary artists Will Wilson and Jeffrey Gibson, curators heather ahtone and Jennifer Scanlan, and several community leaders. Exchange originates from both PHOTO/SYNTHESIS and Jeffrey Gibson: Speak to Me, an exhibition currently on display at Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center. Both exhibitions explore similar topics that will be discussed during the program and question how artists relate to history, and how much freedom there is for interpretation of traditions.

“Working on PHOTO/SYNTHESIS has been a collaborative community project since its inception,” ahtone said. “Exchange: An Un-Symposium has developed with an interest in extending that collaborative process to include the local community in dialogue and sharing knowledge in a manner that retained a communal sense of respect and reciprocity. Working on this with Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center has encouraged us with the potential this format may elicit.”
The program reverses the traditional symposium format by asking attendees to engage with the speakers. After a curator-led discussion with the artists, attendees will contribute and develop ideas in breakout sessions. Light refreshments and pie will be served during the program.

The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art is located in the OU Arts District on the corner of Elm Avenue and Boyd Street, at 555 Elm Ave., on the OU Norman campus. Admission to the museum is complimentary to all visitors, thanks to a generous gift from the OU Athletics Department. Information and accommodations are available by calling (405) 325-4938 or visiting www.ou.edu/fjjma.

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