

April 3, 2000

THIS IS NOT THE PLACE

(Mahwah) – Certain to make a name for itself with its first major exhibition, the Berrie Center at Ramapo College of New Jersey presents an ambitious group show, (*This is not the Place*), outlining personal histories and tracing territories through the works of 12 diverse contemporary artists who negotiate ideas of "place" in the realm of painting, photography, video and sculptural installation.

Co-curated by Virgilio Garza, a Manhattan-based curator and gallery administrator, and Sydney O. Jenkins, art gallery director at the Berrie Center, the show features works by Cuban "artist in exile" _____, know for his paintings of "rafters" adrift at sea; the late _____, Italian leader in the "arte povera" movement; film artist _____, longtime collaborator of Ridley Scott and director of *Demolition Man*; multimedia artist _____, former dean of the School of Contemporary Arts at Ramapo College; body-obsessed conceptual artist _____, included in the controversial *Sensation* exhibition at Brooklyn Museum of Art;

featured in this show contest and open up notions of identity and place as the crux of their life/art continuum."

The public is invited to attend an opening reception on Wednesday, April 12, from 5 to 7 P.M. The exhibition remains on view in the Berrie Center's Kresge Foundation Gallery and Andre Z. Pascal Gallery through May 5, 2000. Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Fridays, 1 to 5 p.m.

, who emigrated from Cuba in 1960 shortly after Castro's revolution, considers himself an "artist in exile." He began his career in New York, and his early work reflects his awareness of urban social issues such as homelessness, disenfranchisement, violence and the AIDS epidemic. Writes Edward J. Sullivan in a 1998 essay, "Since the late 1970s [Azaceta's] paintings and drawings... have been taking the moral and ethical pulse of this country." Azaceta is perhaps best known for his ongoing series of "boat paintings," poetic images of agonized "rafters" adrift at sea, struggling and isolated. *Crossing* (1999), included in the Berrie Center show, is one such work that illustrates the artist's epic, existential quest. Omnipresent in these paintings is an angst-ridden figure, an archetype of alienation. Azaceta, who has been awarded a number of prestigious fellowships, was among those featured in *Latin American Artists of the 20th Century*, a major, international survey that premiered at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1992 before traveling to the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Seville, Spain; the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris; and the Ludwig Art Museum in Cologne, Germany.

The work of the late (1940-1994), a proponent of the "arte povera" movement, reflects the artist's concern with issues of identity and duality - the sense of the self and the "other." His seminal work *Twins* (1968) shows a composite image in which the artist holds hands with his double, a "twin brother" that the photographic image delivers as real. He produced this work as an edition of 50 postcards, which he mailed as an announcement of the birth of Alighiero e Boetti (Alighiero and Boetti). Afterwards, he continued to create "mail art" and other types of work that involved third parties and reflected the artist's transnational sensibility. The exhibition

includes six of Boetti's famous embroideries, which he produced throughout his career. In creating the embroideries, Boetti would render a design—including world maps and text works—that would be executed by skilled weavers, collaborators who exercised their liberty in respect to the use of colors. By incorporating provocative statements and

exhibition features performance stills from *Roadworks*, a poetically—and politically – charged piece in which she walked barefoot through the streets of Brixton dragging a pair of work boots tied to her ankles, as well as the sculpture *Marrow*, a rubber cast of a child's bed that Garza describes as "an inert 'body' that exudes the pathos of the struggle between life and death."

, who became famous for her controversial and deeply personal photographs of her children, is here represented by a large gelatin silver print from her series *Deep South: Landscapes of Mississippi and Louisiana*. These works are devoid of human figures and yet, knowing that the depicted locations are in the South, each scene is "suddenly permeated with those histories, looming ghosts and bitter legacies of loss," points out Jenkins. "Mann calls up a rich romantic essence in photographs dense with atmosphere... Ethereal roots and branches can be discerned amongst the light-filled rectangles, touched by lazy and sad Southern breezes."

Former cloistered monk , whose work was the cover story for the March issue of

Both a teaching facility and a community resource, Ramapo College's Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts offers a diverse schedule of exciting programs—from exhibitions of cutting-edge contemporary art, private collections and student work to concerts, dance performances and plays. Outreach efforts include special programs for families and schooltime performances for elementary students.

Located at 505 Ramapo Valley Road in Mahwah, the Berrie Center is easy to reach via the Garden State Parkway or Route 287. For additional information about (This is not the Place) or other programs in the Center's inaugural season, call (201) 684-7202.

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