Orlando Rodriguez Cuevas
Walsh Library Gallery, Seton Hall University
August 31 - October 19, 2001

Seton Hall University's Walsh Library Gallery opens its Fall 2001 academic calendar with the engaging work of Orlando Cuevas. This new exhibition, *Hocus Pocus With An Urban Focus*, includes the artist's unique three dimensional sculptural works as well as digital prints based on his original sculptures. Also an accomplished magician, many of Cuevas' works serve as magician's props in his performance art. Other mediums to be shown include acrylic, encaustic, watercolor and drawings.

The Gallery will host a reception to meet the artist on Saturday, October 13th, University Day, between 1-4 p.m. At 3:00 p.m. there will be a performance by the artist combining art and magic. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public. The exhibit is sponsored by Seton Hall University's Special Academic Programs, Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority and the Friends of Walsh Library Gallery, and the Hope Center for the Visual and Performing Arts in Jersey City.

At the turn of the millennium the *Star Ledger* named Orlando Cuevas as one of *20 for 2000*, listing him among other top rising New Jersey artists and performers - faces to watch for in the new century. Born thirty-seven years ago in New York City of Puerto Rican heritage, Cuevas' parents and family "migrated" to Jersey City when he was a youngster. He graduated from New Jersey City University with an MA in Art Education and a BFA in Sculpture. In his "rebellious twenties he founded the Artfux movement which was considered by many to be a voice of a generation. Today, Cuevas has melded his talents into a unique sculptured art form that draws the viewer into a dreamlike trance, recognizing the bitter-sweet memories of urban life.

Dr. Alejandro Anreus, former curator at the Jersey City Museum, describes Cuevas as a sculptor of the city: "his highly detailed sculptures, drawings, and prints capture the 'inner life' of buildings, the souls of things, and with this, the daily lives of those who inhabit them, those who sleep, and make love, and eat and dream, those who read stories to their children at bedtime, those who pray to God, or die forgotten, those who laugh, yes laugh, in the tenements, in the churches, in the back alleys, in the parks of Jersey City, or any city. Orlando Cuevas is a magician, who in his landscapes and toys, gifts us moments of epiphany."

His work has won critical acclaim and international recognition. This summer his work was featured in a well received four artist exhibition at the Rockville Arts Place in Rockville, Maryland. Recently he was a featured artist at the Montclair Art Museum's much heralded *Waxing Poetic: Encaustic Art in America*. His work is in the permanent collection of the Jersey City Museum, the Montclair Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic, as well as numerous private collections.

The artist's work has most recently reviewed by *Washington Post* writer Jessica Dawson who describes it as neo-pop, borrowing images and objects from mass-culture and having affinities to the Low Brow
movement artist work on the West coast.

According to William Zimmer, art critic for the *New York Times*, in Cuevas' work "memories are preserved, every bit the social satirist. Cuevas ingeniously models his creatures allegories of power." His work has been described one part Picasso, one part Edward Kienholz and one part Diego Rivera. Cuevas "defines the Jersey City aesthetic" writes *Star Ledger* art critic, Dan Bischoff.

For additional information contact Walsh Library Gallery Director, Jo Ann Cotz at (973) 275-2033 or cotzjoan@shu.edu and visit our website at http://library.shu.edu/gallery. The Gallery is open Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and by appointment. Group and school tour arrangements made in advance are welcome. The Gallery and all events are free and open to the general public.