

International art exchange of homeless art “This is Where I Live” opens Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> of May at Kahalia on Bricklane.

Organised by Cafe Art this unique exchange of artworks between homeless artists all started in 2013 between London and New York and now has five exchange partners that have all joined together to create the only known global homeless art exchange. Partners include; Fresh Art in New York, G15 in Berlin, Pehchan in Mumbai, Auckland City Mission in New Zealand and Nafarsi Arts Centre in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This May, each city will hold an exhibition in their home city, including a collection of works from each partner city. London has been the main organisational hub for this project and will be featuring 28 works all by people that have experienced homelessness including artworks by Londoners.

This Is Where I Live is an exchange of artworks to show solidarity of our mission to highlight the visual art of people that have been homeless in our cities. We are committed to raising public awareness and recognition of these artists’ work and talent, as well as promoting art as a tool for personal expression, creative growth and positive transformation.

The idea behind it is to have fun, make connections and give these artists an international platform to showcase their artwork. The issue of homelessness is international and by talking about it Cafe Art hopes to draw attention to the issue in a creative way.

Artist Quotes:

Mary:

Mary studied art and design for 5 years in college and has been working as an artist in London for 10 years, selling and exhibiting work through Café Art and crisis. ‘Art helps with my depression. I have a history of homelessness and use day centres to access art materials. Without these I would be unable to create my work. I love using colour; it helps my mood; the sadder I am the more colour comes out; the pain becomes beautiful. I love to experiment and my art is always changing and evolving, currently I am playing with different textures and materials

Pauline:

*"I make art to release my innermost feelings, whether it's light or dark, it's what comes out. It's abstract, if I'm thinking of something it's reflecting or redirecting it. The darkness is clouding my inner beauty to come forward. I'm going through a lot and it's coming out in the art."* Pauline attends the fresh art workshop at a Henry Street residence in New York.

James:

Following a dark period in my life, I walked away from everything and lived on the streets [of London]. During this difficult time, I joined an Art therapy class. I taught myself different techniques and experimented with different mediums. I soon fell in love with art. It became my life and you could say, my savior.

For more information, or to arrange interviews with the London artists or for international exhibition contacts email [sarah@cafeart.org.uk](mailto:sarah@cafeart.org.uk) or call 07535807813.