OU Faculty to Discuss New Southwest Art Exhibition

NORMAN, Okla. - The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art will host Faculty Focus, a program featuring four University of Oklahoma faculty members at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 6, in the Dee Dee and Jon R. Stuart Classroom. The event is part of a new public program to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue. Faculty members will discuss how the new exhibition Macrocosm/Microcosm: Abstract Expressionism in the American Southwest relates to their specific fields of expertise.

The Faculty Focus event will feature professor Alfred Striz from the School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering; Gary Gress, a lecturer from the Department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability; Ricardo Souza, an instructor from the School of Music; and assistant professor Erik Braun from the Religious Studies Program.

In the 1950s, the American Southwest became a crossroads for Abstract Expressionists from the New York School and the San Francisco Bay Area. Macrocosm/Microcosm contains more than 60 works representing 40 American painters and sculptors.

The exhibition documents the spread of Abstract Expressionism from major urban centers to other parts of the country and showcases how Southwest artists adapted abstract techniques to interpret the region. Elaine de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn and others found inspiration in the expansive land and sky of the region and used gestural brushwork and veils of color to depict the vast spaces and distinctive coloring of the Southwestern landscape. They joined local artists in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas to create a distinctly modern view of the Southwest that expressed the aesthetic and cultural concerns of postwar America.

Other events at the museum relating to the Macrocosm/Microcosm exhibition are a students’ choice gallery talk on Tuesday, Nov. 11, and a lecture by OU American West art history professor Alison Fields on Thursday, Dec. 4.
Macrocosm/Microcosm: Abstract Expressionism in the American Southwest is currently on display and can be viewed through Jan. 4, 2015, in the Nancy Johnston Records Gallery.

More information about the exhibition and programs is available on the museum’s website at www.ou.edu/fjjma.

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.

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