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## NEWS RELEASE

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*Release Date: December 14, 2004*

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### **RIT art professor revered as “The Uncommon Denominator” in new book**

*An exhibition catalog of exciting contemporary ceramics published by RIT Cary Graphic Arts Press*

A new book, *The Uncommon Denominator: A Tribute to Richard Hirsch*, presents a spectrum of aesthetic eloquence and technical mastery in the ceramic arts. The publication documents its companion traveling exhibition, which celebrates the educational influence of Professor Richard Hirsch, through the work of a selection of his alumni. Many of Hirsch’s former students have established their own outstanding careers in the contemporary ceramics field—thirty-eight of whom are represented in *The Uncommon Denominator*, available in January 2005 from RIT Cary Graphic Arts Press.

Hirsch—a professor in RIT’s School for American Crafts since 1987—has spent the last three decades teaching the complexities of his craft to the artists featured in the show. Some of these former students attended the Program in Artisanry at Boston University, where Hirsch taught from 1975 to 1986. He has been the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant, and a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship. His ceramic sculpture is held widely in collections across the country, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and The American Crafts Museum, New York.

*The Uncommon Denominator: A Tribute to Richard Hirsch* is a ceramic exhibition unlike any other—echoing the progress of human artistic potential. “This is really a microcosm of what is being done in ceramics today,” Hirsch explained. “Throughout my teaching career, I’ve encouraged my students to find their own artistic vision.”

Beyond conventional, Hirsch called the show a diverse and reflective pool of contemporary works—highlighting the artists’ predilection to favor decorative appeal over function. These include utilitarian pottery, non-functional vessels, and figurative and abstract sculpture. Over the next two years, the show will travel to four other venues, including the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference in Baltimore, March 16–19, 2005.

*The Uncommon Denominator* exhibition catalog features large full-color reproductions and detailed captions, accompanied by artists’ statements and curriculum vitae. It includes an introduction by Hirsch, and two essays by his former MFA students, E. Blaise DePaolo and Marvin Sweet. The book is an essential record of the exhibition and will delight and inspire those pas-

sionate about the ceramic arts. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to an RIT School for American Crafts ceramics scholarship fund.

*The Uncommon Denominator: A Tribute to Richard Hirsch*

RIT Cary Graphic Arts Press, 2004

Laminated paperback, 56 pages; color ill., 11 x 8 in.

ISBN 0-9759651-3-1, \$24.99

RIT Cary Graphic Arts Press is the publication arm of the Melbert B. Cary, Jr. Graphic Arts Collection at Rochester Institute of Technology, a renowned resource for those studying printing history, bookbinding, typography, papermaking, calligraphy, and book illustration processes.