

For Immediate Release Contact: Emily Croll

January 11, 2013 609-771-2633 or crolle@tcnj.edu

**TCNJ Art Exhibition Explores the Concept of Value**

This spring TCNJ Art Gallery presents*Value Added: Artists’ Perspectives on the Meaning of Worth*, an exhibition of multi-media artworks and installations that explore concepts of worth and valuation. The exhibition, which is curated by Betsy Alwin, adjunct professor of fine art at the College, will be on view in the Art and Interactive Multimedia (AIMM) Building from March 20 through April 18, 2013.

*Value Added* examines differing values that exist within contemporary society—monetary systems, proprietary rights, and status symbols—as well as the transformation of mere signs of worth into metaphors that reference the personal, the political, and the poetic. Indeed, many value systems are determined by structures that are arbitrary and changeable, and as the global economy grows increasingly complex and speculative, currency and other symbols of worth are becoming ever more abstract.

Included in the exhibition are artworks that weigh monetary worth against other values, including the environment, as in Christina Kelly’s *Pay Dirt*, an ongoing project in which worm-composted currency feeds a garden of plants, and Richard Knox’s *Newtown Creek Oil Spill,*a penny machine that commemorates the largest and most devastating oil spill on U.S. soil.  The value of the American dream is quantified in such works as Esperanza Mayobre’s *Legitimate Dust of Santa Esperanza,* in which the artist sells “dust” from her own body as a religious devotional tool for accelerating the citizenship of illegal aliens.

Michael Landy’s video of his 2001 performance *Breakdown*documents the artist’s demolition of all his person possessions and examines contemporary society’s obsession with consumerism. Katie Creyts explores the concept of self-worth in her sculptural piece *Dowry*, a wedding dress made from old shopping receipts. Peter Simensky’s project *Neutral Capital Collection*is a mobile gallery containing artworks purchased using currency of his own making, thereby creating a critical intervention in the market driven art world

The exhibition will examine a range of issues inherent in the concept of value, including alternative currencies and economies, expressions of self-worth, and expressions of values that are priceless. Other artworks presented in the exhibition include Melissa Brown’s mixed media print, *Zero Dollar*; Pete Driessen’s *List of Loan Office Comments;* Heather Hart’s interactive installation, *Trading Post IV*, Christian Jankowski’s video *Kunsmarkt TV;*Caitlin Karokzak’s painting *Gilded Leper*; Mark Lombardi’s drawing, *George Francorero, Bank of Bloomfield and State Bank of Chatham, New Jersey;* Eric Lunde’s mixed media piece, *The Flat is World*; Tim Portlock’s digital image of *North Las Vegas;*Martha Rosler’s photomontage *Cleaning the Drapes;* Yumi Janairo Roth’s sculpture, *10000dwt (Pennyweights*); Sebastiao Salgado’s photographs of the *Serra Pelada Gold Mine*; Nari Ward’s mixed media piece, *Third World Bank*, and Caroline Woolard’s *Work Dress*.

In conjunction with the exhibition, TCNJ School of Arts and Communication is hosting a lecture and separate panel discussion that will examine the topics of value, worth, and currency through the lens of different academic disciplines and perspectives. The panel discussion will precede the opening of the exhibition on Wednesday, March 20 at 4:00 p.m. and will feature TCNJ faculty from a variety of disciplines. In addition, David Rago, an alumnus of The College of New Jersey, and Suzanne Perrault, owners of Rago Arts and Auction Center in New Jersey, will be presenting on the valuation of art, how valuation has changed over time, and how the economic market has taken a toll on art. Mr. Rago and Ms. Perrault are featured appraisers on the PBS series “Antiques Roadshow,” appear at major shows and conferences across the country, and have published a number of works in their fields. Their presentation will be on Friday, April 12 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Mayo Concert Hall. The exhibition and all related programs are free and open to the public.

TCNJ Art Gallery is located in the Arts and Interactive Multimedia Building (AIMM) on the campus at 2000 Pennington Road in Ewing. The gallery is open to the public free of charge Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 12:00 until 7:00, and Sundays from 1:00 until 3:00. For more information about exhibitions and programs at the TCNJ Art Gallery and for directions and parking, visit tcnj.edu/artgallery or call 609-771-2633. Exhibitions at TCNJ are funded in part by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Image captions:

Melissa Brown

*Zero Dollar*, 2008

Oil paint, paper, wood

34 x 92 in.

Loaned by the artis

*Kunsmarkt TV*, 2008

Video

45 min.

Courtesy Studio Jankowski, Berlin

Peter Simensky

*Neutral Capital Collection II*, 2007

Portable art collection and gallery in collapsible shipping crate

Dimensions variable

Loaned by the artist

Nari Ward

*Third World Bank 6X6*, 2010
Vinyl banner, stencil ink, felt weather seal, shoe tips, shoe laces, cowrie shells, palm-fiber thatch
72 x 72 x 1.5 in.

Courtesy Lehman Maupin Gallery, New York

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