FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Valentine Museum of Art is pleased to announce two events celebrating the release of the limited-edition monograph, **"ref-u-gee,"** accompanying the acquisition of the commissioned series of paintings by artist Audrey Frank Anastasi.To accommodate the extensive series of 180 original paintings, there will be simultaneous exhibitions in two locations. With the museum's focus on featuring artwork that addresses impactful contemporary issues, Ms. Anastasi's work was selected for the powerful themes of human suffering and forced migration.

“This series is a testament to the resilience and courage of those who have been forced to flee their homes,” said Michael Valentine, executive director of the Valentine Museum of Art. “We are honored to be able to share Anastasi’s work with our community and to spark important conversations about empathy, compassion, and the shared human experience.” In his introductory essay, Valentine goes on to say, “Audrey Anastasi's **'ref-u-gee'** series serves as a humanitarian flag, an international symbol with transformative powers.” The refugees she paints “are survivors of rough seas, tent cities, starvation, and treacherous weather.”

Art critic Phyllis Braff praises the work as “… a project that calls attention to a large issue—one that crosses borders and touches people throughout the world.”

The modular 6.75" x 5.25" paintings, created with materials and techniques that evoke strong emotional responses, invite the viewer to confront the complex and urgent humanitarian issues of displacement. Employing an unconventional approach—using her non-dominant left hand and oversized brushes—the artist sidesteps perfectionism in favor of a raw, more visceral connection with the subject matter. In describing her process, Anastasi says: “The paint is loosely laid down onto passport photo ‘protectors,’ providing the foundation on which the artwork is rendered. The paint is then worked abstractly until recognizable subjects emerge. The substrate material is a fascimile of a passport with preprinted text referring to checklist items and documents related to travel preparations. Ironically, the images depict people who may be fleeing without proper papers—people who officially 'belong' nowhere."

Anastasi dedicates this work to “all who have been touched by or lost to injustice.”

The**"ref-u-gee"**monograph is a 440-page volume, with more than 180 full-color images. The 250-copy, individually signed and numbered limited-edition, measuring 12” x 14”, is a hardbound, cloth-covered book presented with a cloth-bound custom slipcase and gold foil stamping. It was printed by SiZ Industria Grafica in Verona, Italy.

It includes a number of essays and an interview with Ms. Anastasi by art critic Phyllis Braff.

Original paintings from this series, and published in this volume, will be on display until December 31, 2024, in two Brooklyn locations: **Valentine Museum of Art**, 1655 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY; and **Tabla Rasa Gallery**, 224 48 Street, Brooklyn, NY.

**Please contact each venue for hours and schedule updates.**

Two receptions will be held.

The first reception will be **Thursday, September 12, 2024, from 6–8 pm**, at Valentine Museum of Art, located at 1655 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY (between Avenues H and I).

Call 347.651.6944 or visit [https://valentinemuseumofart.com](https://valentinemuseumofart.com/)

The second reception will be **Saturday, September 14, 2024, from 4–6 pm** at Tabla Rasa Gallery, located at 224 48th Street in Brooklyn, NY.

Call 718.833.9100 or email [info@TablaRasaGallery.com](mailto:info@TablaRasaGallery.com)

The exhibitions are free and open to the public.

We recommend contacting each venue for hours and schedule updates

IMAGES are available upon request.

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About **Valentine Museum of Art**

Located in the expansive lower level of the Philip Howard Apartment building at 1655 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, this venue is a private institution which celebrates and exhibits visual artists.

Directions to **Valentine Museum of Art**

By subway: 2 or 5 train to Flatbush Avenue/Brooklyn College

By bus: B41, B44, or B103 to Flatbush Avenue/Flatbush Junction

About **Tabla Rasa Gallery**

Tabla Rasa Gallery is located in the burgeoning art destination of Sunset Park, Brooklyn, and is known for its consistently stunning exhibitions. Within the 4,000-square-foot turn-of-the-century carriage house, the gallery exhibits primary and secondary market artwork by emerging, mid-career, and established artists, in all media.

Directions to **Tabla Rasa Gallery**

By subway: D or N train to 36th Street, Brooklyn; change to the R train, one stop to 45th Street.

By car: Street parking is available.