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YALE ART HISTORIAN TO LECTURE AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

(Mahwah) -- A lecture, "Winds of the Spirit: Haitian Vodun Art," by Yale University art historian Dr. Robert Farris Thompson, will be presented Thursday, February 1 at 8 p.m. in the Sharp Theater on the campus of Ramapo College of New Jersey. Admission to the lecture is free. The lecture will be given in conjunction with an art exhibit, *An Apparently Unimportant Event: Self-Taught from the Centre d'Art in the 1940s and 50s*.

Drawn from the private collection of film director Jonathan Demme, this historic exhibition features renowned Haitian artists brought to the fore by American critic and Ramapo College donor Selden Rodman while he was co-director of the Centre d'Art in Haiti. Included are such masters as Hector Hyppolite, Philomé Obin, Wilson Bigaud and Castera Bazile.

In his book, *Flash of the Spirit*, Thompson describes vodun, first elaborated in Haiti, as having "inspired a remarkable tradition of sacred art." Thompson is regarded as one of the world's most significant African art historians and is renowned for his compelling lectures.

Thompson has taught at Yale since 1961, and has served as visiting curator at UCLA's Museum of Ethnic Arts and at the National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution. He has organized several major exhibitions, including *The Four Moments of the Sun* and *The Face of the Gods: Shrines and Altars of the Black Atlantic World* at the National Gallery of Art. In addition, the professor has received research grants from the Ford Foundation, the Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies, the National Institute of Medicine and Science, the National Institute of the Museums of Zaire, and the

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National Gallery of Art. He has served on the Joint Committee on African Studies of the Social Science Research Council and American Council of Learned Societies, as chairman on the Humanities Committee of the African Studies Association and in numerous capacities at Yale.

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For more information, call 201.684.7147.

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