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**February 2, 2005**

**EXHIBIT BY NEW JERSEY PHOTOGRAPHER JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ AT  
RAMAPO COLLEGE**

(Mahwah) – *The Books on the Shelf*, a photography project by New Jersey artist José Hernández, will be exhibited at the Potter Library Galleries on the campus of Ramapo College of New Jersey beginning Tuesday, March 8 and continuing through May 2.

All of the photographs in the exhibit were shot in the Potter Library in color using a digital camera. “I always loved going to libraries and walking past the book shelves without any specific book in mind and being surprised by a title,” recalls the artist. Hernández decided to capture on film what had always caught his eye.

Hernández spent a year roaming the rows of books in the library and choosing what to shoot. Although Ramapo College has other art galleries where his work could have been shown, the artist preferred that his photographs be displayed where he took them. “It was appropriate,” he says.

What makes the project art is Hernández’s juxtaposition of five or six photographs to create picture panels. “When you see them that way, you make connections between the first and the second, and the second and the third in terms of titles, themes and the photo’s composition.”

The artist was born in Cuba and emigrated to the United States in 1970. He received a bachelor of arts degree from Ramapo College of New Jersey and a master of fine arts degree from Hunter College, New York. He is a graphic artist and teaches basic photography at Ramapo College. Among other exhibits, Hernández’s work was featured

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in a solo show entitled *Cuba*, based on his first return trip to the country, at the Jadite Gallery in New York City. His photographs were on display in a two-person exhibit at Columbia University. In 2000 he was one of four featured alumni students in an exhibit at Ramapo College.

“When you walk into a library there is information on every subject,” notes the artist. “You pass a variety of themes and subjects. Sometimes they connect and relate and sometimes they contradict and oppose each other.” In this project, Hernández reflects the connections and the contradictions.

For Potter Library Galleries hours, call 201.684.7575. 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.

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