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Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition

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Unfolding Contemporary Art: How Curators Impact Culture

OKLAHOMA CITY – The **Oklahoma Art Writing and Curatorial Fellowship** invites the public to hear from visiting art world luminaries in a series of public panels offering a broad view of various professional practices within the field of contemporary art. The first of these, *Impacting Contemporary Culture Through Curatorial Practice: Three Perspectives*, is **February 18, 1-3 pm**, at the Oklahoma City Museum of Art Noble Theatre, 415 Couch Dr in Oklahoma City. The panel is free and open to the public.

The Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition (OVAC) presents this program to encourage writing that is informed, articulate, inspired and engages audiences in contemporary art. The Oklahoma Art Writing and Curatorial Fellowship is organized in partnership with the Oklahoma City Museum of Art and The School of Art & Art History at the University of Oklahoma.

“Experiencing art can be profound and it is different for everyone. How we understand it is shaped by the museums, galleries, and publications produced about art,” said Julia Kirt, OVAC executive director. “Through this program, we hope to grow experiences of and expertise in contemporary art in Oklahoma. We will learn from the engagement with and perspectives of national luminaries.”

Mentors for the 2012 Fellowship include many esteemed professionals in the arts. On February 18, audiences will hear from Elizabeth Dunbar, Executive Director of DiverseWorks Art Space, Houston, TX; Dana Turkovic, Curator of Exhibitions at Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, and co-Founder and co-Director of Isolation Room/Gallery Kit, St. Louis, MO; and Hamza Walker, Director of Education and Associate Curator for the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago and faculty of The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL. The panel is moderated by independent curator and writer Shannon Fitzgerald.

During the yearlong Fellowship, each of the twelve Fellows will produce critical writing about contemporary art and exhibitions with the guidance of visiting Mentors. The Fellows were chosen through a competitive application process (see attached list for biographies).

Future public panels will be held at the Fred Jones Jr Museum of Art in Norman on April 14 and at the Oklahoma City Museum of Art on September 15.

The Oklahoma Art Writing and Curatorial Fellowship is sponsored in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Oklahoma Arts Council, Kirkpatrick Foundation and Allied Arts. The Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition was founded in 1988, providing career resources for artists who live and work in Oklahoma. For more about the program and public panels, please visit www.write-curate-art.org or call 405-879-2400.

--Additional Information, Next Page--

Oklahoma Art Writing and Curatorial Fellowship 2012

Public Programs: Free and open to the public.

- February 18, 1-3 pm *Impacting Contemporary Culture Through Curatorial Practice: Three Perspectives*
Elizabeth Dunbar, Dana Turkovic, and Hamza Walker
Moderated by Shannon Fitzgerald
Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Noble Theatre
415 Couch Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73102
- April 14, 1-3 pm *Professors Unfolding Contemporary Art in Academia: Research & Writing*
Sherri Irvin, Nancy Marie Mithlo, and Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie
Moderated by Shannon Fitzgerald
Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art
555 Elm Avenue, Norman OK, 73019
- September 15, 1-3 pm *Visibility & Vitality: Contemporary Art Criticism Now*
Sylvie Fortin, David Pagel, and Gregory Volk
Moderated by Shannon Fitzgerald
Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Noble Theatre
415 Couch Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Mentor Biographies

Elizabeth Dunbar, Executive Director, DiverseWorks Art Space, Houston, TX.

Shannon Fitzgerald, (Program Lead Mentor), Independent Curator and Writer, Oklahoma City.

Sylvie Fortin, Editor-in-Chief at *Art Papers* in Atlanta, GA and an independent curator, art historian, critic and editor who has worked internationally since 1991.

Sherri Irvin (PhD, Princeton), Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK and Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Editor of the journal *Philosophy Compass*.

Nancy Marie Mithlo (PhD, Stanford), Associate Professor, Department of Art History and American Indian Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI.

Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie, (PhD, Northwestern), Associate Professor of Art History, History of Art and Architecture, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA.

David Pagel, Art Critic, *Los Angeles Times*, Chair, Art Department at Claremont Graduate University, Los Angeles, CA.

Dana Turkovic, Curator of Exhibitions, Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis and co-Founder and co-Director of Isolation Room/Gallery Kit, St. Louis, MO.

Gregory Volk, Art Critic, Curator, Writer, and Associate Professor in the School of the Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA.

Hamza Walker, Director of Education and Associate Curator for The Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago and faculty at The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL.

Oklahoma Art Writing and Curatorial Fellowship 2012

Fellow Biographies

Jennifer Barron (Oklahoma City, OK) is an artist, art writer, and arts education program coordinator. She believes in the power of art to impact lives.

Theresa Bembnister (Kansas City, MO) has been an art writer for nearly a decade. Her work appears in the *Kansas City Star* and on The Drawing Center's blog, *The Bottom Line*.

Netha Cloeter (Norman, OK) is a second year graduate student at the University of Oklahoma pursuing her MA in art history, with an emphasis on contemporary Native American art.

Erinn Gavaghan (Oklahoma City, OK) is the Executive Director of the Norman Arts Council. In 2010 she graduated from Webster University, St. Louis with a MA in Art History.

Cory Imig (Kansas City, MO) is an interdisciplinary artist and received her BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design. She is currently co-director/co-curator at PLUG projects, in Kansas City, MO.

Emily Newman (McKinney, TX) is an Assistant Professor of Art History at Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Kirsten Olds (Tulsa, OK) is Assistant Professor of European and American Modern and Contemporary art history at the University of Tulsa.

Blair Schulman (Kansas City, MO) writes about the visual arts in Kansas City as Editor of *Cupcakes in Regalia* and Associate Editor of *Art Tattler*.

Amber Sharples (Oklahoma City, OK) is the Visual Arts Director/Collections Manager at the Oklahoma Arts Council where she manages both the State Art Collection and Capitol Art Collection.

Samantha Still (Norman, OK) received her BA and MA in Art History from the University of Oklahoma.

Sherwin Tibayan (Norman, OK) is a graduate student in photograph at the University of Oklahoma. His images and projects have been exhibited nationally and internationally.

Shiyuan Yuan (Stillwater, OK) is Director of Gardiner Art Gallery at Oklahoma State University. Previously, he was Curator and Collection Manager at the Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art.

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