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EXHIBIT OF SOUND-ART BY MENDI AND KEITH OBADIKE  
OPENS AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

(MAHWAH, NJ) – “African Metropole: Sonic City Lagos,” an exhibit of sound-based art By Mendi and Keith Obadike, opens in the Pascal Gallery at the Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts at Ramapo College on March 28 and continues through May 2.

A talk by the artists will be held on March 28 at 4 p.m., and an opening reception will follow from 5 through 7 p.m.

The exhibition features the premiere of “African Metropole: Sonic City Lagos,” a work commissioned for the Ramapo Galleries.

The Obadikes transform visual images into audio soundscapes. “Sonic City Lagos” uses a multi-channel audio maze based on the major pathways of the city of Lagos, Nigeria. The artists have collected samples of industrial sounds, conversations with people in the city, and the acoustics of the architecture. The Ramapo installation makes use of flat panel ultrasonic speakers that project a narrowly focused and extremely unidirectional beam of sound. These speakers, placed at key nodes in the room, will be mounted on an automated servomechanism and will give the illusion of sound following the visitor through an invisible maze.

Keith holds a Masters of Fine Arts degree in Sound Design from Yale University; Mendi holds a doctorate in Literature from Duke University, and is a past Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow at Princeton University. Their honors include a Rockefeller New Media Arts Fellowship, Pick Laudati Award for Digital Art, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Fiction, and a Vectors Fellowship from USC. In 2011 they were awarded a New York Rhizome grant to support the making of “African Metropole: Sonic City Lagos.”

Their major works include “The Sour Thunder,” an internet opera (Bridge Records); “Big House / Disclosure,” a 200 hour public sound installation at Northwestern University; and a poetry collection, “Armor and Flesh” (Lotus Press). Their intermedia work has been commissioned by the New York African Film Festival and by Electronic Arts Intermix, The Yale Cabaret, Whitechapel Art Gallery (London), and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

“African Metropole: Sonic City Lagos” was curated by Associate Professor of Art History John Pepper, and supported by the Schomburg Visiting Scholar Fund. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue of past writing and audio projects by the

artists that includes an audio CD insert. This project is supported in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Gallery hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 1 through 5 p.m. and Wednesdays 1 through 7 p.m. For further information, contact galleries director Sydney Jenkins at (201) 684-7147. For more about the artists see their website at [<http://www.blacknetart.com/>].

For an image, click here:

<http://www.ramapo.edu/news/pressreleases/2012/images/MandKPortraitNew.tif>

Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Universities North category for public institutions, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,008 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College 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. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers five graduate programs as well as 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.