

# Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 5, 2012

## **Media Contact:**

Kristin Kautz, 505.946.1037

kristin.kautz@okeeffemuseum.org

## **GEORGIA O'KEEFFE AND THE FARAWAY: NATURE AND IMAGE**

### **Exhibition Sheds New Light on Adventurous Aspects of O'Keeffe's Life and Art**

"When I got to New Mexico that was mine. As soon as I saw it, that was my country.

It fitted to me exactly." - Georgia O'Keeffe, 1977

*Santa Fe, New Mexico* – The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum is delighted to present *Georgia O'Keeffe and The Faraway: Nature and Image*, which opens on May 11, 2012. This exhibition is the first to demonstrate how the beauty and elegance of O'Keeffe's paintings were prompted by the intimacy of her ongoing experiences with the Southwest's natural forms, especially because of the camping trips she made to remote areas.

The exhibition will be on view until May 5, 2013, and includes drawings and paintings inspired by the beauty of the painted desert surrounding O'Keeffe's house at Ghost Ranch, which she purchased in 1940, and by the camping and rafting trips she made. Highlights of the exhibition include O'Keeffe's paintings, photographs made by others of places she camped, and a recently made photographic panorama of the "Black Place" that establishes a context for the exhibition's reconstruction of a site where O'Keeffe and her friend Maria Chabot camped in 1944. This includes the tent the two pitched, their lanterns, camping stools, and cooking equipment from the camping gear Chabot bequeathed to the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum at her death, in 2001.

Barbara Buhler Lynes, Curator, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, who organized the exhibition for the Museum, explains: "O'Keeffe had been passionate about nature since childhood, but living amidst the astonishing beauty of the Ghost Ranch landscape, and making camping and rafting trips in the

Southwest, allowed her to form an immediate and personal relationship with the area through which she realized her independent spirit and sense of adventure in new ways.”

As O’Keeffe herself pointed out, in 1943, “Such a beautiful–untouched lonely feeling place – such a fine part of what I call the ‘faraway.’ It is a place I have painted before but I wanted to do again - and even now I must do again.”

Also shown are photographs by those who accompanied O’Keeffe on these trips. Maria Chabot photographed their 1944 camping site at one of O’Keeffe’s favorite landscape configurations in Navajo country, about 150 miles west of her Ghost Ranch house. O’Keeffe called it the “Black Place” because of its desolate, monochromatic landscape. Todd Webb and Tony Vaccaro photographed O’Keeffe at another one of her favorite spots, the “White Place,” near the village of Abiquiu, whose spiked white cliffs are depicted in several O’Keeffe paintings from the 1940s. Webb also photographed O’Keeffe on one of the several rafting trips she made in the 1960s, down the Colorado River to Glen Canyon. These images capture O’Keeffe drawing from the landscape and paddling the raft, and accompany her drawings and paintings inspired by the trip, as well as photographs of Glen Canyon by O’Keeffe.

Lynes concludes, “From O’Keeffe’s first prolonged stay in New Mexico, in 1929, she instantly felt an affinity with the unique character of the area, its landscape, and its architecture, all of which nourished her creativity and inspired her art until ill health forced her into retirement in 1984, at the age of 97. The beauty, clarity, and colorful character of these paintings capture the area’s richness in such a compelling way that they have been associated with the landscape of Northern New Mexico, and thus have allowed O’Keeffe to claim the area as her own. It has come to be known as ‘O’Keeffe Country.’”

The National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, Fort Worth, Texas, organized the exhibition in partnership with the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, and it opened at the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame Museum-in 2009. Its Curator there was independent scholar Valerie Ann Leeds, who worked with former Cowgirl Museum Curator Patricia Dixon to organize the show. The exhibition catalogue, which

reproduces all of the images in the exhibition, includes an introduction by Dixon and essays by Leeds and Lynes, who is also the Emily Fisher Landau Director, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Research Center. The catalogue is available in the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Store.

**What:** *Georgia O'Keeffe and The Faraway: Nature and Image*

**When:** May 11, 2012 - May 5, 2013

**Where:** Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, 217 Johnson Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico

**More Information:** [www.okeeffemuseum.org](http://www.okeeffemuseum.org)

**Request Images:** Kristin Kautz, 505.946.1037 or [kristin.kautz@okeeffemuseum.org](mailto:kristin.kautz@okeeffemuseum.org)

**GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM:**

The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum is dedicated to the artistic legacy of Georgia O'Keeffe, to defining its ongoing significance, and to the study and interpretation of American Modernism, late 19th century to the present. The Museum's collections, historic properties, exhibitions, Research Center, publications, and education programs contribute to scholarly discourse and inspire diverse audiences. Located in Santa Fe, NM, the Museum's collections, exhibits, research center, publications and education programs contribute to scholarly discourse and serve diverse audiences. The largest single repository of the artist's work in the world, it is the only museum in the world dedicated to an internationally known American woman artist and is the most visited art museum in New Mexico.

###