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**For Immediate Release**

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## **El Camino College Art Gallery to Present “Victor Raphael: Illumination, From Digital to Sublime”**

The El Camino College Art Gallery will present the exhibit “Victor Raphael: Illumination, From Digital to Sublime” from October 7-31, with an artists' reception set for 7-9 p.m. October 10 and an artist's lecture at 1 p.m. October 15.

The show will feature the artwork of Victor Raphael, which occupies a fascinating and complex aesthetic territory that encompasses the exploration of cosmic space and man's response to its incomprehensible immensity. Through the use of sophisticated technology, he produces extraordinary photo-based images that bridge the scientific and the spiritual worlds. He explores and wanders through art history, combining ancient and modern sources, utilizing antique and ultra-modern media.

Raphael deftly moves from Polaroid to painting, from brushes and hand-gilded illumination to video camera and computer. The resulting images differ broadly in format, from large, photo-based canvases to Polaroids and from video projections to digital works on paper. All bear witness to a deep sense of wonder.

Raphael is both a seeker of knowledge and an artistic translator of what he experiences. Whether he is observing a Buddhist shrine, Islamic mosaics or glacial ice while traveling, or viewing NASA broadcast TV images of space in his living room, Raphael's camera is capturing what he sees. These photographic images are the basis of the artworks that emerge, transformed. Through both the digital manipulation of image and color, and the use of the ancient technique of application of metal leaf as a source of light within the visual plane, Raphael literally illuminates areas of his photographs.

The metal leaf embellishment creates a superimposed physicality that propels the photographic surface and the viewer into another dimension. In this light-enhanced level of reality, the artist explores multi-faceted perspectives on the nature of the universe. His alteration of the surface through very specific hand-application of metal leaf serves not so much to decorate but acts to designate and highlight meaning within the image.

In pursuit of expanding the visualization of both interior and exterior worlds Raphael has collaborated with four individual artists: Bill Aron, Jean-Pierre Hébert, Clayton Spada and David Jordan Williams, to pool visual and technological resources. He brings a numinous focus to each collaboration, reflective of his own solo investigations into both spatial and terrestrial imagery. Raphael is intimately involved in the conceptualization and realization of all of the projects, and each serves to expand the artistic capabilities of both Raphael and his collaborators.

The El Camino College Art Gallery is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays and from noon to 8 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays. For more information, call curator Susanna Meiers at 310-660-3010. Admission to the El Camino College Art Gallery and gallery events is free. On-campus parking is \$3.

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