



**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Office of Communications and Public Relations**  
**Press Release**  
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*Contact: Angela Daidone*  
*201-684-7477*  
*adaidon1@ramapo.edu*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Artist Victor Davson Comes Full Circle in Ramapo College Exhibition Examining Guyanese Roots**

***Victor Davson: Full Circle***  
**Curated by Sydney O. Jenkins**  
**September 9–October 16, 2015**

**Opening Reception: September 9, 2015, 5-7 p.m.**  
**Artist's Talk: 6 p.m.**

**MAHWAH, N.J.**— The Ramapo College Art Galleries will present an ambitious mid-career survey exhibition by artist Victor Davson on Wednesday, September 9. The exhibition spans 30 years and five bodies of work that move back and forth between abstraction and figuration.

Davson's work is heavily influenced by the anti-colonial politics of the Caribbean, and by the intellectual powerhouses of that period. These include extraordinary writers and activists such as Martin Carter, Frantz Fanon and Walter Rodney. Since 1996, his series of paintings and drawings, which include the *Limbo/Anansi* drawings, *Bad Cow Comin'* paintings, and his most recent paintings on long playing vinyl record album covers, are his attempt as an artist to negotiate the roots of identity in a terrain of loss and desire. All of these series are a response to his strong memories from his childhood in Guyana of a folk performance in which the participants masqueraded from house to house on Christmas Day. He sees these carnivalesque characters as metaphors for people of the African Diaspora who have survived because of their resiliency.

"This compelling exhibition offers visitors a first-time opportunity to experience the scope of the artist's oeuvre," says Sydney O. Jenkins, Director of the Ramapo College Art Galleries and Exhibition Curator. "A cavalcade of imagery is offered -- from the earlier accomplishments in formal abstraction, to pieces

informed with literary and political references, to the layered imagery from popular culture seen in *the Dub Factor: Heroes* album covers series. “

An illustrated catalogue will be available.

### **Additional Programs During the Exhibition**

**Poetry:** Monday, September 28, 2 p.m. Kresge Gallery: Jim Haba, Founding Director of The Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival reading from T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets and Trinidadian-born, Queens-bred visual artist and poet Cheryl Boyce-Taylor reading selections from her poetry.

**Music:** Friday, October 16, 8 p.m., Sharp Theater, Berrie Center: Concert with Canadian vocal musicians FreePlay Duo interpreting music by figures represented in Davson's *Dub Factor/Heroes* series. Tickets: \$28/25/22; children under 17: \$18. Galleries are open pre-performance from 6 - 8 p.m.

### **About Victor Davson**

Victor Davson is a practicing artist and founding director since 1983 of Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art in Newark, New Jersey.

He was born in Georgetown, Guyana, and since immigrating to the United States in 1973 he has received a BFA from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York; co-founded Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art; and established himself in his practice as an artist.

Notable solo exhibitions include *Dub Factor Redux*, Maplewood Art Center, Maplewood, N.J.; *Bad Cow Comin': Recollections and Transformation*, Rush Arts Gallery, New York City; *Hero and Monster*, The Tomasulo Gallery, Cranford, N.J.; *Bad Cow Comin' and Limbo/Anansi*, DHR Gallery One, Newark, N.J.; *Bad Cow Comin': Recollections*, Tompkins College Center Gallery at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Penn.; and *The Chain Link Series*, Jersey City Museum, Jersey City, N.J.

Notable group exhibitions include *African-American Artists and Abstraction*, Cuban National Museum, Havana, Cuba; *Timehri Transitions: Expanding Concepts in Guyana Art*, The Wilmer Jennings Gallery at Kenkeleba House, New York City; *Contemporary Expressions: Art from the Guyana Diaspora*, Five Myles Gallery, Brooklyn, N.Y.; *Drawn to New York*, The Bertha V.B. Lederer Gallery, State University of New York, Geneseo; *This Twittering World*, Francis Kyle Gallery, London, England; *African American Artists from the Permanent Collection*, The New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, N.J.; *Present Continuous*, Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York City; *La Línea: Dibujos Contemporáneos*, Museo de Art Moderno de la República Dominicana, Santo Domingo; *Diverse Representations II*, Morris Museum, Morristown, N.J.; *The Act of Drawing: Medium/Method/Meaning*, Tompkins College Center Gallery at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Penn.; and *Jonction Internacional*, Nice, France.

Davson has received a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant; a Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper fellowship and three fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. His work is in the permanent collections of the Newark Museum, The Montclair Art Museum, the New Jersey State Museum, and the National Collection of Fine Arts, Guyana.

As executive director of Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art, Davson leads a vital hub for creative excellence in Newark New Jersey's downtown arts district. He has been internationally recognized for his leadership with Aljira. ([www.aljira.org](http://www.aljira.org))

This program is made possible in part by funds by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding for the exhibition catalogue has been provided by the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation.

The Kresge and Pascal Galleries are located in the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts. Ramapo College is located approximately 40 miles outside of New York City at 505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, N.J. For directions, visit our website at [www.ramapo.edu/berriecenter](http://www.ramapo.edu/berriecenter). The Galleries are open Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday from 1 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 201-684-7147.

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