

Gallery 263

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Project FOCUS: *Common Threads*

Opening reception Thursday June 11, 7-9pm

June 4 – July 3, 2009

Gallery 263 is pleased to collaborate with Project FOCUS, bringing Ugandan art and activism to Cambridge. Project FOCUS is a diverse, grass-roots initiative of artists, writers, activists, and students formed in 2006 and bound by a common purpose: to educate, inspire and empower local communities in both Uganda and the United States through creativity and self-expression. Project FOCUS believes that every individual has a story to tell. In 2007 they implemented a series of art-based projects in Uganda focusing on health, identity and community-based development.

Common Threads displays artwork of men, women, and children living in the rural community of Lyantonde, Uganda. Two art therapists facilitated three groups and asked them each to design a quilt panel with one question in mind: How has your community been affected by HIV/AIDS? Their responses convey the intersection between art, design, community and public health. Through their artwork, Ugandans were able to communicate both the reality of the AIDS virus and the spirit of resilience and determination with which they have responded to this pervasive epidemic. Photos and stories of community members help viewers connect to the images and create a sense of personal relevancy.

Common Threads is part of the Project FOCUS Boston initiative: The Artists Against Social Apathy Project (AASAP), whose goal is to connect Boston artists and concerned communities with artists and communities in Lyantonde through a series of exhibitions and workshops.

On Saturday June 20th, the Gallery will host *Meet Project FOCUS* from 6 to 9 pm. On Friday June 26th, at 8 pm, Bambino, with special guests Joe Galeotta and friends, for an evening of African music. On Saturday and Sunday, June 27th and 28th, from 1 to 5 pm, the gallery will host *Activist Art Workshops* – overcoming apathy through creative expression. Project FOCUS is a 501(c)(3) registered non-profit. Donations will help support the continued work of Project Focus and the promotion of local health and education initiatives in Lyantonde.

The gallery is open to the public Thursday-Sunday from 11 am to 6:30 pm. For more details about this exhibit and the gallery, please visit www.gallery263.com.

For further information contact David Craft, Co-Director. 781-367-2252