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TWO NEW FEATURES PAINTINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAMAPO COLLEGE FACULTY

(Mahwah) – *Two New*, an exhibit of work by two new visual arts faculty at Ramapo College of New Jersey, will open in the Kresge and Pascal Galleries at Ramapo College of New Jersey on Wednesday, September 14 and continue through October 21. An opening reception will be held from 5 - 7 p.m. on September 14.

The exhibit features paintings and mixed media by assistant professor of painting Irina Nakhova in the Kresge Gallery. An artist's talk will be held at 5:30 p.m. on September 14. Born and educated in Moscow, Nakhova belongs to the younger generation of Russian nonconformist artists known as the Moscow Conceptual School. She grew up in Moscow during the final phase of the Soviet regime. Her work combines painting, sculpture and new technology into interactive installations and environments.

Nakhova's first one-person show outside of Russia was *Partial Triumph I* in 1989 at Vanessa Devereux Gallery, London, followed by *Momentum Mortis* at Phyllis Kind Gallery in New York in 1990. Her recent projects include *Artificial Shrubbery* at the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow (2005), *Alert: Code Orange* at the National Centre for Contemporary Arts in Moscow (2004), and *Silence* at Galerie im Traklhaus in Salzburg, Austria (2004). In a catalog published in conjunction with this show, Nakhova recalls how she and other artists whose work didn't conform to the Socialist Realism movement showed their work where it was produced, at their studios and in their homes, referred to as "islands of freedom." The artist has lived in the United States since the early '90s, but in recent years also has spent time in Russia and Europe. Nakhova has

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been a critic, artist-in-residence or professor at Princeton Atelier in New Jersey, Sommerakademie fur Bildende Kunst in Austria, Wayne State University in Detroit and Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania. Her work will be shown at the Nailya Alexander Gallery in New York City September 1-24.

Photography and digital images by Matt Swarts, assistant professor of photography/digital media, will be shown in the Pascal Gallery. An artist's talk will be held at 6 p.m. on September 14. The artist was born in Plainfield, New Jersey and is a graduate of Princeton University, where he earned a degree in philosophy, and The Massachusetts College of Art, where he pursued a MFA. Before joining the faculty at Ramapo College, he taught at Amherst College and Bowdoin College. In 2001, Swarts traveled to Costa Rica as a Fulbright U.S. Student Fellow. His work has been shown at The Museum of New Art in Michigan and DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Massachusetts.

Swarts' work is imbued with philosophical "what ifs." Curator Alexis Salas has described the artist's work as "melancholy, ruminative, and strange...images are culled from comics, second hand store paintings and educational diagrams, nature programs and mid-century design. His curiosity on several levels is about end user photographic technology: namely, can the Internet itself be seen as a camera?" It's not uncommon for Swarts to begin with a simple premise, such as what a random word looks like when inputted into various Internet search engines the artist uses to find new images. Swarts has been an artist-in-residence at Light Work in Syracuse, New York and his work has been published in the *New York Times Magazine*.

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 and Pascal Galleries are 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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