

August 28, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Project HOPE Art:

Artist Dinner - Saturday, September 14, 4-8pm

Where: Chez Poulet Art Gallery, 3359 Cesar Chavez St San Francisco, CA 94107

Tickets \$45/85, Purchase Link: <http://projecthopeart.org/third-annual-project-hope-art-donor-dinner/>

Recology:

Reception-Friday, September 20, 5-9pm

Reception-Saturday, September 21, 1-3pm

Additional viewing hours-Tuesday, September 24, 5-7pm

Artist panel discussion-Tuesday, September 24, 7pm

Where: Environmental Learning Center, 401 Tunnel Avenue, San Francisco, CA

Admission is free and open to the public, all ages welcome, wheelchair accessible.

Ghettos to Galleries: Visiting Haitian Artists bring Voodoo and Upcycling to San Francisco

Atis Rezistans is a Haitian art movement focused on transforming lives and creating hope for youth in the ghettos of Port-au-Prince. Project HOPE Art is sponsoring the three members from the movement while they are in residence at Recology in San Francisco and share their first-hand experience about reclamation, resiliency, and creativity.

This project will have 4 major impacts:

- 1) Develop confidence, facilitation and leadership skills in three Port-Au-Prince based artists, for their work with youth groups in the ghetto.
- 2) Demonstrate the power of positive, constructive and creative culture as a way of responding to tragedy and challenge.
- 3) Engage social media networks with our story so that will multiply efforts to create hands-on educational programming and creative, sustainable options for youth in areas of the world most affected by climate change, natural disaster and structural inequality.
- 4) Actualize the dreams of 3 young artists and cultivate their skills so that their voice can be heard.

Claudiel Casseus

Claudiel Casseus was born in 1981 in Grand Rue, Port-au-Prince, a neighborhood with a strong art and creative community. From a young age Casseus made art and in 2008, he joined Atis-Rezistans. In 2009,

he participated in the 1st Ghetto Biennial, an international arts festival organized by Atis-Rezistans and British artist/curator Leah Gordon. During the Biennale, Casseus met British artist Bill Drummond, and after the 2010 Haitian earthquake he collaborated with Drummond on *Imagine*, a book describing his experiences following the disaster. Casseus's sculptures, informed by Vodou and made from recycled materials, have been included in many exhibitions. This will be Casseus's first trip outside of Haiti.

"I grew up in a large ghetto in Port-au-Prince, a place that has a lot of trash around. I take advantage of this situation by creating artwork with the same garbage found in the community. I think this is a way to educate people who live in the area, to make people understand that it is not necessary to keep throwing trash in the street. Because with art, any number of things can be created. Definitely, art is a means of communication with everyone, regardless of social differences. Art can help a person to manage the frustration inside him and it enables you to say what you feel is happening in the world, whether positive or negative. Therefore, I think a person who chooses to make art is a person who wants to collaborate with the world."

Romel Jean Pierre

Growing up in Port-au-Prince, where he was born in 1993, Romel Jean Pierre initially was interested in becoming a politician, but turned his focus to art when he attended the 1st Ghetto Biennale. He joined the youth division of Atis-Rezistans, called Timoun Rezistans, and began creating the video performance/citizen media series, *Tele Ghetto Haiti*. For the 2nd Ghetto Biennale he collaborated with Bay Area artist and writer Robert Gomez on *Dreams/Rèv Ou*, a video project in which Haitians speak about their hopes for the future. Romel's works have been exhibited widely. In 2011 he was a visiting artist at Bates College in Maine, and in April, 2013 he attended the Tribeca Film Festival in New York where he participated in a panel discussion on *Inside Out-The People's Art Project*, a documentary film about the French artist JR who worked with Romel in Haiti. *Tele Ghetto* video works can be seen on [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#). Romel will head the new photography program at the Project [HOPE Art Center](#) located at Haiti Communiterie, in Port-au-Prince. The Art Center is housed in a converted 20-foot shipping container.

"The Rezistans movement means many things to me, because when I wasn't part of it, I knew I would spend each day not doing anything and that knowing life would pass me by as I joked around, not going to school and losing all good chances in my life..."

Racine Polycarpe

In 2006 at the age of fifteen, Racine Polycarpe was adopted by his uncle, the well-known artist, Jean Hérard Celeur. He worked as an apprentice at his uncle's school, the Realm of the Arts and Minds, in Grand Rue, Port-au-Prince, where he learned about contemporary art history, the skills of carving wood and rubber, and how to create sculptural works from found objects. Polycarpe is also a member of Atis-Rezistans, which was founded by his uncle. His work has been exhibited in Haiti at the Institut

Francais (2009), the Fet Gede at the National Cemetery (2009), the 1st and 2nd Ghetto Biennales (2009, 2011), and Nouvo Rezistans at the Institut Francais (2011). In 2010 his work was exhibited at the Portman Gallery in London, and at the XISM Etnografiska Museet in Stockholm. This will be his first trip outside of Haiti.

“I make sculpture out of recycled materials such as wood, plastic, metal, rubber, and anything I find. I also make painted sculptures with carved rubber from old tires. The reason I use these materials as my medium is because, in my country, when people are finished using things they just throw them outside. As artists we see value in these things and turn them into art following the history of assemblage art. It is a transformative act to take these discarded objects off the street and turn them into art.”

About the Recology Artist in Residence Program

Since 1990, the Artist in Residence Program at Recology San Francisco has encouraged the conservation of natural resources while instilling a greater appreciation for art and the environment in children and adults. This one-of-a-kind program enables artists to work in studio space on site, use materials recovered from the Public Disposal and Recycling Area, and speak to students and the general public about their residency experiences. Over one-hundred professional Bay Area artists have completed residencies. Applications are accepted annually in August. www.recology.com/air

About Project HOPE Art

Based in Aptos, California, Project HOPE Art is a non-profit that uses art as a vehicle to inspire, educate, and create intentional whimsy. The organization works with children in hospitals, orphanages, schools, and communities in disaster stricken areas, utilizing art to help establish self esteem, self expression, self respect, and stress relief for youth. Project HOPE Art creates art for art's sake, while educating through art, science, nutrition, and literacy programs. Since the organizations inception in January 2010, Project HOPE Art has made multiple trips to Haiti and has recently launched a Visiting Artist Program, creating a sustainable way for artists in any medium to come to Haiti and work with youth and project partners to inspire, heal, and improve the quality of life for children in need. www.projecthopeart.org

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