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For immediate release

Ouachita's Adams Gallery to feature exhibits by guest artists Ted and Debra Barnes March 3-31

By Ali Robinson

February 26, 2016

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's Department of Visual Arts will host a pair of exhibits by guest artists Ted and Debra Barnes in the Rosemary Gossett Adams Gallery on March 3-31.

Ted Barnes' exhibit, "Pilgrim's Progress," will be in the first floor gallery and Debra Barnes' exhibit, "Longing and Losing," will be in the second floor gallery. An exhibit opening and artists' lecture will be held Thursday, March 3, from 2 to 4 p.m. It is open to the campus community and the public.

Ted Barnes, a 1972 Ouachita graduate, holds his Master of Fine Arts in painting from the University of Arkansas, a Master of Arts in art education from Western Kentucky University and his Bachelor of Arts in studio art from Ouachita. He currently is as a professor of visual art and dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. He previously has served at Ouachita, Louisiana College, Georgetown College and Campbellsville College and spent a summer as a visiting scholar in art at Oxford University.

Debra Barnes holds her Bachelor of Arts in art from Western Kentucky University and a master's degree in art education from the University of Arkansas. She has worked as an adjunct professor at several universities and most recently as an elementary school art teacher.

Summer Bruch, assistant professor of visual arts, said the Barnes' exhibits will help students gain a better understanding of what is going on in the world around them.

"They see multiple perspectives on the world and people approaching everyday issues in their own way," Bruch noted, adding that they "take an objective look on what is happening in the news and filter those issues through art."

Ted Barnes said his artwork is focused on discovering "spiritual truth and paradox" through a variety of influences such as advertisement design, baseball and modernism. His latest works are modeled around the theme of pilgrimage after his experience in the Canary Islands while on sabbatical in 2014.

"The use of religious themes and spiritual imagery has provided a major source of inspiration for my artwork throughout my career, and travel has been central to this investigation," he said, resulting in "a body of work that is concerned with a personal spiritual pilgrimage within the mystery and paradox of our secular world."

Debra Barnes is a strong advocate for art education after spending several years teaching elementary art in Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and Texas. She said her inspiration comes from a wide range of musical genres, politics and Mid-American modern furniture.

"I have a reckless affection for pattern, color and ornament and a need to make these kinds of images for my own excitement," she explained. "My desire and intention overall is to make art that comes from the soul and speaks loudly to the viewer's senses."

For more than three decades, the Barnes' artwork has been displayed in numerous shows and exhibitions both regionally and nationally. Their work can be found in a number of public and private collections throughout the Southeast.

Regular gallery hours for the two exhibits are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information about the exhibits and artists, contact Summer Bruch at bruchs@obu.edu or (870) 245-4655.