



FOLD exhibit opens at IMAS and UTRGV

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Are you looking for something to do that will challenge the way you to look at the world around you? If so, you might want to take in a collaborative project by the International Museum of Art and Science (IMAS) and the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). It's a multi-venue exhibition and lecture series called FOLD, and it could broaden your understanding of the seemingly unrelated fields of art, science, math, metaphysics, and more. "I read Gilles Deleuze's book, *The Fold*, during the summer of 2016 and I started thinking about it," said UTRGV assistant professor and FOLD curator Rahaleh Filsoofi. "I was going to apply it to my own work, but one artist was not enough to explore the idea of fold.

So, I thought maybe I could invite five artists, then it became seven, and then I thought it's still not enough."

By the time the exhibition opened last week, FOLD had grown to include the works of 13 artists along with lectures by seven scholars from diverse disciplines, including literature, philosophy, psychology, history, and women's studies.

FOLD is being held in conjunction with the university's annual FESTIBA event, which will focus on the theme of borders and how theoretical concepts compare with concrete realities.

According to the UTRGV website, "the fold is simple and complex at the same time — it is a physical act, a state of material, and a way to explain things that happen in other realms. The fold challenges space and even time, and as a symbolic paradigm, it offers an ever-expanding impulse for creativity."

Confused and intimidated? Don't be, says UTRGV Dean of Fine Arts, Steven Block.

"If you want to look at the scholarship behind it and all those things, that's there for you," said Block. "But if you just want to enjoy the art, for instance this sculpture of a dress in salt, I'm looking at the detail and the constant motion. Anybody is going to appreciate that. It's just a matter of appreciating good art."

The salt dress sculpture entitled "Like the Ocean" is a centerpiece of the twomonth- long exhibition. The 24 feet by 14 feet sculpture dominates IMAS' Central Gallery and it drew innumerable "Oohs" and "Ahs" at last week's exhibit opening. Florida-based artist Giannina Coppiano Dwin spent 12 days manipulating 150 pounds of salt for the work. The installation transcends a simple, outsized rendering of a dress laid out on the floor.

"Yes, it's static, but it has movement," said Dwin. "I was thinking of the movement of the ocean and the movement of a skirt, of how it would flow if you laid it down on the floor.

Salt is a time-based medium. This will not last. At the end of the exhibition, out of respect for the piece, I do a performance to destroy the work and if I'm not available, I ask a group of art students to destroy it for me."

Coppiano and artists Laleh Mehran, Sibel Kocabasi, and Anja Marais will exhibit at IMAS from February 2 to April 1. Artists Linda Behar, Isabel Gouveia, Rojhaneh Hosseini, Dorothea Grace Lemeh and Amber Scoon will exhibit at the UTRGV Visual Art Gallery from February 15 to March 29. A third exhibition will be housed at the UTRGV Visitors Center from February 27 through March 30. With works by Misoo Filan, Gulia Huber, Sibel Kocabasi and Golnar Shahyar, the opening reception will be held Tuesday, February 27 from 6:30 to 8 pm.

Additionally, flamenco dancer Niurca Marquez and guitarist Jose Luis de la Paz will be featured in a live performance that the UTRGV Performing Arts Complex Monday, February 26 at 7 pm. On Thursday, March 8 at 4:00 p.m., Dr. Riccardo Pizzinato, Assistant Professor of Art History at UTRGV will host a lecture on "Fold as Meaning in Medieval Art."

Dr. Brian McConnell, Professor of Art History & Classical Archaeology at Florida Atlantic University will share "FOLD: Let the Metaphor Reveal" at noon on Thursday, March 22. Both lectures will be held at the UTRGV School of Art.

"Unfolding Social Issues," a panel discussion hosted by five UTRGV faculty presenters, will be held Tuesday, February 27 at 5:00 p.m. in the UTRGV Visitor Center. Dr. Friederke Bruhofener, Assistant History Professor, will serve as panel moderator. Dr. Young Rae Oum, lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology will present "Immigrant Identities in the Folds of Narratives." Dr. Ruby Charak, Assistant Professor of Psychology, will present "Caught in the Folds of Sexual (Re) Victimization." Dr. Cathryn Merla-Watson, Assistant Professor of Literatures and Cultural Studies will present "Difference, Feminism, and FOLD." Dr. Mariana Alessandri, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Mexican American Studies, will present "Unfolding the UTRGV Students."

On Saturday, March 31, Dr. Katherine McAllen, UTRGV Assistant Professor of Art History will share "Luxuries of Trade: Folding Screens in Colonial Latin America" at the IMAS, beginning at 1:00 p.m.