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Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Friday, 11am-5pm, Saturday, 11am-3pm, and by appointment

Depicted/Connected

Baroque & Graffiti-style portraiture captures the character of an evolving city through the faces of its citizens

Washington, DC – The Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery is honored to announce the **September 20th** opening of *Depicted/Connected: Paintings by Tim Okamura*, a specially created collection of contemporary portraits by Tim Okamura.

Depicted/Connected: Paintings by Tim Okamura will run from **September 20 to October 31, 2013**, with the **Opening Reception on Friday, September 27, 7 to 9pm**. Please also join us for the **Artist's Talk on Thursday, October 17 at 6:30pm** as Okamura delves into the details of his working process and inspiration. For more images of works visit www.smithcenter.org/gallery.



For his first exhibition in D.C., New York City-based painter Tim Okamura unveils a collection of eleven portraits depicting women who were primarily born and raised in the D.C. area, and have witnessed the city's evolution over the last few decades.

Tim Okamura is perhaps best known for his portraits of Hollywood celebrities and his commanding depictions of African-American and minority subjects set against Brooklyn facades. Born in Edmonton, Canada and educated at the Alberta College of Art & Design and New York's School of Fine Arts, Okamura was shortlisted to paint an official portrait of Queen Elizabeth in 2007 and selected nine times to appear in the prestigious BP Portrait Award Exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London. A recipient of the 2004 Fellowship in Painting from the New York Foundation for the Arts, Okamura has exhibited throughout galleries in the U.S. and Canada.

Once referred to as the “Caravaggio of our time,” Okamura expertly blends seemingly disparate styles – Baroque, Realism, and Graffiti – to create striking portraits capturing the raw energy of urban culture while evoking the ageless allure of storytelling. In coupling his subject's dramatic, Baroque lighting with the edgy, Graffiti-laden architectural backdrops he infuses each work with a gripping dynamism and masterfully blurs the line between the individual and their environment, with the end result being the city and citizen fuse into a singular portrait.

Working closely with Okamura over the past year we invited him to immerse himself in our U Street neighborhood and introduced him to artists, musicians, socialites, members of the military, mothers, daughters, and even “spiritual sisters.” The eleven women portrayed in *Depicted/Connected* have experienced first-hand D.C.'s evolving character from the tumultuous lows and transformational highs – witnessing the city's battle with crime and poverty, gentrification, the emergence of Go-go music, and the election of our nation's first African-American president. Okamura describes his experience coming to know D.C. through the stories of these women and unexpectedly the broader connection their narratives revealed: “The women in these paintings are **depicted** as seen through my self-constructed lens - one that has formed over time through my life-long fascination with the emotionally expressive power of the human face. I view my subjects through this lens in an attempt to document a spiritual resonance, which transcends outward appearances and challenges preconceived perceptions. I have sought to celebrate these women as individuals, connected to their environment, but also to discover through them metaphors for greater aspects of the human condition - **connected** to all of us.”

IMAGE: Tim Okamura's *Sun Rise on U Street*



Special thanks to our Sponsors:

Depicted/Connected is part of Art4All DC (September 13 – October 6) presented by Cultural Tourism DC. A complete calendar of events can be found at CulturalTourismDC.org or art4alldc.org.

About: The Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery is a nonprofit arts space dedicated to exhibiting fine art exploring the innate connection between healing and creativity. Exhibitions feature contemporary artists addressing significant issues, such as spirituality, multiculturalism, and health. The gallery is a part of Smith Center for Healing and the Arts, a health, education, and arts organization that provides deep healing resources to