OU Students to Present Works From Native American Art Collection at the FJJMA Nov. 1

NORMAN – Five students from the University of Oklahoma School of Art and Art History will give a short presentation about the significance of a favorite selected work of art from the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection at 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1, at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art.

“Being a university-based museum, it is important for the public to hear from current OU students,” said Jessica Farling, coordinator of academic programs at the FJJMA. “The Students’ Choice event is a great way for the museum to collaborate with the School of Art and Art History.”

Presenters include three OU School of Art and Art History doctoral students – Tammy Hanawalt, Hadley Jerman and Melissa Nuzum – along with two master’s degree students, Caroline Fernald and Native American Studies scholar Benny Tahmahkera. The presentations will be held in the museum’s Sandy Bell Gallery.

Hanawalt will discuss Narciso Abeyta’s 1959 painting, Werewolf. According to Hanawalt, Abeyta’s work illustrates an intense and macabre scene that is based in his own Navajo mythology and depicts a shift from traditionalism in Native American art to “embrace practices of modernism.”

Jerman will present Sioux-Soldier-Sold (c. 1970s), a black-and-white ink drawing by Oklahoma Kiowa-Caddo artist Tommy Wayne (T.C.) Cannon (1946-1978). The work, as described by Jerman, was originally rendered in one of the artist’s
sketchbooks and “forms an arresting political statement and snapshot of its time.”

The third doctoral student, Nuzum, has selected Grey Cohoe’s (1944-1991) oil on canvas painting, *The Kill*. Nuzum suggests Cohoe’s works seek to explore the alienation the artist felt from both Native and Anglo society.

Fernald will present the Anadarko native Blackbear Bosin’s *Challenge*, a 1959 watercolor on paper, which she finds represents the traditional Indian painting style akin to OU’s Kiowa Five – a group of Kiowa artists from the university’s art program in the 1920s.

The final student presenter, Tahmahkera, will discuss *Epitaph* by Comanche artist Diane O’Leary. The painting is a representation of politics through art and is a symbol of what Tahmahkera identifies as the artist’s frustration with infighting within the American Indian Movement and the marginalization of reservation tribal communities.

The student presentations are being held in conjunction with the James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection, which is on display in two new exhibitions at OU’s art museum.


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, $2 for OU faculty/staff and complimentary for military veterans with proof and children 5 and under. The museum is closed on Mondays and admission is free 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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**IMAGE CUTLINE**

Students from the OU School of Art and Art History have selected works from the James T. Bialac Collection of Native American Art to discuss at 4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1, at the Fred Jones. Jr. Museum of Art, including this painting by Navajo artist Grey Cohoe, titled *The Kill*.

Grey Cohoe (U.S., Navajo, 1944-1991)
*The Kill*, n.d.
Oil on canvas, 35 5/8 x 23 1/2 in.
Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art, the University of Oklahoma, Norman; James T. Bialac Native American Art Collection, 2010