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REWIND, RE-CAST, REVIEW, NEW MEDIA WORKS BY INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS, ON EXHIBIT AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

(Mahwah) – *Rewind, Re-Cast, Review* will open in the Kresge Gallery at Ramapo College of New Jersey on Tuesday, February 8 and continue through March 18. An opening reception will be held from 5 – 7 p.m. on February 8 and a curator’s talk is scheduled for 5:30 p.m.

The exhibition, in recognition of Women’s History Month, explores how five contemporary artists use photography, videos, painting and sound to probe how perceptions of culture, history, religion and gender are produced. The artists, Lalla Essaydi (Morocco/U.S.A.), Mansoor Hassan (Pakistan/U.S.A.), Wangechi Mutu (Kenya/U.S.A.), Nalini Malani (Pakistan/Mumbai) and DJ Rekha (U.K./U.S.A.) reflect on and draw inspiration from their own histories and backgrounds.

Isolde Brielmaier, the exhibition’s curator, says, “They also look to the global political and social arena as they explore, re-work, and in the process, ‘rewind’ the constructed images of our past and recent histories in order to re-cast them in a different light of the present.” Brielmaier is a visiting assistant professor of art at Vassar College and an independent curator and writer focusing on international contemporary art.

Nalini Malani’s bold, colorful paintings convey a commitment to the integral roles that women construct and maintain in social and familial relationships while articulating criticism of groups who impose and propagate fundamentalist beliefs.

A series of photographs and a video by Mansoor Hassan dealing with the aftermath of September 11 take up the question of power and the production of history.

(more)

At the center of each image is Hassan dressed in a *burqa*, a widely recognized Muslim symbol. By placing herself and, by extension the viewer, in front of icons associated with U.S. nationalism and patriotism including the Statue of Liberty, her images have a destabilizing effect on how power is constructed and perceived.

Cutting, a video projection by Wangechi Mutu, also positions the female body as a central site for investigating history and culture, challenging the viewer with often violent visions of the past, present and future.

Lalla Essaydi, in *Converging Territories*, explores the relationship between memory and experience and the tensions between the confinement and fluidity in the Islamic culture in which she grew up. Her series is part of a broader aim to reinvent the cultural images of Islam, Arab women, the role of a photographer and the power of the image.

Brielmaier, the curator, notes that completing the rich array of materials, techniques and textures developed by these artists, the exhibition also features two “soundscapes” by DJ Rekha installed at listening stations in the gallery, providing an alternate sensory experience to the visual representations presented.

This program is made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Kresge Gallery is located in the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College. Gallery hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, 1 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 201.684.7147.

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