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Soul-filled images promote profound experience at the Art Gallery on Eissey Campus

(Palm Beach Gardens, FL – October 15, 2002) **"ClayPaper,"** the newest exhibition at the Art Gallery on Eissey Campus, will feature clay sculptor/painter **Nazaré Feliciano** and neo-expressionist painter **Alessandra Gieffers**. The artists will be on hand for the opening of their exhibition on Oct. 28 from 6 to 9 p.m. The exhibition at Palm Beach Community College in Palm Beach Gardens, 3160 PGA Blvd., runs until Nov. 29.

Both artists spent their childhoods in Europe, which profoundly influenced their work. Nazaré Feliciano was born in Torres Vedras, Portugal, and Gieffers lived in Rome, Italy. They also studied art in the United States and established themselves here as respected artists with numerous awards and solo exhibitions. The two women earned their bachelor's degrees at Marymount Manhattan College in New York City, and both are art professors at Palm Beach Community College.

Having grown up surrounded by the beautifully painted terracotta tiles known as "azulejos" in Portugal, Nazaré Feliciano creates clay sculptures or "installations" as well as clay paintings using terracotta tile. In her most recent work, she shapes tiles into framed, two-dimensional structures when viewed from above. In "Desert City," the aerial view of the tiles reveals a definitive pattern to a townscape or village. When viewed from the side, "Desert City" is a vast panorama of layered, pyramid shaped structures. Nazaré, as she is known in the art world, paints terracotta with powdered clays in natural colors or colors them with a smoking process originated by American Indian tribes.

"On my landscape paintings, I'm expressing the colors of earth," the artist explained. "You don't need to add more to it."

Her minimalist landscapes are sublimely beautiful and serene, combining the Portuguese tile images with the vast visual landscapes of the United States. In "Tempo," the tiles are mounted on magnets and can be rearranged. The overall gestalt of the piece, the artist said, "keeps the rhythm going so that it always comes back to the same." Nazaré's medium and message hearken back to ancient times, always reflecting the theme "that everything comes from the earth."

"Lullabye," a ceramic quilt connected by steel cable threads, tells the story of family times when Nazaré's mother sewed, sang and told stories to her children. "Lullabye" was shown in a 2002 exhibition in Lisbon, Portugal at the Casa da Cultura Jaime Lobo e Silva. As a result of the showing, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Soares Branco purchased

"Lullabye." A similar piece, "Nazaré," will be on display at the Eisey Campus Gallery; it tells the unusual story of how the artist got her name.

The exhibition also will feature a massive clay sculpture (6.5" x 4.5" and 2,000 pounds) entitled "Sanctuary," a meditation/ceremonial piece one art critic described as "gently touching a collective conscious chord."

Nazaré earned her masters of fine arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been published in *Contemporary Ceramics* by Susan Peterson, *Ceramic Art Tile* by Deborah Goletz and the international magazine, *Ceramic Art and Perception*.

Alessandra Gieffers creates colorful montages of both abstract and realistic images using pastels mixed with gouache. She began painting when she was four. When she was nine, she studied in Rome with the celebrated artist Lilli Romanelli.

Although Gieffers began painting in watercolors, Romanelli introduced her to the tempera medium and later, to the Cubism style. Cubism taught her to create "a feeling of static motion," Gieffers explained, "allowing the viewer to see the straight-on view as well as the other sides of an object at the same time. My work evolved from that tradition."

For the exhibition, Gieffers will display a series of gouache and pastels paintings that were created during the past ten years. The paintings reflect "a passage in a person's life," Gieffers said, "an almost universal journey of losing one's parents that travels through sorrow and fear that finally ends up with acceptance. The tribulations displayed in these paintings represent how life can be thrown out of balance."

In "Papa, What Are You Saying?" the daughter says goodbye to her deceased father. A later painting, "Now I Understand," affirms a joyful afterlife in Gieffers' signature vibrant colors. "Fruits of Wrath" depicts a woman's anger and despair while the Cubist painting "St. Francis of Assisi" depicts "a known international center where people from all beliefs find peace the world cannot bring," Gieffers explained.

In her most recent piece, "The Garden of My Heart," branches of orchids cascade and metaphorically dissolve in a field of pink and aqua. A human face of peace emerges from the pink field, guarded by a bird of death. "These paintings celebrate Henri Matisse's famous quote that color heals, and I hope the viewer will feel a healing through the vibrancy of the color," Gieffers said.

Gieffers earned her M.A. from Hunter College. She also did post-graduate work at New York University, where she taught in the graduate division. Gieffers was instrumental in establishing the Art Gallery on Eisey Campus at PBCC, acting as a director and curator. For more information, call 561-207-5008.

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