

News from QUEENS COLLEGE

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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For it isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. One must work for it.

Eleanor Roosevelt

POWER TO THE PEACEFUL: PEACE QUILTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD **AT GODWIN-TERNBACH MUSEUM, DEC. 15, 2008 – JAN. 15, 2009**

*-- Exhibition Opening Includes Traditional Indian Music and Reception:
Monday, December 15, 6 – 7:30 pm*

FLUSHING, NY, December 4, 2008 – Girls from rural northern India express their hopes and dreams through hand-made quilts that travel across the ocean, destined for permanent exhibition in a Bronx school. Painter and quilt-maker Faith Ringgold creates a textile masterpiece inspired by a book in which New York's youngest citizens document their feelings about 9/11. And teenage girls literally weave Eleanor Roosevelt's vision for social justice with their own insights into a vibrant montage that challenges the viewer to embrace change. These are a few examples of the beautiful, handcrafted works in *Power to the Peaceful: Peace Quilts from Around the World*, the next show at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum at Queens College.

The exhibition grew out of the Peace Quilt project, a unique collaboration among Queens College art education professor Rikki Asher, the East Bronx Academy for the Future, and a vocational school for girls operated by the Pardada Pardadi Educational Society in a village in Bulandshar, India. In 2007, Professor Asher visited the girls' school, which provides free training in block printing, appliqué, and embroidery—highly marketable skills that will help the young artisans escape poverty. Returning to Pardada Pardadi this year, the professor brought a gift: a quilt made by students at the East Bronx Academy for the Future, a new school in a struggling South Bronx neighborhood. Then she led a workshop to help the Indian students sew a quilt they could send back in exchange.

“As the world grows smaller and communication ever faster, it is vitally important for global understanding to go hand in hand with globalization,” says Professor Asher. “The Peace Quilt project, initiated in New York and taken to northern India, demonstrates understanding and empathy in a way that no business arrangement ever could. They rose to the challenge of creating works that communicate the essence of their lives through art.”

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Power to the Peaceful includes the quilt made by the Pardada Pardadi students—which will be displayed permanently at the Bronx school after the exhibition—and one by 19 Pardada Pardadi teachers; both celebrate the theme of world peace. These works of textile art hang alongside “Peace Story Quilt,” three panels by celebrated contemporary artist Faith Ringgold. She designed the triptych with the school-age contributors to *What Will You Do for Peace? Impact of 9/11 on New York City Youth*, a book produced by the InterRelations Collaborative, which promotes cross-cultural relations among rapidly diversifying populations in New York City. “Peace Story Quilt” has been displayed across the United States, bringing its message of hope and healing from coast to coast.

Other quilts in the exhibition include the *Human Rights and Social Justice Quilt* created by students and staff at the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Center for Girls (Hyde Park, NY), which takes its theme from Eleanor Roosevelt’s mission statement for the Center: “to create a world where social justice prevails.” *Mandala Peace Quilt* and *Tarot Peace Quilt*, fabricated at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies (Rhinebeck, NY) as part of its ongoing peace quilt project, is a visual expression of the spiritual art of global cultures that creates a “state of awareness...with which to grow deeper in one’s spiritual practice.” Fabric artist Helema Kadir oversaw the creation of these three artworks, as well as a quilt by Queens College art education students that is also in the show.

“Understanding and interaction across cultures are key elements in the creation of these quilts,” says Amy Winter, director of the Godwin-Ternbach. “They exemplify the global and local community activism being called for by our newly elected president.”

Power to the Peaceful is augmented with photographs and videos illustrating the production of the works, as well as appliquéd banners made by the Indian students that highlight school activities such as reading, biking, and cricket. The opening reception on December 15 will feature a gallery talk by Professor Asher followed by a reception with traditional Indian music played by Peace Soundscape duo Daisy Paradis and Laraaji Nadabrahmananda, on sitar and zither, respectively.

Exhibition and program support has been generously provided by the Queens College Office of the President, the Division of Secondary Education and Youth Services, and the friends of the Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

Visitors’ Information:

Museum hours are Monday–Thursday, 11 am to 7 pm; Saturday, 11 am to 5 pm. The museum is open on Sundays during related exhibition events. Please call the museum at 718-997-4747 for further information on the exhibition and public programs or visit http://www.qc.cuny.edu/godwin_ternbach. Admission is free.

Travel Information:

By car, the Godwin-Ternbach Museum is 40 minutes from midtown Manhattan. Directions are at <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/about/directions.php>.

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The Godwin-Ternbach Museum at Queens College is the only comprehensive collection of art and artifacts in the borough of Queens, housing over 3,700 objects that date from ancient to modern times. The mission of the GTM has grown over time from serving as a teaching museum for the benefit of art and art history students to embracing all disciplines and an increasingly diverse and engaged community. All exhibitions are free, as are their related lectures, symposia, gallery talks, workshops, films, concerts, and tours.