

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 10, 2014

MEDIA CONTACT:
John C. Wilson
410-888-9048 ext. 6619
jwilson@muih.edu

“Unseen Beauty” Photographs by Homeless Individuals Curated by Art for the People

Opens December 20 at Himmelfarb Gallery, Maryland University of Integrative Health

LAUREL, Md. – “Unseen Beauty” features photographs by homeless and severely under-served individuals from the greater DC metro area, and is presented in cooperation with Art for the People. The exhibition opens Saturday, December 20 in the Himmelfarb Gallery at Maryland University of Integrative Health.

Sue Bracey, the photo project director of Art for the People, brought this project to the Himmelfarb Gallery. “All of us can certainly recall seeing homeless people, but Unseen Beauty helps us see more than we can at first blush by showing us what the world and beauty looks like through their eyes,” said Bracey. “The exhibit is a lens into not only what is beautiful in the eyes of people who are part of the subculture, but also into our own understanding of our neighbors without homes. It lets us know that even in blight, there is also beauty.”

Initially distributing twenty cameras to individuals outside the local overnight shelter and soup kitchen, Bracey reports that more than fifty per cent were returned. These volunteers agreed to take pictures of what is beautiful in their world, and to allow one of their photos to be displayed in a public exhibition. According to Bracey, “It does not matter that their only possessions are piled high in a shopping cart, how they smell, if their clothes are stiff with grime from the street or they don't have money. They need only accept the camera and return it. The film is developed and pictures emerge. Ultimately a single picture from each film set is framed, matted and hung in an exhibit. The beauty expressed in these photos is displayed for the world to see.”

The initial concept was that donations from viewers would support the purchase of additional cameras, photo lab costs, and exhibition supplies. Since then, 50 additional cameras have been disseminated at Section 8 senior housing projects and Community Vision Health Center that serves the homeless who have no permanent address. The photographs have been exhibited at a restaurant and Montgomery College.

Himmelfarb Gallery Coordinator John C. Wilson says, “I love that this exhibition challenges our assumptions, and provides us new eyes to see beauty and to gain insight into our homeless brothers and sisters. When Sue Bracey brought a proposal to exhibit at MUIH, I was very moved by the images and the story she told me about the process of getting these photographs. The Himmelfarb art committee was equally enthused. One of them responded: *Absolutely, YES! The creative spirit [in this project]*”

animates all of us, no matter where we eat or sleep. It is only happy accidents that separate any of us from the soup kitchens. There is no "them and us," only us."

Artwork from the exhibit will be on sale through the Meeting Point bookstore, which is adjacent to the gallery. [Visit the Himmelfarb Gallery online.](#)

What: Unseen Beauty, Photographs by Homeless Individuals curated by Art for the People

When: December 20, 2014 – March 14, 2015

Where: Himmelfarb Gallery, Maryland University of Integrative Health

7750 Montpelier Rd., Laurel, MD 20723

Gallery Hours: Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday: 8 a.m.– 4 p.m.

Artist Reception: Thursday, January 22, 2015 from 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

About Art for the People

Unseen Beauty is the first photo project of Art for the People, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Their goal is to give the dispossessed individual an avenue for positive self-expression, and perhaps, open new possibilities for themselves. It also aspired to change the way the rest of us look at homeless individuals. This exhibition has changed perceptions about those living in the sub-culture of our society. This organization hopes to ensure that all people are "seen" and treasured for the beauty within each person.

To learn more about the homeless artists and Art for the People, please visit www.unseenbeauty.org

About Maryland University of Integrative Health

Maryland University of Integrative Health (MUIH) educates and practitioners and leaders in health and wellness through transformative and relationship-centered programs that integrate ancient wisdom and contemporary science. MUIH offers graduate degrees and certificates in a wide range of wellness fields, as well as programs for professional and personal development. The on-campus Natural Care Center offers compassionate and affordable healthcare from student interns and professional practitioners, delivering more than 35,000 clinical treatments a year.

About the Himmelfarb Gallery

The lobby of MUIH's main campus building serves as the gallery space and features four exhibits each year that focus on some aspect of healing, wellness or nature. Since opening in April 2003, the gallery has displayed paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, fabrics, and artist-made paper.

For more information, please visit www.muuh.edu.

#