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FILM LIFTING VEIL ON ARMENIAN WOMEN WHO WERE FORCED INTO BONDAGE DURING GENOCIDE TO BE SCREENED AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

(MAHWAH, NJ) – Director Suzanne Khardalian will screen and lead a discussion of her film "Grandma's Tattoos," at Ramapo College of New Jersey on December 9 from 3:45 to 5:15 p.m. in Room B222/223.

The film is a personal film about what happened to many Armenian women during the genocide. It is a ghost story—with the ghosts of the tattooed women haunting us—and a mystery film, where many taboos are broken. As no one wants to tell the reel and whole story, and in order to bring the pieces of the puzzle together, the director makes us move between different times and space, from today's Sweden to Khardalian's childhood in Beirut. The viewer is taken on a journey into the secrets of the family.

Eventually, Khardalian's mother reveals the secret behind Grandma Khanoum's blue marks. "Grandma was abducted and kept in slavery for many years somewhere in Turkey. She was also forcibly marked—tattooed—as property, the same way you mark cattle. Grandma Khanoum's fate was not an aberration. On the contrary, tens of thousands of Armenian children and teenagers were raped and abducted, kept in slavery. Although after World War I U.S. and European missionary and aid groups rescued over 90,000 of these victimized Armenian young girls and children, the film makes clear that the ordeal for these survivors of genocide did not end there.

Suzanne Khardalian is an independent filmmaker and writer. She studied journalism in Beirut and Paris and worked as a journalist in Paris until 1985, when she started to work on films. She also holds a master's degree in international law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University, and contributes articles to different journals. She has directed more than 20 films that have been shown both in Europe and the U.S. They include "Back to Ararat" (1988), "Unsafe Ground" (1993), "The Lion from Gaza" (1996), "Her Armenian Prince" (1997), "From Opium to Chrysanthemums" (2000), "Where Lies My Victory" (2002), "I Hate Dogs" (2005), "Bullshit" (2006), and "Young Freud in Gaza" (2009).

The screening and presentation are free and open to the public. It is being co-sponsored with the Armenian National Committee of New Jersey. For more information or to reserve a seat, please call 201.684.7409.

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as sixth in the Best Regional Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work, and as courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers four graduate programs and articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.

Undergraduate students choose to concentrate their studies in one of five schools with more than 700 course offerings and 40 academic programs. Ramapo College boasts an average student/faculty ratio of 18:1 and average class size of 23, affording students the opportunity to develop close ties to the College's exceptional faculty.