

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Art @ Work: A Collaboration to Heal DC

Adults, kids, and mural artists use art to beautify DC neighborhoods and build community

Washington, DC - December 8, 2011 - *Smith Center for Healing and the Arts* is excited to announce an upcoming community arts collaboration, **Art @ Work**, opening at *the Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery* this **January 2012**.



In partnership with **Albus Cavus**, an arts group that transforms communities through public art, **Art @ Work** will use graffiti-style mural art to bring Washington DC residents together in beautifying their neighborhoods.

According to the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services, the current unemployment rate is 11%. Unemployment breaks families and communities as individuals fall into despair, depression, and isolation. While we are not labor experts or economists, what we can offer is a means to weather this storm as a community and to grow together. In this interactive exhibition, we will push visitors and artists alike to directly experience the power of art by providing engagement, therapy, and a colorful tool to build a stronger and healthier community.

Three on-site mural workshops facilitated by *Albus Cavus'* team of graffiti-style mural artists will transform the Gallery into a working studio, beginning on January 13 and culminating in the unveiling of an on-site mural on February 17, 2012. *Albus Cavus'* artists aptly use the well-known, graphic, urban art form—graffiti—to inspire, connect, and empower the city's residents. Visitors will trade in their traditional roles as passive observers for active roles as artists. Participants of all artistic backgrounds, adults and kids (ages 12 and above) are invited to work with *Albus Cavus* to create a public art piece incorporating their unique voices and perspectives. Eventually the show's completed mural will be permanently installed in a local neighborhood as part of *Albus Cavus'* Open Walls project.

With this interactive exhibition, we hope to more directly engage our community in the healing power of art and to leave behind an inspirational remnant that elicits community pride and empowerment beyond our doors.

Get involved and join us in creating a community mural on **January 14, 28 and February 4 at 3:30pm**. **Workshop registration at www.smithcenter.org/gallery.**

Art @ Work will run from January 13 to February 18, 2012

Opening Reception - Friday, January 13, 7-9pm

Final Mural Unveiling Celebration - Friday, February 17, 7-9pm

Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery is located at 1632 U Street, in Northwest DC.

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

For more information about *Albus Cavus* and their Open Walls project visit, www.albuscav.us

About the *Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery*: The Gallery is a non-profit arts space dedicated to exhibiting fine art exploring the innate connection between healing and creativity. Exhibitions feature contemporary artists addressing meaningful 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 healing resources to cancer patients and the local

community. To learn more visit www.smithcenter.org/gallery.