

# CORCORAN

GALLERY OF ART • COLLEGE of ART + DESIGN

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

Kristin Guiter, Vice President of Communications and Marketing,

[kguiter@corcoran.org](mailto:kguiter@corcoran.org), (202) 639-1867

Rachel Cothran, Director of Public Relations,

[rcothran@corcoran.org](mailto:rcothran@corcoran.org), (202) 639-1833

Melanie Kimmelman, Public Relations Manager,

[mkimmelman@corcoran.org](mailto:mkimmelman@corcoran.org), (202) 639-1873

**CORCORAN MARKS 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARTREACH**

*Corcoran celebrates its signature educational outreach program with an exhibition of current and “Master” students and Community Portrait Project, May 30–June 24, 2012*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design** is proud to announce the 20th Anniversary of **ArtReach**, the Corcoran’s signature educational outreach program, which seeks to empower youth by creating a safe, supportive environment in which they can excel and be celebrated for their artistic talents. Established in 1992, ArtReach has for 20 years helped to fill the gap between the D.C. Public School System and arts instruction by providing underserved and at-risk youth in Washington, D.C. with a constructive way to channel their energies during critical after-school hours.



To celebrate the anniversary, the Corcoran will open the exhibition *Expressions 2012: Celebrating 20 Years of ArtReach*, on view **May 30–June 24**. A reception with live performances will be held **Thursday, May 31, 6–8 p.m.** The exhibition presents work made by current ArtReach students, an ArtReach retrospective highlighting student works over the years, and the Corcoran Community Portrait Project—a suite of over 250 self-portraits with glitter, inspired by the work of artist Mickalene Thomas.

Special for this year are works by the Master Class, a program piloted in the spring of 2012, designed for students who have participated in ArtReach classes year after year to further their creative and technical skills. The class covers portfolio development and advanced studio arts techniques while exploring Corcoran exhibitions in depth. ArtReach’s vision for Master Class includes college admission preparation, exhibition design and installation, articulation of artistic intent through artist statements, classroom critiques, and collaborations with artists.

- more -

“With art programs being cut in many schools, ArtReach fills a vital need,” said Melissa Green, director of community partnerships at the Corcoran. “Studies show that art education directly contributes to enhancing a student’s ability to learn other academic subjects, and we hear from parents and teachers all the time that our program is making a difference.”



Many of the works in the exhibition were inspired by the recent Corcoran exhibition *30 Americans*, including portraits of heroes, based on the work of Jean-Michel Basquiat; disguises based on sound suits by Nick Cave; and silhouettes based on the cut-paper work of Kara Walker. Also in conjunction with *30 Americans*, ArtReach hosted its first artist-in-residence program at THEARC in October 2011. Artist Nina Chanel Abney collaborated on a mural at the community center with the teen students and worked with them for a week-long residency.

## ABOUT ARTREACH

ArtReach serves more than 300 inner-city youth (ages 8–18) each year at its partner centers located in the nation’s capital: THEARC and the Sitar Arts Center. THEARC, located in Southeast Washington, D.C., is a “home away from home” for many underserved children of Ward 7 and 8 (also known as the Congress Heights neighborhood). The Sitar Arts Center, located in Ward 1, has been dedicated to serving the communities of Adams Morgan and Columbia Heights, where despite positive financial indicators in the area, most participating families at the Center earn 45% or less of the median income for Washington, D.C., amounting to \$19,000 or less for a family of four.



ArtReach provides a unique service in the region by offering a sequential learning experience with a curriculum that involves inquiry-based instruction as well as art history and studio training. The curriculum focuses on objects from the Corcoran’s world-renowned collection and special exhibitions.

Throughout the semester, students explore the cultural and artistic importance of each featured artist by creating pieces inspired by their work. A typical semester may include watching a documentary on the artist, visits to the Gallery, creating several pieces of art in various mediums, participating in critiques, and analyzing both the artist's and their own works.

Resident art educators for ArtReach are contracted staff members who work off-site at their respective partner center. They instruct afterschool classes and visit the Corcoran regularly to incorporate the Gallery as a resource for learning in their classes and workshops. They act as a positive adult mentor to the students, nurturing and modeling skills that reflect an artist's creative process. The on-site coordinator of community programs, Tara Malik, oversees and assists the instructors while serving as a liaison to the community by meeting with community partner staff to strengthen communication, feedback, and assessment of the program. The high quality of the educational experience offered through Corcoran ArtReach is a reflection of the talent and depth of professional experience of the administrative and instructional staff. For more information on ArtReach, please visit [www.corcoran.org/artreach](http://www.corcoran.org/artreach).

## **ABOUT THE CORCORAN**

**The Corcoran Gallery of Art**, a privately funded institution, was founded in 1869. It was America's first dedicated art museum and today is Washington's largest nonfederal museum of art. It is known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts. In addition, a dynamic schedule of special exhibitions is complemented and enhanced by a range of educational programming, which together seek to enrich perspectives, support the local arts community, and encourage interpretation. **The Corcoran College of Art + Design** was founded in 1890 and stands as Washington's only four-year college of art and design, offering BFA degrees in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Fine Art Photography, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Photojournalism; a BA in Art Studies; a five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts/Master of Arts in Teaching (BFA/MAT); an AFA in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, and Photography; and MA degrees in Art and the Book, Art Education, Exhibition Design, Interior Design, Master of Arts in Teaching, and New Media Photojournalism. The College's Continuing Education program offers part-time credit and non-credit classes for children and adults and draws more than 2,500 participants each year. For more information about the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design**, visit [www.corcoran.org](http://www.corcoran.org).



Photos by Tara Malik.

###