

FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

Vol. 51, No. 15

www.savefoggybottom.com

March 24, 2010

HAITI HEALING ARTS launched by FB's International Child Art Foundation

The dramatic TV coverage of the recovery efforts for the 7.0 magnitude earthquake January 12, 2010, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti is over. Instead the news media relates the need for shelter as the rainy season approaches. While the scope of needs for this historically poor, but proud, black population have been barely sorted out, sorely missing from the conversation are the mental health problems for the legions of children—whether they have family, are lost or orphaned after earthquakes—and the measures required to heal them. That's where the FB-headquartered, International Child Art Foundation (ICAF) comes in.

According to ICAF, "Research shows that earthquakes increase the rates of mental health problems in the communities they strike. A series of studies conducted one-to-four years after the August 1999 earthquake in Turkey showed that about 40 percent of

survivors suffered from post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) and 20 percent from depression. The effectiveness of art therapy in a post-earthquake setting was demonstrated in a study of twenty-five elementary schoolchildren who were victims of the

Los Angeles earthquake in 1994. Art therapy services were found to be instrumental in accessing the children's internal processes and helping them return to normal functioning."

ICAF's Healing Arts Program was originally developed as a response to urgent requests from ICAF partner organizations in Sri Lanka, India, and Indonesia to help children who survived the Asian tsunami. Later that year, the

(continued on
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Artworks produced by children along the Mississippi beach front on their first week back to school after the Katrina Hurricane.



Juarez Circle —

March 21 marked Benito Juarez' 200th birthday recognition by the Mexican Embassy at Juarez Circle with a brief ceremony.

And... KUDOS to National Park Service (NPS) —

whose 36 hour response to a FB resident's email regarding the snow storm damage to trees on the Circle last week was heartening. Thanks NPS!!

C A L E N D A R

SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 2010
NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL®
FAMILY DAY AND OPENING CEREMONY
NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

Family Festival: 10:00 am-3:30 pm
Opening Ceremony: 4:00-5:30 pm

FREE. Join the National Building Museum and the National Cherry Blossom Festival in celebrating the annual opening of Washington's cherry blossom season. This year's family festival, the fifth annual, will feature hands-on activities and exciting indoor and outdoor performances that celebrate spring and explore Japanese arts and design.

SERVICES DURING HOLY WEEK
AT THE UNITED CHURCH – 1920 G St NW
PALM/PASSION SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 11 am

MONDAY, MARCH 29 THROUGH
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31:
Mid-Day Prayer Service: 12:15–12:45 pm
(The Sanctuary will be open 12:00–1:00 pm)

MAUNDAY THURSDAY, APRIL 1:
12 pm. with Holy Communion
7:00 pm. Foot Washing and Holy Communion,
followed by a meal at the Parish House.

THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

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The *Foggy Bottom News* is published by the Foggy Bottom Association as a service to its members and provides information on FBA and neighborhood news, programs, activities and other events of interest to FBA members. Contributions and story ideas are welcome, but the *FBN* reserves the right to edit or hold pieces as space requires.

The Foggy Bottom Association was formed by a group of citizens in 1955 and was formally incorporated in 1959. Attendance at FBA meetings is open to all residents of Foggy Bottom and the West End.

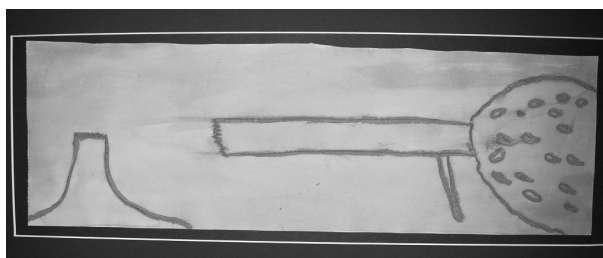
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HAITI HEALING ARTS (cont'd)



program expanded as ICAF volunteers and art therapists reached out to children affected by Hurricane Katrina. The program focuses on creative interventions for victims of natural disasters and aims to help them cope with the traumatic experience.

It is estimated that the Healing Arts Programs have helped one thousand child survivors in Sri Lanka and India to recover from the December 2004 tsunami tragedy they experienced. ICAF's work with young survivors of Hurricane Katrina also attests to the power of art therapy; recent artworks from the "Katrina children" depict their wellness and hope for the future.

With the launch of "The Haiti Healing Arts" in May, ICAF's Program Coordinator, Chantal Paret Antoine, draws poignantly from her own Haitian roots. Born in 1957, the year Duvalier assumed power, she recalled the haunting brutality of genocide for those aligning with his political opponent. With her mother and sister, she hid for three years in Haiti—her father, in the Dominican Republic. At eight, Chantal, her mother and sister were reunited with her father in New York to begin new lives.

Mrs. Antoine found her way to art. As an architectural planner for the New York Public Library System and having raised two children, she decided on a career change and had enrolled in a Master's Program at Hofstra University. Noting that her first day of class was to be Sept 11, 2001, she entered her office that morning to find her secretary standing over her workstation listening to the radio after seeing the breaking news. Classes were of course, cancelled. She witnessed

the aftermath where among the volunteers and first responders were artists and art therapists. Chantal credits them with transforming Ground Zero, "in addition to a horrific site, an endless urban canvas of art." As she notes, "that night I became an 'art therapist' and never looked back, secure in the fact more now than even then, that art heals."

With this most recent earthquake, she also witnessed the profound loss felt by the Haitian Diaspora from heavily populated, multi-cultural Queens, regarding the wellbeing of those "at home." Chantal writes about the resilience of the Haitian people despite huge challenges over the last 200 years: the extreme political, economic conditions marked by "poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, rampant disease, deforestation, lack of infrastructure, social, racial and gender inequality, political corruption and unrest." As she puts the past in context, "this earthquake was something different—a complete disaster."

Beginning this May, ICAF will train and send groups of art therapists to Port-au-Prince where children with severe cases will be identified for psychological treatment and submit to independent evaluation. The art exchange component will provide schoolchildren in the U.S. an opportunity to view the art of Haiti's children, who in turn will receive encouragement art from their American counterparts. ICAF's program partners include the Center for Rebuilding Sustainable Communities after Disasters (University of Massachusetts, Boston), the



International Art Therapy Organization, and BelTiFi (Young Haitian-American Women Empowerment Network). The program will go on throughout 2010 and if funding is secured, there are plans to continue the program beyond this year.

ICAF has succeeded in sparking a nascent global trend. More policy makers and thought leaders talk about nurturing children's creativity, and empathy is being recognized as a key attribute of successful learners and leaders. ICAF addresses this and fosters collaboration through tools and programs available through its Website including: the *Arts Olympiad Lesson Plan* to review and forward to your neighborhood elementary school to participate in this free global program; and a sample copy of *Child Art* magazine on "co-creation + innovation;" subscribe to it or donate a subscription to your neighborhood school or public library.

ICAF has opened doors for arts education in several countries in Africa and the Middle East. Now leaders recognize that for a nation to remain competitive, children must be creative and arts education can help pave the way. For more information about The Haiti Healing Arts program and to help support this effort visit www.icafe.org.