NORMAN, OKLA. — Museums can be places of quiet reflection and meditation. To elaborate on this idea, the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art at the University of Oklahoma is offering a series of meditation classes at 5:30 p.m. each Monday in October.

Although the museum is usually closed to the public on Mondays, these complimentary one-hour classes are open to the public and will be held in the Sandy Bell Gallery. Dr. Surya Pierce, medical doctor at Goddard Health Services, will guide all meditation exercises, and no previous meditation experience is required. Participants are welcome to bring their own mats, but some will be provided.

“We are pleased to offer this new program at the museum and feel that it will offer our audience a new way to approach art in the museum,” said Susan Baley, director of education.

Many Abstract Expressionist artists practiced meditation as a way to clear the mind the same way they purged their paintings of representational subject matter. These classes are offered Oct. 13, 20, and 27 in conjunction with the new exhibition Macrocosm/Microcosm: Abstract Expressionism in the American Southwest at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. The exhibition opened Oct. 3 and is on display until Jan. 4, 2015.

Abstract Expressionists Elaine de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn and other East and West Coast artists found inspiration in the expansive land and sky of the American Southwest, using gestural brushwork and veils of color to depict the vast spaces and distinctive coloring of the landscape. They joined with 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.

With more than 60 works representing nearly 40 American painters and sculptors, Macrocosm/Microcosm not only documents the spread of Abstract
Expressionism from major urban centers to other parts of the country but also how artists of the Southwest adapted the techniques of the style to interpret the region.

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 on the basis of disability are available by calling (405) 325-4938 or visiting www.ou.edu/fjjma

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