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**OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART'S EDUCATION MANAGER HONORED BY
THE LOUISIANA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

NEW ORLEANS, LA— The Ogden Museum of Southern Art is pleased to announce that Ellen Balkin, Education Manager, was named the Louisiana Art Education Association's (LAEA) 2017 Museum Education Art Educator. She was also nominated for the Southeastern Region's award honoring outstanding service and achievement of regional significance during the LAEA's fall conference.

The LAEA is a professional organization affiliated with the National Art Education Association, dedicated to promoting art education through professional development, service, leadership and advocacy. Each year it recognizes exemplary art educators to not only honor these teachers' excellence in their field but to also focus professional attention on quality art education and increase public awareness of the importance of education in the arts.

Balkin has been with the Ogden Museum of Southern art since 2004, working as a docent, outreach coordinator, camp director and education coordinator. She assumed her current position as Education Manager in June 2015. Under her leadership, the Ogden Museum's Education Department has been awarded the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the Orleans Public School Network's Outstanding Community Partner Award, and has been recognized for outstanding Institutional Leadership by Fashion Week New Orleans for "achievements and contributions in support of the Southern Fashion Industry."

During her time at the Ogden Museum, Balkin has expanded the Museum's Education Outreach Program to provide Orleans and Jefferson Parish public school students opportunities to make meaningful connections with Southern art and artists. Over 10,000 students have participated in these creative experiences since the program's inception. Specific programs expanded under her leadership include the *Early Childhood Curriculum Program* (serving 300 students a year), the *Artists and Sense of Place Residency Program* (serving 600 students a year), and the *Day with an Artist Program* serving 200 students a year. In 2015, Balkin traveled to the White House to accept the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from First Lady Michelle Obama for the Ogden Museum of Southern Art's *Teen Docent Program*. The program was one of

twelve selected for the nation's highest honor for out-of-school arts and humanities programs that celebrate the creativity of America's young people, particularly those from underserved communities.

Balkin is also responsible for the curation of over 14 exhibitions a year installed in the Education Gallery and throughout the Museum. These exhibitions support and honor the teaching of art to students throughout the region. In 2015, approximately 14,000 people engaged in programming presented by the Ogden Museum's Education Department.

William Andrews, Executive Director of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art: "It's a great distinction for Ellen Balkin to be recognized for innovative educational programming that puts artists and students together in a creative environment year-round. There is a real impact when students from a residency, workshop or camp see their artwork at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art alongside masterful works by other artists. These activities are educational and inspirational, and help build a sense of personal identity, community and individual responsibility."

Andrews cited the support of foundations like The Helis Foundation, the Daybrook Foundation, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation & Festival, Arts Council of New Orleans, City of New Orleans Wisner Grant, Louisiana Division of the Arts and the MaggieGeorge Foundation as creating an environment for success, and mentioned the expanding Ogden Museum School program that combines a tailored learning path with 'behind the scenes' opportunities to create a long-lasting relationship between school communities and the Ogden Museum.

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Located in the vibrant Warehouse Arts District of downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art holds the largest collection of Southern art and is recognized for its original exhibitions, public events, and educational programs which examine the development of visual art alongside Southern traditions of music, literature, and culinary heritage to provide a comprehensive story of the South. Established in 1999 and in Stephen Goldring Hall since 2003, the Museum welcomes almost 80,000 visitors annually, and attracts diverse audiences through its broad range of programming including exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, and concerts which are all part of its mission to broaden the knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of the visual arts and culture of the American South.

The Ogden Museum is open Wednesday through Monday from 10AM-5PM and also on Thursdays from 6-8PM for Ogden After Hours. Admission is free to Museum Members and \$13.50 for adults, \$11 for seniors 65 and older, \$7.25 for children ages 5-17 and free for children under 5.

The Ogden Museum is free to Louisiana Residents on Thursdays from 10AM-5PM courtesy of The Helis Foundation. The Helis Foundation is a Louisiana private foundation, established by the William Helis Family. The Art Funds of the Helis Foundation advance access to the arts for the community through contributions that sustain operations for, provide free admission to, acquire works of art, and underwrite major exhibitions and projects of institutions within the Greater New Orleans area.

The Museum is closed Martin Luther King Day, Lundi Gras and Mardi Gras, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and day following, Christmas Day and New Years Day.

The Museum is located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans Louisiana 70130. For more information visit ogdenmuseum.org or call [504-539-9650](tel:504-539-9650).