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Indianapolis museum showing O'Keeffe art

by The News-Gazette

INDIANAPOLIS — The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art is presenting more than 30 works by Georgia O'Keeffe in the exhibition "Georgia O'Keeffe: Visions of the Sublime." It will remain on view through April 3.

The exhibition takes an unconventional perspective on O'Keeffe's work, placing it in the context of the "sublime," which means lofty; grand or exalted in thought, expression or manner; tending to inspire awe.

The show introduces museum visitors to works by O'Keeffe that many people have not seen before. The exhibition includes paintings, among them landscapes of the Southwest, rivers and horizons that illustrate O'Keeffe's understanding of the sublime, according to a news release from the museum. Also on view are 25 photographs by O'Keeffe's husband Alfred Stieglitz and several 19th century paintings that illustrate the tradition of the sublime in American art.

For O'Keeffe (1887-1986), the sky and objects associated with the landscape — rocks, shells, trees, flowers — conveyed the suggestion of the sublime, or infinite. To create works that were the emotional equivalents of her experiences with the Western landscape, she moved freely between realism and abstraction.

"I have picked flowers where I found them, have picked up shells and rocks and pieces of wood and I have used these things to say what is to me the sacredness and wonder of the world as I live in it," she once

Born in Sun Prairie, Wis., O'Keeffe knew as a young girl that she would become an artist. She studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League in New York. In 1918, Alfred Stieglitz, a photographer and art dealer who had previously exhibited O'Keeffe's work, persuaded her to move to New York and work full time as an artist.

The two began an intimate relationship and married in 1924. In 1929, O'Keeffe visited Taos, N.M., and was profoundly attracted to the high desert. She continued to spend most summers in New Mexico and moved there permanently after Stieglitz's death in 1946.

"Georgia O'Keeffe: Visions of the Sublime" was organized by Joseph S. Czeszochowski of International Arts in Memphis, Tenn. The exhibition was made possible by the assistance of the Georgia O'Keeffe Foundation in Abiquiu, N.M.; George Eastman House, Rochester, N.Y. (Alfred Stieglitz Collection); and the Museum of New Mexico and Museum of Fine Arts, both in Santa Fe.

The exhibition publication includes essays by Charles C. Eldredge, Eugenia Parry, Marjorie Baige-Crozier, Therese Mulligan, Barbara Novak, Robert Rosenblum, James Turrell, Sharyn R. Udall and John Wilmerding.

The Eiteljorg Museum is at 500 W. Washington St. in White River State Park in downtown Indianapolis. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. It is closed Mondays. For informa-