

For Immediate Release

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***IF YOU BUILD IT THEY WILL COME* EXHIBIT OPENS AT RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**

(Mahwah) -- Artists and designers who address and critique cities such as Las Vegas, Disney's Celebration project in Florida, mega malls, and the new American cities of Atlanta, San Jose and Orlando are featured in *If You Build It They Will Come*, an exhibit opening Wednesday, October 27 in the Kresge and Pascal galleries, in the Berrie Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey. A reception is scheduled October 27 at 5 p.m. followed by an artists' talk at 6 p.m.

If You Build It They Will Come examines a current direction in architecture and design in America today, a direction based on thematic narratives, simulated environments, and what curator Jason Middlebrook calls "the Disneyfication of contemporary society." This show is an investigation into space, how space is designed and what people desire in the spaces in which they live and vacation. Many of the artists in the show live in New York City, but deal with subject matter that is reflective of the overall American urban landscape.

The exhibit looks at the notion of architecture as event, a Barnum-esque approach to building that incorporates hope for capital and promotion of chance. In the tradition of Barnum, who understood our desire to gather and gape at orchestrated events, this show replaces bearded ladies and death defying stunts with architectural flights of fantasy. The title of the show references Barnum's simple philosophy: create a site that is mysterious, one of a kind, and the people will gather.

Each of the 11 artists chose to either construct or document architectural fictions. By simulating space, these artists suggest an alternative to traditionally accepted notions of design and planning, by extending the notion of thematic growth within architecture. It is within this process that these artists can develop their own systems for building and for questioning pre-existing systems of design.

Alrie Middlebook proposes a public garden based on the semi-conductor chip, to be sited in California's Silicon Valley. Jude Tallichet has chosen to install her work in the most private of places, the Berrie Center's bathrooms. Her multilayered sound piece weaves music, spoken word and recorded sound to activate what is usually perceived of as the least artistic of spaces. Jocko Weyland's Cibachrome photographs memorialize unlikely "placemaking" spaces, such as the Mall of America and various Las Vegas casinos. Charles Goldman's work takes disorder and regularizes it. *Scrapwood*, New Jersey 1999 is comprised of small pieces of scrap wood, rigorously ordered into what, at first glance, reads as an endless city, a growing urban sprawl. Additional artists represented include Knut Asdam; David Galbratth and Teresa Seeman; Kelly Chorpening; Stephen Hendee, and Mungo Thomson.

The exhibit will continue through November 23.

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