

Staff Reports. "Faulconer Gallery to display Siberian and feminist art," *The Des Moines Register*, 6 January 2016.

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Faulconer Gallery to display Siberian and feminist art



Building on its last exhibition theme of asking questions, Grinnell College's Faulconer Gallery will be showing a variety of feminist works alongside a collection of historic Russian photographs.

These exhibitions provoke inquiry from artists and viewers alike, including questions such as "Are feminists supposed to support open depictions of sexuality?" and "What can photographs of rural Siberia teach us about Russian society and history?"

The simultaneous exhibitions, "Beverly Semmes: FRP" and "Siberia: In the Eyes of Russian Photographers," open Friday, Jan. 29, with a reception from 4 to 5 p.m. at Faulconer Gallery in the Bucksbaum Center for the Arts, 1108 Park St., Grinnell.

The exhibitions and opening reception, which includes refreshments, are free and open to the public.

"Both exhibitions present critiques of contemporary assumptions about gender politics, landscape, history and everyday life," said Lesley Wright, director of the Faulconer Gallery.

In her Feminist Responsibility Project (FRP), Semmes simultaneously conceals, reveals and otherwise colorfully intervenes in pornographic scenes from vintage *Hustler* and *Penthouse* magazines. The exhibition also features Semmes's striking work in other media: glass, ceramic, and video, as well as three of her signature dress pieces, including one acquired by the Faulconer Gallery in 2014. This exhibition is co-organized with the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College.

"Siberia: In the Eyes of Russian Photographers" is a geographical portrait that has the potential to alter stereotypes about a famously remote region. The photographs, taken by Siberians, span more than 130 years, from the late 19th century to the present. The images include rural and urban scenes, landscapes, native peoples, agriculture and industry, Russian frontier settlements, the Gulag, religion and everyday life, and offer an insider's view of unique and often isolated places.

The project is timely as Siberia's role grows on a world stage. The region's military, political and economic possibilities have intrigued individuals and nations for centuries. They do so now with renewed vigor as Siberia's energy and mineral resources and strategic location draw global attention.

Leah Bendavid-Val curated the traveling exhibition, organized by Foundation of International Arts and Education and presented in honor of Greg Guroff (1941-2012), who founded FIAE and also taught Russian history at Grinnell College in the 1970s.

Gallery Talk: Beverly Semmes on her Feminist Responsibility Project will be a chance to hear from the artist herself about her career as a feminist artist, March 8, 4 p.m.