



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Sandra Varner, VarnerPR Agency
510-569-8855, varnerpr@sbcglobal.net
Ayanna Anderson, VarnerPR Agency
510-415-5873, ayanna.ns.anderson@gmail.com

The 39th Annual KPFA Crafts & Music Fair Shines a Spotlight on Visionary Artist Evan Bissell and Community Works' Families and Prison Project

Local Artist works with Bay Area Youth and Residents of the San Francisco Jail for a Public Visual Arts Collaboration

November 4, 2009, BERKELEY, CA—The 39th annual KPFA Crafts & Music Fair, the largest juried holiday craft fair of its kind in Northern California, returns to the Concourse Exhibition Center in San Francisco (635 Eight Street in San Francisco) on **December 12 and 13, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day**. This year, fair organizers are excited to announce an innovative partnership with Bay Area artist, Evan Bissell.

Together with the Berkeley-based non-profit, Community Works, Bissell is spearheading a groundbreaking visual arts collaboration: **What Cannot Be Taken Away: Families and Prisons Project**, designed to bridge the gap between the disrupted lives of the imprisoned and their children. Through a series of workshops, six pair of youth/incarcerated adults will collaborate to create portraits that will explore notions of justice and punishment.

“One of the aims of this project is to create a dialogue around how incarceration can further perpetuate inequality and injustice by de-stabilizing individuals, families and ultimately, communities,” notes Bissell. “I will be facilitating workshops with one group and then bringing their work to the next group for inspiration, dialogue and collaboration.”

Participants of this collaboration will work with an array of mixed media, including: acrylic paint, pastel, stencils/spray, enamel, pencils, pens and block printing, in tandem with writing. The goal of the collaboration will be the creation of six murals that feature life-size portraits of each pair. The project will culminate in an installation and public workshop series at Somarts in August of 2010; the murals will then be permanently installed throughout the Bay Area.

“Community Works views art as a vehicle for understanding and community building,” said Ruth Morgan, executive director. “By processing their experiences through the visual, performing and literary arts, program participants gain new insights and can imagine new possibilities for themselves. And the public can connect with people impacted by incarceration on a more emotional, more human level. The arts link real people’s voices and lives to the issue of mass incarceration.”

Fairgoers will have the chance to meet Evan Bissell, as well as several youth participants of the **What Cannot Be Taken Away: Families and Prisons Project**. Bissell will lead interactive art demonstrations throughout the two-day event and showcase some of his work from previous collaborative projects. All proceeds from Bissell’s exhibition will support the operating costs of the collaboration, including workshop space rentals, art supplies, transportation costs and stipends for the youth participants.

“This collaboration is a testament to the healing aspect of art,” notes Fair organizer, Jan Etre. “With this project, Evan and Community Works are creating a space for unity and understanding among those most affected by incarceration: the imprisoned and children of criminal offenders. Just as KPFA has been at the forefront of coverage that explores the long-ranging implications of incarceration, we are elated to partner with Evan and Community Works and raise awareness about this worthy endeavor.”

QUICK FAIR FACTS

2009 EXHIBITORS

220 artists are selected by a jury of peers and feature original and contemporary handcrafted items in all media, including:

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|------------------------|-------------|
| Accessories | Metal |
| Body Care Products | Leather |
| Ceramics | Mixed Media |
| Children's Items | Painting |
| Fashion – Wearable | Paper |
| Textiles – Decorative | Printmaking |
| Furniture and Lighting | Sculpture |
| Glass | Toys |
| Gourmet Food Products | Weaving |
| Jewelry | Wood |

HOURS

Saturday, December 12, 2009 (10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

Sunday, December 13, 2009 (10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)

WHERE:

Concourse Exhibition Center, 635 - 8th Street at Brannan in San Francisco (*location is wheelchair accessible).

TICKETS

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for persons 65 and over and persons with disabilities.

*The event is Free for children under 17.

TRANSPORTATION

The Fair makes it easy for Green Travel providing complimentary shuttles from the Civic Center BART Station, 8th and Market MUNI bus stop, and the Caltrain station at 4th and King Streets

*Valet bicycle parking provided by the SF Bicycle Coalition

*Carpooling is available with SpaceShare.com

About Evan Bissell

Evan Bissell is a Bay Area artist and educator whose work comes through collaborative models of reflection and action as a process of dialogue. In the last three years he has collaboratively created and publicly installed over 40 original paintings of and with living Bay Area residents. His work has been exhibited at public transit stations, on schools, in the San Francisco Botanical Garden and anywhere else there is a public space with a willing host. In addition, he has had solo exhibitions at Intersection for the Arts and Marcus Books and has exhibited work at Southern Exposure and with Amnesty International. He is a two-time recipient of the Individual Artist Commission award through the city of San Francisco's Cultural Equity Grants program and his work has garnered features in the San Francisco Chronicle and the Marin Independent Journal.

About Community Works

CW engages youth and adults in arts and education programs that interrupt and heal the far-reaching impact of incarceration and violence by empowering individuals, families and communities.

CW links up with the institutions that most affect our constituents' lives, including the criminal and juvenile justice systems, the public school system, and other community-based organizations, providing innovative programs serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women, their children, families and affected communities.

CW's programs include the award-winning Resolve to Stop the Violence Project (RSVP), which supports men incarcerated for violent crimes in confronting and stopping their violence; and Project WHAT! a youth-led initiative designed to raise awareness about what it's like to have a parent in prison or jail. Evan Bissell will collaborate with participants from both programs.

About KPFA

KPFA 94.1FM is the nation's original listener-sponsored, noncommercial, public radio station founded in 1949. The mission of KPFA is to encourage cultural diversity and pluralistic community expression; to contribute to a lasting understanding between individuals of all nations, creeds and colors; to promote freedom of the press and to serve as a forum for various points of view, and to maintain an independent funding base.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.kpfa.org/craftsfair/> call or email Jan Etre, Fair Organizer: 510.848.6767, ext. 646, events@kpfa.org.

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