



Open Source Gallery, Inc - 501(c)(3) Organization
306 17th street, Brooklyn, NY 11215, contact@opensourcegallery.org 646 279 3969 opensourcegallery.org
Gallery Hours: Thursday - Saturday: 2pm - 6pm

HEALING ARTS INITIATIVE: SOLE EXCHANGE

April 2-29, 2016

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 2, 7-9pm

Workshops: April 7, April 14, 1-5pm

Artist talk: April 21, 7-9pm

Healing Arts Initiative and Open Source Gallery present *Sole Exchange*, a participatory art installation curated by Francis Palazzolo.

From an art historical perspective, pedestals have served a variety of purposes, from removing art from the viewer's space to signifying importance to simply designating what is considered art. In *Sole Exchange*, pedestals will be toppled and refashioned into seating, transforming an exclusive barrier into a utilitarian object that can be shared by all. Upon these pedestals, visitors to the gallery will be invited to exchange their footwear, with conversation aiming to encourage understanding and empathy between both friends and strangers. Not limiting audience participation to a shoe swap, gallery-goers can also doodle and sketch their own interventions on the platforms, generating collaborative artwork throughout the course of the exhibit. Through the use of these pedestals turned social sculptures, visitors, participants, and artists will share the opportunity for exchange on an inclusive platform—and will feel what it's like to be in another's shoes.



Sole Exchange explores the intersection between live performance and representational form, utilizing social practices that enhance intersubjectivity. Paintings and drawings by HAI studio members included in *Sole Exchange* aim to disrupt cultural polarization and destigmatize mental health issues. Participation in this exhibit not only makes the viewer an active participant, helping to increase understanding between individuals, but also increases the visibility of the HAI studio members. To negotiate unspoken and unrealized spaces between people, HAI studio members pictured kinship upon the Open Source walls, creating artwork for the exhibit that explores collaboration and community. Exhibited work validates the input of marginalized communities and encourages a position of strength and stability for the artists.

The HAI Art Studio & Gallery is part of Healing Arts Initiative, a Long Island City based non-profit organization that touches a quarter of a million lives each year. HAI is committed to making the arts accessible to all New Yorkers, especially individuals who are isolated and marginalized due to institutionalization, hospitalization, disability and illness, as well as at risk youth in low-income neighborhoods. HAI exists to remove barriers to art and culture for the audiences most in need of the healing role of arts. In 1994, Palazzolo co-founded the Art Studio & Gallery at HAI. The mission of the HAI Art Studio is to organize a safe artistic empowerment zone for marginalized persons who are diagnosed with severe mental illness. The Gallery at HAI has participated in the Outsider Art Fair in NYC and Paris. Works created at HAI can be found in the collections of the Museum of Everything in London and the American Folk Art Museum in NYC.

