FJJMA to Provide Free Native Art Events Nov. 15, 18

NORMAN – Complimentary events are being offered at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art to celebrate the opening of two Native American art exhibitions from the James T. Bialac Collection. Christy Vezolles, art appraiser and founder of Art Value LLC, will present a guest lecture at the art museum at the University of Oklahoma at 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 15. Family Day is scheduled from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18.

As a young law student in Tucson, Ariz., in the late 1950s, James T. Bialac purchased his first kachina, leading to a lifelong interest in American Indian art. Along the way, he formed friendships with scores of artists, collectors and dealers, ultimately leading to a collection of more than 4,000 artworks. The Nov. 15 lecture, James T. Bialac: A Lasting Legacy, discusses the path Bialac took to become one of the foremost private collectors of American Indian art.

Vezolles is a senior accredited appraiser of fine arts and American Indian arts, as designated by the American Society of Appraisers. She has served as a judge at many prestigious Indian Markets, including at the Heard Museum in Phoenix and at the SWAIA Indian Market in Santa Fe, N.M. She writes regularly for Western Art Collector and Native Peoples magazines.

Events continue Nov. 18 with a Family Day, made possible by the generous support from the Kirkpatrick Family Fund. The museum will provide complimentary admission and hands-on art activities for all ages.

The exhibitions The James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection: Selected Works and Indigenous Aesthetics: Selections from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection both opened Sept. 27 and are on display through Dec. 30.

OU President David L. Boren announced in March 2010 that the university had received one of the most important private collections of Native American art in the country. The gift came to OU from the private collection of James T. Bialac of Arizona. The multimillion-dollar collection of more than 4,000 works represents
indigenous cultures across North America, especially the Pueblos of the Southwest, the Navajo, the Hopi, many of the tribes of the Northern and Southern Plains and the Southeastern tribes.

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 OU students with a current student ID and all museum association members, $5 for adults, $4 for seniors, $3 for children 6 to 17 years of age, and $2 for OU faculty/staff. Admission also is complimentary for military veterans with proof and children 5 and under. The museum is closed on Mondays and admission is complimentary on Tuesdays. The museum’s website is www.ou.edu/fjjma. Information and accommodations on the basis of disability are available by calling (405) 325-4938.

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