

# Emerson hosts U.S. premiere of 'Saving Faces'

## 'Healing Power of Art' symposium to accompany exhibition

Throughout the month of September, Emerson's Huret and Spector Gallery will host the U.S. premiere of a unique and award-winning exhibition that "aims to celebrate, empower and bring dignity back into the lives of those who live with real disfigurement," as one newspaper put it. The *Saving Faces* exhibition is a gallery of before-and-after painted portraits of individuals who have undergone reconstructive surgery to correct facial deformities in Britain.

The paintings, by acclaimed artist Mark Gilbert of Glasgow, Scotland, will be exhibited through Sept. 30, Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The Gallery is located on the sixth floor of the Tuft Center.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the College has organized a multidisciplinary event called "Exploring the Healing Power of Art" to be held Friday, Sept. 23.

Gilbert's portraits, which have been displayed at the National Portrait Gallery and the Royal College of Surgeons in London, explore the power of art to engage and transform. The works were completed when he was an artist-in-residence at the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Unit of St. Bartholomew's & Royal London Hospital.

The portraits capture

the character, emotion and spirit of individuals before and after reconstructive surgery, according to Robert Fleming, associate director of access services at the

roundtable discussion led by Gilbert and British facial surgeon Iain Hutchison. In addition, films that address aspects of the relationship between art and healing will



Emerson College Library, who organized the exhibit. Fleming says the exhibition reveals the cathartic effect that portraiture can have in helping patients come to terms with their altered appearance.

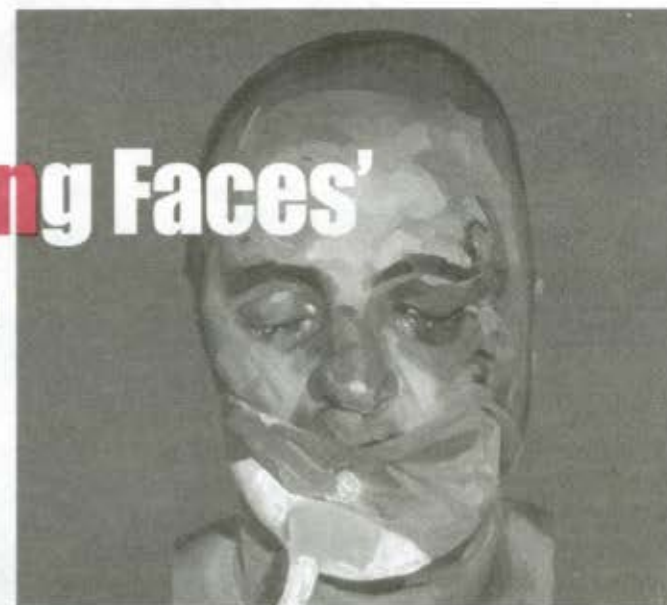
### 'Exploring the Healing Power of Art'

The companion events include a puppet performance; a presentation by Dr. Edith Langner, director of the Arts-in-Medicine Project at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons; a discussion of poetry and healing led by physician-poet Rafael Campo; and a

be screened on campus.

The acclaimed "Kids on the Block" puppet troupe will kick off the day's events. The troupe, which was developed to foster understanding between children and their peers with disabilities, will perform a piece focusing on a child who is a burn survivor from 10 a.m. to noon in the Semel Theater (Tuft Center, 3rd floor).

Later in the day, Dr. Edith Langner will speak about how physicians in training learn humanistic values through exposure to the visual arts. Her presentation will take place from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Greene Theater



(Tuft Center, 6th floor).

Dr. Rafael Campo, of the Harvard Medical School, a noted physician, poet and memoirist, will give a talk on "Poetry and Healing." Campo will read from his poetry and discuss how literature can be used to respond to illness. His talk will take place from 4-5:30 p.m. in the Greene Theater.

Finally, a roundtable discussion and gallery reception will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Greene Theater. Participants will include Mark Gilbert, the artist who painted the portraits in the exhibition, and Dr. Iain Hutchison, founder of the Saving Faces Project.

Also during the month, three films and accompanying faculty-facilitated discussions will address the relationship between art and various aspects of the healing process. The films to be shown are: *The Life and Times of Frida Kahlo*, 2 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 15; *Slam*, 2 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 22; and *Freaks*, 2 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 29.

The companion events have been arranged by Daniel Kempler, chair of Emerson's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and Timothy Edgar, director of the College's Health Communication Program.