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Fountain Gallery Presents: *MAKE. BELIEVE.*
A Group Exhibition
Featuring Artwork from: Fountain Gallery, HAI, The Living Museum
and Services for the UnderServed
Curated by Frank Maresca

January 12 – March 7, 2012

Opening Reception: January 12, 6-8 p.m.

NEW YORK – Jan. 6, 2012 – Fountain Gallery, located at 702 Ninth Avenue and representing artists with mental illness, today announced the upcoming opening of *MAKE. BELIEVE.* This group exhibition features work by Fountain Gallery artists and by artists with mental illness from three other non-profit organizations based in New York City, participating through The Fountain Gallery Visiting Artists Program: HAI, The Living Museum, and Services for the UnderServed. The show will be on view from January 12 through March 7, 2012, with an Opening Reception on January 12, from 6 to 8 p.m. *MAKE. BELIEVE.* is curated by Frank Maresca.

"Basically, art for me falls into two categories. That which is effective, and that which is less effective. It is all about communication," said Maresca, co-owner of Ricco/Maresca Gallery. "Many of the artists in this show do not have the questionable benefit of academic training or an art historical background. However, they still have a lot to say. The art emanates from life experiences that are often harsh and unique, creating an overwhelming desire to reach out and make their stories known. The medium that they have chosen is art, and the message is powerful." Maresca has championed the work of artists communicating outside of the academic mainstream for the last 30 years; the mission of Ricco/Maresca Gallery has always been to blur the lines between the so called high and low.

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Among the more than 40 pieces spotlighted in *MAKE. BELIEVE.* are: Rodney Thornblad's (HAI) intricate graphite, colored pencil and ink work on paper; John Tursi's (The Living Museum) large scale wire coat hanger assemblages; Alfred Samba's (Services for the UnderServed) brightly hued mixed media works on wood; and the late Frances Olivero's (Fountain Gallery) colored pencil on newsprint portraits of Fountain House members and staff.

HAI inspires healing, growth and learning through access to the arts for the culturally underserved. HAI provides cultural access through music, dance, theater and the visual arts, reaching out to the frail elderly, mentally and physically disabled, seriously ill children at health and social service facilities and youth in grades K-12. Each year, HAI touches the lives of more than 350,000 people in the New York City community. The Gallery at HAI is an outgrowth of HAI's Arts Workshops Program.

The Living Museum of Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in Queens, NY, is the first museum in the United States dedicated to the production and collection of art by people with mental illness. Founded in 1983 by the Polish artist Bolek Greczynski and Dr. Janos Marton, the Museum is a 40,000 square foot oasis for innovative therapeutic healing through creative expression. The Museum and its artists were the subject of the critically acclaimed HBO documentary "The Living Museum."

Services for the UnderServed (SUS), founded in 1978, has gained a reputation for supporting individuals and families facing challenging life situations such as mental illness, developmental disability, physical disability, AIDS, homelessness, unemployment and poverty. The uniqueness of SUS lies in its commitment to provide evidence-based practices and holistic opportunities to its members. SUS recently launched the Visionary Arts Project, directed by Marie Sabatino, which gives individuals living with mental illness the resources and support to express themselves through the creative arts and to engage with the larger community to showcase their talents.

The Fountain Gallery Visiting Artists Program

The Fountain Gallery Visiting Artists Program was established in 2008 with support from founding sponsor Glenn Close. Through the Program, talented artists with mental illness from around the world, who may lack opportunities to show their work in a professional setting, are invited to participate in selected Fountain Gallery exhibitions.

About Fountain Gallery

Fountain Gallery is the premier venue in New York City representing artists with mental illness. Founded by Fountain House in 2000 as a not-for-profit exhibition space for its member-artists living and working with mental illness, the Gallery sells original artworks and collaborates with a wide network of artists, curators and cultural institutions. Embracing artists who are emerging or established, trained or self-taught, Fountain Gallery cultivates artistic growth and makes a vital contribution to the New York arts community.

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This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and by generous support from The Jarvis & Constance Doctorow Family Foundation and The Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust.

Artworks by Gallery artists may be viewed at: www.fountaingallerynyc.com.

For information about Fountain House: www.fountainhouse.org.

Fountain Gallery
702 Ninth Avenue at 48th Street
NYC 10019
212.262.2756
Hours: Tues.-Sat. 11-7; Sun. 1-5
More than a gallery. A movement.

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