Photography Exhibit Debuts at OU Health Sciences Center

NORMAN, Okla. – *Silent Witnesses*, an art exhibition that explores the reality of landmines through a moving display of photography that opens in October at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Originally a collaboration between the United Nations and the Center for International Health and Cooperation, *Silent Witnesses* was organized by Dr. Kevin M. Cahill, an internationally recognized tropical medicine specialist, and award-winning photographer Thomas Roma in July 1995 for the U.N. International Meeting on Mine Clearance in Geneva, Switzerland.

Due to his longtime friendship with OU Regent Max Weitzenhoffer, Dr. Cahill gave his collection of photographs comprising *Silent Witnesses* to the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art this year, and the exhibit will debut at a public reception set for 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3, at the Robert M. Bird Health Sciences Library, 1000 Stanton L. Young Blvd, in Oklahoma City.

“We are grateful to Dr. Cahill for generously giving this exceptional collection to the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art,” said OU President David L. Boren. “This exhibition is a powerful expression of the way in which the arts provide a bridge to the medical sciences and other disciplines.”

Dr. Cahill will give remarks preceding the exhibition’s opening, which signals a new collaboration between the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art and the OU Health Sciences Center.

“Interest in the humanities is an integral part of being a successful health
care professional, and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center welcomes any opportunity to raise awareness of issues that are prevalent in the world,” said Dr. M. Dewayne Andrews, senior vice president and provost and executive dean of the College of Medicine at the OU Health Sciences Center.

“This initial collaboration with Dr. Kevin Cahill and the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art is only the first in what I hope is a long and mutually beneficial relationship between our campuses and important individuals worldwide who convey a message of humanitarian concern.”

The exhibition tells a remarkable tale of suffering and pain mixed with incredible determination, accomplishment and hope through the contributions of 25 internationally acclaimed photographers, including Elaine Mayes, James Nachtwey, Irving Penn, John Szarkowski and Eileen Darby.

Nearly 800 innocent people are either killed or maimed each month as a result of more than 100 million mines lying scattered across more than 60 countries throughout the world.

Through the use of prosthetic legs as subject matter, the artists hope viewers will identify with the ever-increasing humanitarian and diplomatic efforts to stop the landmine epidemic from spreading.

“This incredible gift of photography from Dr. Cahill provides us with a unique opportunity to collaborate with the OU Health Sciences Center,” said Ghislain d’Humières, the Wylodean and Bill Saxon Director of the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. “We have been very fortunate to team with Dr. Andrews and the staff at the Health Sciences Center, and we see a future full of potential for new exhibits and programs.”

Dr. Cahill is President and Director of the Center for International Health and Cooperation in New York City. He also serves as Clinical Professor of Tropical Medicine at New York University and as Professor and Chairman of the Department of International Health at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He is Senior Medical Consultant to the U.N. Health Service, as well as to numerous foreign governments, and he has carried out medical research and refugee relief work in Somalia for more than 50 years. Cahill specializes in internal and preventive medicine. He graduated from the Joan Sanford I Weill Medical College of Cornell University in 1961.
Photographer Thomas Roma has twice received Guggenheim Fellowships and his work has appeared in exhibitions internationally, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the International Center of Photography. He has published nearly 10 books of photography, and his works appear in numerous collections such as the Art Institute of Chicago, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Roma has taught photography at Yale, Fordham, Cooper Union and The School of Visual Arts. In 1996 he was appointed the director of photography at Columbia University School of the Arts.

A second event related to global landmine awareness is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 24 at Oklahoma City University as OCU welcomes guest speaker and human rights advocate Jody Williams. Williams, along with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997. She has worked with the Nobel Women’s Initiative since 2006 on peace advocacy efforts throughout the world. The organization, for which she serves as chairwoman, utilizes the notoriety of the Nobel Peace Prize to bring awareness of inequalities and human rights violations. She will discuss the importance of both human and national security, and whether one is more important than the other when there are no guarantees of peace or stability. Additional information is available online at www.okcu.edu/speakers.

The OU Health Sciences Center’s website is www.ouhsc.edu and the museum’s website is www.ou.edu/fjjma. Information and accommodations on the basis of disability are available by calling (405) 271-2285.

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**IMAGE CUTLINES**

An exhibition by 25 noted photographers is scheduled to go on display with an opening reception at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3, at the Robert M. Bird Health Sciences Library at the OU Health Sciences Center in Oklahoma City. *Silent Witnesses* is an exhibition in collaboration with the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art and includes works such as this untitled photograph by Elaine Mayes. The reception is free and open to the public.

Image credit:
Elaine Mayes (U.S., b. 1936)

*Untitled*, 1995

Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, the University of Oklahoma, Norman;
Chromogenic color print, 9 7/8 x 6 3/4 in.
Gift of Dr. Kevin Cahill, 2012