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**RAMAPO COLLEGE WILL PRESENT “MESSAGES FROM GHANA,”  
PAINTINGS BY KWAKU KISSIEDU**

MAHWAH – “*Messages from Ghana*,” an exhibit of recent paintings by Kwaku Kissiedu, a Ghanaian artist with a growing international reputation, will be on view in the Pascal Gallery in the Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts in February.

Kissiedu will be a 2009 Schomburg Artist in Residence for two weeks, coinciding with Ramapo College’s observance of African Ancestry Month. The Schomburg Fellowship is sponsored by the College’s Minority Faculty Staff Association.

In addition to showing and discussing his work, the artist will present a lecture, “The History of Contemporary Art in Ghana” Wednesday, February 11 from 5 to 6 p.m. in Room B-224. The lecture is free and open to the public.

He also will offer a workshop focusing on African techniques that have influenced his work, including Adinkra symbols, Akan Golden Throne imagery and Ashanti Linguist staff finials. “These images and symbols are not intended to play a major role in interpreting the paintings,” he said. “They serve as a reminder of the dynamism of culture and the richness of African ancestry.” In addition, he will visit classes at Ramapo College to discuss the culture, history, religions and economics of Ghana.

The artist’s visit to Ramapo College was arranged by Shalom Gorewitz, a professor of Video Art and New Media. The professor met Kissiedu when he traveled to Kumasi,

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Ghana as the recipient of a Fulbright Senior Specialist Grant. “Ghanaian visual artists have extraordinary challenges. There is no infrastructure for contemporary art; there is an iconographic language already infused in textiles and architecture and there continues to be a tension between Western/African culture. Kissiedu tackles these questions with wisdom and humor, balancing his heritage with trends in contemporary international art. This is a unique opportunity for students, and the wider community, to meet, work and learn directly with an important African artist.”

Kissiedu is on the faculty of fine art in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the College of Art and Social Sciences of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.

The exhibit will be sponsored by the Ramapo College Galleries and the School of Contemporary Arts. 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 Pascal Gallery is located in the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College. Hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 1 to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, 1 to 7 p.m. For more information, call Sydney Jenkins, gallery director, 201.684.7147.

A preview reception will be held Wednesday, February 4 from 5 to 7 p.m. An artist’s talk will begin at 6:30 p.m. The exhibit will run Thursday, February 5 and continue through March 6.

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