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THIS IS PERSONAL | MICHAEL RAGSDALE'S 9/11 ARCHIVE
AT QUEENS COLLEGE ART CENTER SEPTEMBER 6 – OCTOBER 14

*—New York's Worst Tragedy is Commemorated in a Collection
of More Than 3,000 Items Gathered from a Mourning City--*

WHERE: Queens College Art Center (part of the Selma and Max Kupferberg Center for the Arts)
Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library, Level Six
Queens College, 65-30 Kissena Blvd., Flushing.
Curated by Tara Mathison, assistant curator, Queens College Art Center

FLUSHING, NY, August 25, 2011 – In the chaotic weeks after 9/11, as New Yorkers struggled to make sense of this horrific tragedy, Michael Ragsdale roamed the city gathering ephemera from vigils, lectures, and debates—more than 220 events. For the next seven years, his life revolved around amassing and cataloguing the material. *THIS IS PERSONAL*, an exhibition of that memorabilia, presents one individual's response to a day that forever changed the world.

Comprising more than 3,000 post-9/11 items and 500 event-related autographs—on view and available for examination—Ragsdale's "seven-year paper history" forms a unique and possibly the largest private archive showing the ways in which our traumatized city dealt with the unimaginable. Organized in chronological and special event binders, these flyers, posters, pamphlets, photographs, and other paper items bear witness to events ranging from community rallies to sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. The collection also includes materials from organizations such as NYC Recovers, Tribute WTC Visitor Center, the 9/11 Commission, Americans for Victory over Terrorism, International Commission of Inquiry on Crimes Against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration, Not In Our Name, and the West Point Military Academy. Together, all these materials document the processes of remembrance, recovery, and reconstruction.

A New Yorker living in Maspeth, Queens, Ragsdale began collecting paper ephemera and autographs in 1997 while covering local events as a videographer. His hobby assumed new importance on the morning of 9/11 as he watched the Twin Towers burning on a video monitor. "I took this collecting project on as a challenge, to try and document on paper how the world, U.S. and New York City were going to react to 9/11," he explains. "I did it because I knew I

- more -

could." The National September 11 Museum acquired a group of over 4,000 pieces that Ragsdale assembled during the first 14 months after the attacks; about 1,000 of his documents are included in the September 11 Digital Archive of the Library of Congress.

The exhibition is free and open to the public. Images, as well as biographical and sales information, are available upon request. For information on additional events to be scheduled, please visit http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Art_Library/exhibitions.html.

For directions to Queens College, please visit <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/ABOUT/DIRECTIONS/Pages/default.aspx> . For a campus map, go to <http://www.qc.cuny.edu/about/directions/2d/Pages/default.aspx> Rosenthal Library/Art Center).

Collector's Talk/Reception: Wednesday, September 7, 5-8 pm; Collector's Talk 6–7 pm

Lecture + Discussion: Monday, September 12, 12:15-1:30 pm
A New York City Autograph Collector's 9/11 Aftermath Journey,
by Michael Ragsdale

Lecture + Discussion: Monday, September 19, 4-5 pm
Remembering the World Trade Center: History, Planning and Architecture, by Anthony Robins
Sponsored by the New York Council for the Humanities, Speakers
in the Humanities.

Gallery Hours: Monday–Thursday, 9 am–8 pm; Friday and September 28–29, 9
am–5 pm; closed October 10, weekends and holidays; open
September 11, 11 am–5 pm Free and open to the public

Gallery Contacts: For more info: (718) 997-3770
http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Art_Library/artcenter.html
artcenter@qc.cuny.edu

The Queens College Art Center, founded in 1987, succeeds the Queens College Art Library Gallery established in 1960. In more than 200 exhibitions to date, the Art Center has shown masters like Alice Neel, Joseph Cornell, and Elizabeth Catlett, and introduced scores of artists from around the globe. Focusing on modern and contemporary programming expressive of the best art of our time, this display space presents the works of emerging and established artists in diverse media. Art Center exhibitions support the educational and cultural objectives of Queens College. The shared goal of the Queens College Art Center and of the Godwin-Ternbach Museum at Queens College is to provide the means for participating in and upholding a democratic society through learning, adaptation, and critical thinking.

