

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Alaina Sadick, Communications Director
**Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery &
Smith Center for Healing and the Arts**
1632 U Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009

[202.483.8600](tel:202.483.8600) | www.smithcenter.org | alaina@smithcenter.org

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



SMITH CENTER
FOR HEALING AND THE ARTS
community. creativity. cancer support.

**125 Local Artists & 16 Curators Join Forces for
Upcoming Exhibition + Benefit**

*“Alchemical Vessels” artists will examine the idea of transformation and
healing through the arts and sacred space*

Exhibition Dates: April 26 – June 7, 2013

Opening Reception: Friday, April 26, 7-9pm

Benefit Event: Friday, May 17, 7-9pm (details below)

Artists’ Closing Reception: Friday, June 7, 7-9pm

Washington, DC, March 19, 2013 - Smith Center for Healing and the Arts is thrilled to announce a unique initiative to engage local artists, curators, collectors and the general public in a community dialogue about the transformative power of the arts.

Debuting April 26, 2013 at the *Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery at Smith Center*, the “Alchemical Vessels” exhibition will feature the work of 125 local artists, hand-selected by 16 invited curators, to transform ceramic bowls by means of their own personal aesthetic and medium. Garnering inspiration from the alchemical process, each bowl symbolically references creating a place where healing can take place, which is at the heart of *Smith Center’s* work and mission. The bowl form brings up such associations as a place of holding, open community, a circle of care, sacred space, nourishment, and even the alchemical vessel. The respected 20th century alchemist, Jean Dubuis, wrote, “Alchemy is the art of manipulating life, and consciousness in matter, to help it evolve, or to solve problems of inner disharmonies.”



Metaphorically speaking, *Smith Center* - the space and the work that happens within it – can be described as an alchemical vessel. People bring their most challenging burdens, fears, and pains to be transformed and in this place of holding. *Smith Center’s* deep, holistic programs—such as therapeutic creativity programs, yoga,

and immersion retreats—help transform those toxic elements into hope, light, wisdom and strength. Healing is often that of transforming suffering into meaning, and art is one of the many tools that are available to aid in this process. As local artists transform the commonplace object of a bowl into an alchemical vessel, they will indirectly illustrate *Smith Center's* transformative work within the community and engage participants in the healing power of the arts. Rather than merely decorating the bowls, each artist will be asked to answer the profound question of what it means to transform poison into medicine, or pain into wisdom. Thus, the exhibition's 125 expressive responses will hang as a community dialogue on healing and transformation through the arts.

Benefit Event

In addition to viewing the exhibition from April 26-June 7, the community is invited to purchase tickets to attend a special benefit event on **Friday, May 17 from 7-9 pm**. This reception will offer the public the opportunity to claim one of the 125 unique pieces for their own collection—with the purchase of their benefit ticket. These tickets, which are priced at \$125, will go on sale at 10 am on Tuesday, March 26. On the evening of the benefit, each ticket holder will select a vessel to take home after the exhibition closes. Priority will be given by the order in which the tickets were purchased, so the first to buy a ticket will be awarded the first pick, and so on. Ticket holders will also be invited to the Artists' Closing Reception on June 7 to meet the creators of their work.

A \$50 ticket will also be made available for supporters who would like to attend but are not interested in owning a work of art. 100% of proceeds from ticket sales will go to support Smith Center's programs for people living with or recovering from cancer.

About Smith Center for Healing & the Arts & the Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery:

Smith Center for Healing and the Arts is a unique 17-year old health, education, and arts nonprofit that serves individuals affected by cancer. We offer programs and resources built on an integrative model that addresses healing and wellness for the whole person – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. As the only DC-based cancer support organization serving the entire community, Smith Center specializes in using creativity and the arts as tools for healing.

In May 2008, Smith Center expanded by opening the *Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery* to advance the understanding and utilization of the arts to build, unite, inspire, and heal our communities. The gallery is the first professional, nonprofit gallery dedicated to promoting the innate connection between healing and creativity. Each year, the gallery hosts six exhibitions featuring contemporary, award-winning artists addressing significant themes, such as social change, multiculturalism, health, identity and community, to name a few. On average, each opening exhibition reception welcomes over 225 visitors, and each show receives over 700 visitors.

In 2011, *Smith Center* initiated *The 9/11 Arts Project*—a successful city-wide response to the 10th anniversary of 9/11 that engaged over 30 community partners in dialogues about leveraging the power of the arts throughout the healing process.

Featured Curators Include:

Felix Angel, Myrtis Bedolla, Margaret Boozer, Lenny Campello, Richard Dana, Mary Early, Lillian Fitzgerald, Helen Frederick, Mel & Juanita Hardy, Laila Jadallah, Bridget Lambert, Wendy Miller, John Paradiso, Annette Polan, Alec Simpson, Ellyn Weiss, and Smith Center for Healing and the Arts.

Featured Artists Include:

Akili Ron Anderson, Sondra Arkin, Tom Ashcroft (Workingman Collective), Joanna Axtmann, Rosana Azar, Cedric Baker, Carol Barsha, Joan Belmar, Kristina Bilonick, Alan Binstock, Emily Biondo, Natalya Borisovna Parris, Anne Bouie, Elle Brande, Laurie Breen, Sally Brucker, Lenny Campello, Gloria Capron, David Carlson, Mei Mei Chang, Hsin-Hsi Chen, Kay Chernush, Natalie Cheung, Irene Clouthier, Joe Corcoran, Tory Cowles, Sheila Crider, Joan Danziger, Alonzo Davis, Katie Dell Kaufman, Elsabe Dixon, Mary Early, Cheryl Edwards, Laura Elkins, Kathy Emery, Dorothy Fall, Phoebe Farris, Susan Finsen, Lillian Fitzgerald, Barbara Frank, Helen Frederick, Maya Freelon Asante, Adrienne Gaither, Ric Garcia, Matthew Gifford, Olivier Giron, Carol Goldberg, Susan Goldman, Pat Goslee, Elizabeth Graeber, Drew Storm Graham, John Grunwell, Mel Hardy, Winston Harris, William Harris, Elyse Harrison, Rania Hassan, Francie Hester, Tom Hill, Ellen Hill, Lisa Hill, Laila Jadallah, Pilar Jimenez, Wayson Jones, Steven Jones, Becca Kallem, Rebecca Kamen, MJ Kavian, Madeleine Keesing, Jeffery Kent, Micheline Klagsbrun, Bridget Lambert, Elaine Langerman, Mary Virginia Langston, Joren Lindholm, Shelley Lowenstein, Marta Luz Gutierrez, Dana Jeri Maier, Matthew Mann, Kaltoum Maroufi-Colle, Percy Martin, Janet Mathias, Kathryn McDonnell, Maggie Michael, Wendy Miller, Nan Montgomery, Bill Newman, Sarah Nikitopoulos, Jared Packard-Winkler, John Paradiso, Brian Petro, Michael Platt, Darien Reece, Jamea Richmond-Edwards, Amber Robles-Gordon, Jessica Rose, Wendy Ross, Rachel Rotenberg, Louise Sagalyn, Rachel Schmidt, Greg Scott, Pat Silbert, Alec Simpson, Susan Stacks, Martin Swift, Rob Tarbell, Valerie Theberge, Evelyn Tickle, Erwin Timmers, Novie Trump, Aniekan Udofia, Patricia Underwood, Pamela Viola, Kazaan Viveiros, Sigrid Vollerthun, Tom Wagner, Jenny Walton, Ellyn Weiss, Lee Wheeler, Peter Winant, Julie Wolfe, Tom Wolff, Yuriko Yamaguchi, Millicent Young, and more...