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**“Wherefore ART?”**

**July 8 - August 31, 2014**

**Exhibiting Artists:** Danielle Siegelbaum, Guy Beckles, Ibou Ndoye, and Suprina

*June 24, 2014 (Harlem, NYC)* –Art in FLUX Harlem presents a visual arts exhibition in collaboration with the Classical Theatre of Harlem and their production of *Romeo n Juliet*. “Wherefore ART?” on display from July 8 through August 31 at Aloft Hotel, 2296 Frederick Douglass Blvd at 124th Street paves an intersection of contemporary art with classical theatre, incorporating the multitude of cultures surrounding its Harlem location.  The exhibit starts from a display of artwork in the large empty retail windows on Frederick Douglass Blvd. to the larger exhibit inside the lobby and lounge of Aloft Hotel. Art in FLUX activates an underutilized space with visual art while Classical Theatre of Harlem occupies Marcus Garvey Park jointly engaging theatre and art lovers alike for the summer in Harlem.

This production of the classic Shakespearian tragedy directed by Justin Emeka weaves Harlem's artistic legacy and other Diasporic traditions. In response to the Harlem-inspired production, Art in FLUX visual artists, Danielle Siegelbaum, Guy Beckles, Ibou Ndoye, and Suprina, roguishly make philosophical commentary on the play’s prevailing themes of love, passion and conflict with paintings, mixed media works and kinetic sculptures.

Guy Beckles has been producing kinetic works of art for thirty-three years. His moving sculptures draw you in with their whimsy and activate upon approach, pushing, pulling, and circulating - a mesmerizing call for viewer interaction. Beckles uses movement and witticism to convey social commentary just as Justin Emeka reveals contemporary social ills through a clever production of Romeo n Juliet. In Beckles’ *“Second Thoughts – the last time I have second thoughts about you”* two doll faces manipulated by smartly engineered colorful gears and cranks move apart then come together again and again and again for a perfectly aligned kiss every time.

Danielle Siegelbaum’s works reference her experience as a textile designer and illustrator. Her work is riddled with irony and cynicism poking at the incoherencies of our society and at the core – family. She develops themes that suggest surprising parallels: love-hate, sex, family, woman-man, good-evil, rich-poor, peace-war, ambivalence, and the absurdity of our time. These elements bang together in her paintings and mixed media sculptures inviting peculiar interpretations. The sensual shapes in her works are abruptly interrupted creating tension and contradiction. References from a multitude of cultures, often in the form of signs and pictograms, contribute to the mise-en-scene, which mystifies the viewer. A narrative aspect informs her paintings as in “Who?” where two sensual figures gaze forward torturing the masked face between while the nursemaid, the symbols, and the signs of fertility expand and confuse the story.

Suprina’s works examines human interactions with both the natural world and the discarded object. Detritus, castings, modeling, and painting, are the core of her three dimensional sculptural works of art. The subjects by nature of their parts feel like castaways exhibiting expressions of content, disdain, defeat, anger, and sometimes wistfulness or bewilderment. “Empty Soul” for example speaks about loss. The face of the figure looks forlorn and the body appears perched uncomfortably bearing a heart with a large hole protruding from the chest that reads Sweet Heart. Suprina’s work weaves together an earthly poetic quality with manmade trash and natural materials blended together to question society’s values and individual worth.  Suprina studied sculpture at the Philadelphia College of Art but she refined her construction skills working in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade studio and many years of large prop design and production.

Born in West Africa's most progressive capital city, Dakar, Senegal, glass-painting artist Ibou Ndoye has combined modernism and traditionalism to create a style unique to him. When the glass painting technique was first introduced to the Senegalese, the subject matter was predominated by religious scenes. Ibou began breaking and layering the glass to create new textures and effects; incorporating copper wire, broken bottles, wood, bone, and animal skin; and adding plastics and other materials common to our modern environment then painting traditional African scenes often interrupted with contemporary influences like technology. In “The Couple” Ibou portrays an African couple in traditional garb and floating around them are youth in modern clothing carrying boom boxes along with streetlights comically placed within the primitive surroundings - almost mimicking Classical Theatre of Harlem’s juxtaposition of Romeo n Juliet within a contemporary urban setting.

**WHAT:** Wherefore ART?

**WHEN:** July 8 – August 31, 2014, open daily

**OPENING RECEPTION:** July 8, 6:00-9:00pm sponsored by VOSS Water

**WHERE:** ALOFT HARLEM, Frederick Douglass Blvd. at 124 St.

**WHO:** Art In FLUX

**EXHIBITING ARTISTS**: Danielle Siegelbaum, Guy Beckles, Ibou Ndoye, and Suprina

**INFO & PROGRAMMING:** www.artinfluxharlem.com, info@artinfluxharlem.com, 646-340-3479

**IMAGES:**

1. *Who?*, Danielle Siegelbaum, Acrylic on canvas, 60”x40”
2. *Empty Soul*, Suprina, Detritus, metal, plastic, wood, epoxy, paint, 10" x 14" x 10"
3. *The Couple,* Ibou Ndoye, Broken glass painting, 28”x27”

**About Art In FLUX:**

Art In FLUX creates opportunity for artists living and/or working in Harlem, brings art into public spaces, creates a positive use for underutilized spaces and stimulates a vibrant neighborhood by merging art, commerce and community.  Art In FLUX Harlem was launched in 2012 and since then has popped up in empty retail spaces, on the streets, in restaurants, schools and lobbies bringing art closer to the community as well as attracting media attention and art collectors to the diverse group of artists in Harlem.

www.artinfluxharlem.com

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