



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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www.vetartproject.com

Please List; Call for Interviews and Info

THE VET ART PROJECT

2009 SPRING & SUMMER WORKSHOP & PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington Street

The Chicago-based **Vet Art Project** (www.vetartproject.com), in association with the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs Theater Program, will offer monthly creative arts programming workshops for veterans, active duty military personnel, family members of veterans and active duty personnel, practitioners who work with veterans, and artists. The Vet Art Project creates opportunities for veterans to work in collaboration with artists from all disciplines to create new art about war for public performance and viewing. The program aims to support our veterans, create stronger voices among our veterans, provide new opportunities for artists, offer a venue to hear the voices of our veterans and artists, and foster discussions about how war affects us all. The Vet Art Project, recipient of the Illinois Humanities Council Towner Award for its unconventional and unique method in pursuit of ambitious goals, is spearheaded by lead artist Lisa Rosenthal and co-lead artist Jessa Carlstrom.

All programs are opportunities for veterans to explore an artistic form of self-expression and an opportunity to connect with artists (or fellow artists) to form collaborative artistic partnerships. Art from these resulting partnerships will be performed in November 2009. **All events are free, held the third Wednesday of the month (unless otherwise indicated below), and held in the Garland Room on the first floor of the Chicago Cultural Center located at 78 E. Washington Street, Chicago.** See specific dates below. Please register in advance by calling 773-301-5366 or 708-715-5488. Drop-ins are welcome, too.

CREATIVE ARTS WORKSHOPS

- **Wednesday, May 20**

- **6-7:30 p.m.: Blind Contour Self-Portrait**

- Following scripted directions, participants will draw a self-portrait with eyes closed that is abstracted, yet representational. A second portrait will be drawn to meditative music. Led by Jeanine Hill-Soldner, MA Art Ed & Visual Artist

- **8-9:30 p.m.: Relaxation through Movement**

- A workshop that teaches breathwork, gentle stretching, and progressive muscle relaxation to build self-awareness and the means to self-regulate tension and stress. Goals are to reduce anxiety and increase flexibility, focus, circulation, and energy. Please wear comfortable nonrestrictive clothing. Led by Gail Adduci, dance and movement therapist, choreographer & dancer

- **Wednesday, June 17**

- **6-7:30 p.m.—Part I: Mapping Your Wartime Personality**

- **8-9:30 p.m.—Part II: The Journey Home: Mapping Your Peacetime Personality**

- We often travel to our personality *edges*, or insecurities, while facing traumatic events. Threats to personal safety challenge every kind of personality. Drawing a personality map helps us acknowledge all aspects of our functioning, including the strengths that can help us meet our basic needs. Led by Janis Clark Johnston, Ed.D. Private Practice in Family Psychology

- **Wednesday, July 15**

- **6-7:30 p.m.: Story Truth**

- Teaching veterans the value of story truth not as embellished fiction, but as necessary to authentically relating to one's story. Participants will gain a fresh approach to writing and start a piece of creative nonfiction. Led by Dani Brzozowski, freelance creative and professional writer

- **8-9:30 p.m.: Storytelling with Abstract Art**

- Create non-realistic visual art freeing you from the pressure to create accurate work and instead connecting you to the feelings or meaning of an event. Use shapes, colors, and textures to express internal thoughts and ideas, some just discovered. Led by Christine Krumsee, visual artist and art as therapy instructor, North Chicago VA Hospital

- **Wednesday, August 19**

- 6-7:30 p.m.: Drawing Your Story**

- Participants will create a visual record to honor and preserve their experiences by recognizing the emotional component of their stories through the act of drawing. No prior drawing experience is necessary. Led by Mary King, visual artist

- 8-9:30 p.m. Show Me, Tell Me**

- Artists and veterans will meet each other and talk about their lives and stories. This workshop will provide opportunities for veterans to think about different ways their stories can be told using various artistic media. Structure of workshop facilitates everyone meeting and possibly form artistic collaborative partnerships as well as sharing in the community of the program itself. Led by Errol McLendon, director, actor, teacher

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES & APPEARANCES (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC):

- **Saturday, May 30, 3 and 5 p.m.**

- In Association with Dryhootch.org for the Reclaiming Our Heritage Event
Milwaukee VA Medical Center, 5000 W. National Avenue, Milwaukee, WI**

- The Vet Art Project will offer two performances of “The Journey of a Soldier” created from extracts of poetry, interviews, and essays submitted to the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum.

- **Saturday, June 13, Noon**

- Hanover Park**

- 240 S. Illinois Route 59, Bartlett, IL 60103**

- Performance of “The Journey of a Soldier” by Vet Art Project affiliated artists following by a creative arts program: Picture Storytelling, using collage to visually represent the experience of veterans focusing on emotions, sights, sounds, and the transition home. Led by Christine Reddington, RN, BSN

The Vet Art Project is produced in association with the **City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs Theater Program**. The project is supported, in part, by the **Illinois Humanities Council**, the **National Endowment for the Humanities**, and the **Illinois General Assembly**, the **Puffin Foundation**, **Chicago Dramatists**, **Stage Left Theatre**, **Rivendell Theatre Ensemble**, **16th Street Theater**, and is fiscally sponsored by **Fractured Atlas**.

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“Veterans are the light at the tip of the candle, illuminating the way for the whole nation. If veterans can achieve awareness, transformation, understanding, and peace, they can share with the rest of society the realities of war. And they can teach us how to make peace with ourselves and each other, so we never have to use violence to resolve conflicts again.”

—Vietnamese Buddhist monk **Thich Nhat Hanh**