



OKLAHOMA • VISUAL  
ARTS • COALITION

**For Immediate Release:  
December 13, 2011**

Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition  
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**Images and Video Available**

## **OKLAHOMA VISUAL ARTS COALITION INVESTS \$11,000 IN ARTIST AWARDS**

STATEWIDE –The Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition (OVAC) awards the \$5,000 **Oklahoma Visual Arts Fellowships** Eyakem Gulilat of Norman and Paul Bagley of Oklahoma City. In a series of video profiles, the public is invited to learn more about the award-winning artists at [www.youtube.com/okvisualarts](http://www.youtube.com/okvisualarts).

OVAC also grants two **Student Awards of Excellence** of \$500 each. Those were awarded to Lindsay Larremore of Tulsa and Mark Zimmerman of Edmond.

The Fellowship awards recognize past achievement and future promise. “Through funding such as these Fellowship awards, the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition develops and retains talented artists who enliven our state,” said OVAC Director Julia Kirt.

Ben Heywood selected the awards as guest curator. Heywood is the Executive Director of The Soap Factory, the largest space for emerging visual arts in the Midwest. Heywood is a graduate of Oxford University and the Courtauld Institute of Art, with an MA in medieval art history.

In his curator’s statement, Heywood said the four selected artists “intersperse their own real and authentic person histories into a wider examination of that individual’s place in society, while at the same time anchoring their work in an understanding of their locality.”

Through his multimedia sculpture, Bagley encourages communal interactivity. The origin of materials and site provide the conceptual frameworks, such as wood recycled from demolished buildings or adaptive reuse of outdated technology. Bagley received a BFA in Visual Communications from the University of Oklahoma.

Gulilat’s photographs examine identity and cross-cultural encounter. He focuses on underrepresented communities, such as his own Ethiopian heritage, and his memories of physical landscapes and new cultures. Gulilat received an MFA in Media Art/Photography from the University of Oklahoma and a BAS in Photojournalism and Art from Abilene Christian University.

Larremore recently received her BFA in Studio Art from Oklahoma State University. Through her *Peepholes* painting series, she explores issues of privacy in public and personal settings. The perspective of her oil paintings brings the viewer into the role of voyeur, capturing moments in the life of a young woman.

Zimmerman recently received his MFA with an emphasis in Photography from the University of Oklahoma. His current body of work, *A Fragile Existence*, invites viewers to contemplate their existence and the continuation of time. Using precarious photographic processes, he explores impermanence as a reminder that people, places and things decline, decay and die.

OVAC supports visual artists living and working in Oklahoma. For more information about OVAC, visit [www.ovac-ok.org](http://www.ovac-ok.org) or call 405-879-2400. The Fellowship awards are sponsored in part by the Oklahoma Arts Council. OVAC is an Allied Arts Member Agency.

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