

Copy for SOTA Introductory Panel (text was drawn from didactics provided by Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art)

State of the Art: Discovering American Art Now

In its 2014 report, the National Endowment for the Arts identified more than two million working artists in this country. There likely have never been more artists at work, and yet few receive the attention and visibility their art deserves. This means, of course, that we—the potential audiences—are seeing an infinitesimal fraction of the art being produced. It's quite possible that we are missing the most crucial and meaningful developments being made in art history.

During the better part of 2013 and early 2014, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art curators Don Bacigalupi and Chad Alligood spent nearly every Monday through Friday traveling around the United States to visit artists' studios in cities, small towns, and rural areas, seeking a fuller understanding of all that is being produced by American artists today. Together they logged more than 100,000 miles and visited some 900 artists through every region of the country.

The result of their year-long effort is *State of the Art*, an exhibition featuring more than 130 works of art made by 52 living American artists active in every part of our nation. They come from all walks of life and play many roles in our communities. The works on display reflect that diversity: in concept, materials, scale, and subject matter.

Art has always reflected the time and place in which it was made—this art is no different. *State of the Art* is a call to action: to pay more attention to the artists who live and work among us and what they have to say. Their art speaks. Let's listen.

[insert images of Crystal Bridges curators at bottom of panel]

Don Bacigalupi, President, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

Chad Alligood, Curator, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art