

Nasher Museum to open 'Time Capsule'

08.21.12 - 04:04 pm

From staff reports

DURHAM – The Nasher Museum of Art will present an exhibition of contemporary art assembled in 1991 by Jason Rubell back when he was a senior at Duke University.

Rubell is one of the most noted collectors of art. His senior project opened 21 years ago at the former Duke University Museum of Art and traveled to 10 other university museums. The exhibition, recreated at the Nasher Museum, opens Thursday and will be on view through Jan. 6, 2013.

“Time Capsule” includes work by 53 artists, including George Condo, Keith Haring, Jenny Holtzer, Mike Kelly, Jeff Koons, Cady Noland, Gerhard Richter and Cindy Sherman.

“This dynamic exhibition proves that Jason Rubell has a terrific eye for identifying artists before they became famous. Though most of these works are from the '80s, the ideas expressed are still relevant and fresh as ever,” said Kimerly Rorschach, Mary D.B.T. and James H. Semans director of the Nasher Museum. “The world knows Jason from his work in Miami, where he and his family collect art and present public exhibitions from the Rubell Family Collection. But it all started when he was a student here at Duke.”

The exhibition includes paintings, works on paper, photography, sculpture and video art.

“It’s exciting to bring Jason’s early collection back to Duke,” said Trevor Schoonmaker, Patsy R. and Raymond D. Nasher Collector of Contemporary Art at the Nasher Museum. “I hope that Jason’s passion for contemporary art at such a young age comes through and inspires others to begin collecting.”

Rubell’s parents, Don and Mera, began collecting art in 1964. Through his parents, Rubell met and began a friendship with the artist Keith Haring in 1980. Haring designed Rubell's bar mitzvah invitation and gave him a Masonite work, “Untitled,” which inspired the 13-year-old to start his own collection.

Jason Rubell earned money to buy art by stringing tennis rackets for friends and members of the East River Tennis Club in Long Island City, N.Y. That early collection was “a group of objects that I crammed into my bedroom for my own visual pleasure,” Rubell said in an essay about the exhibition.

As an art history major at Duke, Rubell was challenged by his professor, Kristine Stiles (now Duke’s France Family professor of Art, Art History and Visual Studies), to thoroughly analyze and critique the work he had collected, and think

of it as a collection. The result was an exhibition and illustrated catalog with Rubell's own critical essays. "This early curatorial experience," Rubell wrote, "helped shape who I am as a collector."

"Time Capsule" is complemented with a talk by Rubell Sept. 5, a free film series " '80s to the M-M-M-Max," an "Art for All" event, free Family Day events, K-12 teacher workshops and more.

For more information, visit nasher.duke.edu.