FREDTalks Features Road Trip Participants Sept. 27 at FJJMA

NORMAN, OKLA. – In May, 20 University of Oklahoma students took an educational road trip recreating Pop artist Ed Ruscha’s own 1962 trip – the inspiration for a photography book titled *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. The student trip culminated in a rare visit with the artist himself at his studio in Los Angeles. Faculty and students who took the trip will be reliving their thoughts and memories of the trip during a complimentary public event set for 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 27. The presentations are being offered as part of FREDTalks, a new program at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art on the OU Norman campus.

Light refreshments will be served at the event, which will be held in the museum’s Dee Dee and Jon R. Stuart Classroom. Seating is limited to 40 people, so visitors are encouraged to arrive early.

Based on the popularity of shorter, informal discussions such as TEDTalks, FREDTalks are planned to engage visitors with panel speakers on different subjects related to art.

Friday’s event is titled *Journey* and is presented by Todd Stewart, art, technology and culture associate professor and interim co-director of the OU School of Art and Art History. Stewart will be joined by Pete Froslie, art, technology and culture assistant professor in the OU School of Art and Art History; Gary Gress, a lecturer at the OU Department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability; Jessica Farling, the curator of academic programs at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art; and Angela Rodriguez, a student in the OU School of Art and Art History.

The panel will discuss Road to Ruscha, a 10-day journey from Oklahoma City to Los Angeles made by 20 OU students in May that reenacted, in reverse order, a road trip made by Ruscha in 1962. Students documented their journey through a variety of media, including photography and video, as well as other artistic responses. Participating students’ academic disciplines included art and art history, geography and meteorology, geology, film and media studies, and
Students were given a rare opportunity near the end of the trip when they met Ruscha in his studio and spent some time getting to know the artist.

The trip was scheduled to coincide with the museum’s spring fundraising efforts to acquire Ruscha’s 1990 painting, No Man’s Land. The work features the territory of Oklahoma prominently and has been on loan from the artist and on display at the museum since June 2011. It is part of the museum staff’s ongoing efforts to expose visitors to more contemporary art.

At a Museum Association event Sept. 20, museum staff announced that, after several months of fundraising, the painting had been successfully acquired by the museum. A list of all financial contributors now is on display next to the painting in the museum’s Sandy Bell Gallery.

Additional information about the Road to Ruscha trip is available on the museum’s website.

The next FREDTalks event is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 22, in the museum’s Mary Eddy and Fred Jones Auditorium. Dan Schwartz, assistant professor of music in oboe in the OU School of Music, will lead a discussion about blasphemy, including a performance of original music inspired by a controversial photograph by Andres Serrano.

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 the generosity of the OU Office of the President and the OU Athletics Department. The museum is closed on Mondays. Information and accommodations on the basis of disability are available by calling (405) 325-4938 or visiting www.ou.edu/fjjma.