



# EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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## **Icon or Myth?**

*Paintings of the Statue of Liberty by Raúl Manzano portray an American/immigrant experience during Latin American Cultural Week*

(New York – October 1, 2008) Hope, liberty, and justice for all is Raúl Manzano’s central theme at his exhibit “Icon or Myth?” opening on October 20 at Empire State College, State University of New York, as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Latin American Cultural Week in New York City. A reception will be held on Thursday, October 23, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at 325 Hudson Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor (entrance on Van Dam Street).

The exhibition features the Statue of Liberty as a questionable symbol of freedom and democracy in modern times. With vibrant colors and a personal visual language, the paintings engage the viewer’s emotions and invite reflection on today’s important world events. Mr. Manzano will be present at the opening reception to discuss his work. The exhibition will be on display from October 20 through December 20, by appointment. Admission is free. A press kit can be downloaded at [www.raul-manzano.com](http://www.raul-manzano.com).

“His paintings depict and embody the ideal of the Statue of Liberty expressed in different forms to engage the spectator introspectively as a viewer or as someone who’s being viewed. The artworks incite impassioned discussions about the true meaning of liberty as viewers reflect on diverse aspects of identity and find themselves drawn into seeing as others see. This interaction and discourse, in image and meaning, is Mr. Manzano’s intricate and powerful message,” says Dr. Cynthia L. Ward, interim dean of the Metropolitan Center.

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Mr. Manzano's artworks have contributed to the education and dialog of controversial issues of the day. Past exhibitions include "AIDS Awareness," in 1996, at the Broadway Mall Community Center, "en America," in 2003, which depicted the immigrant experience, at the Edward Williams Gallery at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Hackensack, NJ; and "America on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown," in 2007, at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, in which Manzano offered the viewer a way to reflect on their perceptions on the nation's future.

**Raúl Manzano**, a Colombian immigrant, has had a challenging career during his 28 years in America, but his artwork and philosophy have been committed to one cause – to create awareness, provoke thought and encourage the value of art for social change. Raúl Manzano has an M.A. from Empire State College and a B.F.A. from the School Visual Arts, both institutions in New York. He is the resident director of the School of Visual Arts' summer program "Painting in Barcelona" in Barcelona, Spain and an arts mentor at Empire State College.

**Empire State College**, a leading institution in adult education, is proud to be a participant in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Latin American Cultural Week. This exhibit is a stirring example of how the college's mission, values, and spirit are demonstrated. Empire State College offers motivated adults the opportunity to earn associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. Through a combination of face-to-face meetings with faculty, online courses and small study groups students can study anytime and anywhere. They also may earn credit for college-level learning from work and life. The college serves 18,000 students at 35 locations across New York state and through its Center for Distance Learning. With more than 57,000 alumni, Empire State College is the SUNY college for adults. For more information on Empire State College please visit our web site: [www.esc.edu](http://www.esc.edu).

**The Latin American Cultural Week** is a celebration of Latin American arts and artists with dance, music, theater, visual arts, literature and lectures in venues throughout New York City from November 5 - 21. The event presents the highest quality art and artists to the broadest cross-section of the community attracting visitors nationwide and abroad. LACW is supported by Mayor Bloomberg's Latin Media and Entertainment Commission. For a full schedule of events, please visit [www.latinamericanculturalweek.com](http://www.latinamericanculturalweek.com). LACW is a program of PAMAR (Pan American Musical Art Research), founded and directed by Uruguayan pianist Polly Ferman. For more information, please visit [www.pamar.org](http://www.pamar.org) or [www.pollyferman.net](http://www.pollyferman.net).

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Directions: #1 to Houston Street or C/E to Spring Street.