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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Media Contact: Barbara Levitov
781-283-2034, blevitov@wellesley.edu

Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College
Ellen Zweig: *HEAP*
September 17 – December 14, 2008

Wellesley, MA – This fall, the Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College will be showing Ellen Zweig: *HEAP* and opening with a Celebration on September 17 from 6-8pm. Poet, performance artist, and filmmaker Ellen Zweig explores the cultural encounters that are the result of travel in *HEAP*, a series of videos portraying China through Western eyes. The title refers to a philosophical and philological conundrum: how many of a particular thing do you need before the conglomeration can be called a “heap?” Created over a period of several years, each of the evocative videos in *HEAP* presents an experimental portrait of a thinker influenced by Chinese culture.

(The Chinese Room) John Searle refers to philosopher John R. Searle, whose “Chinese Room Thought Experiment” argues against the possibility of strong artificial intelligence. In *(tongue tongue stone)* G.W. Leibnitz, Zweig alludes to the theories of German philosopher G.W. Leibnitz (1646-1716), whose misinterpretation of the *I Ching* corroborated his system of binary arithmetic. *(unsolved)* Robert van Gulik explores assumption and illusion through the varied interests of Robert van Gulik, the Dutch diplomat, sinologist, and mystery writer. *a surplus of landscape* investigates the links between travel and the landscape, landscape and memory, memory and truth. The potential of images to deceive becomes apparent as we question where we are and where we are going. *(flick flight flimsy)* Ernest Fenollosa delves into language—its sound, image, and meaning. The video references Ernest Fenollosa’s essay: *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*, controversial to some and inspiring to others. In *(the origin of bitterness)* Joseph Rock, Zweig uses explorer and self-taught botanist Joseph

Rock's translations of the religious texts of the Naxi tribe of southwest China as a means of contemplating loss.

The six videos that so far comprise *HEAP* question our interactions with other cultures, our motivations, expectations, and experiences. They explore the gestures of daily life that link identity to place and culture, and the ways in which language, in its physical, visual, aural, and communicative characters, is the primary medium through which we might understand, or misunderstand, one another.

Related Programs

Artist's Talk: Ellen Zweig
October 22, Wednesday, 6pm
Collins Cinema

Ellen Zweig's work ranges from poetry to performance art, installation to interactive web-based art. *HEAP*, her series of videos currently on view at the Davis Museum, explores the cultural encounters that are the result of travel by portraying China through Western eyes.

DAVIS MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER HOURS AND INFORMATION

Public Tours: Wednesday 1pm; Sundays 2pm led by museum docents. Free.

Museum Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–5pm, Wednesday until 8pm, and Sunday 12noon–4pm.
Closed Mondays and holidays. Admission is free.

Location: Wellesley College campus, 106 Central Street in Wellesley, Massachusetts

Parking: Free and available in the lot behind the museum. Additional parking is available in the Davis Parking Garage.

Docent tour information: 781-283-3382.

Accessible: The museum, Collins Café and Collins Cinema are wheelchair accessible and wheelchairs are available for use in the Museum without charge. Special needs may be accommodated by contacting the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice at 781-283-2434 or at jwice@wellesley.edu.

FREE ADMISSION. FREE PARKING. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.