

# BLACK ROCK ARTS FOUNDATION

INSPIRING ART, COMMUNITY & CIVIC PARTICIPATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 1, 2010  
San Francisco, CA

Contact: Tomas McCabe  
Phone: (415) 626-1248  
Email: [tomas@blackrockarts.org](mailto:tomas@blackrockarts.org)  
Website: [blackrockarts.org](http://blackrockarts.org)

\* \* \* PRESS RELEASE \* \* \*

**Black Rock Arts Foundation and Hayes Valley Arts Coalition present**  
**Large Scale Community Art Installation, *Ecstasy***  
at Patricia's Green at Octavia and Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA  
February 6, 2010 to June 18, 2010  
Opening Reception February 26, 2010, 4:00pm-7:00pm

## For your calendar listing:

The Black Rock Arts Foundation proudly collaborates with the Hayes Valley Arts Coalition in the installation of Dan Das Mann and Karen Cusolito's massive 30-foot metal sculpture, *Ecstasy*, at Patricia's Green, at Octavia and Hayes St, San Francisco, CA, to be on display from February 6, 2010 to June 18, 2010. Join the community in celebration of this hopeful, figurative work at the opening reception, February 26, 2010, 4:00pm-7:00pm.

## About *Ecstasy*:

The Black Rock Arts Foundation is proud to support the installation of Dan Das Mann and Karen Cusolito's sculpture *Ecstasy* at Patricia's Green in the Hayes Valley neighborhood of San Francisco, Ca. This hopeful, figurative work will be on display, free to the public, from February 7, 2010 till June 18, 2010.

First displayed at the Burning Man festival in Nevada in 2008, *Ecstasy* is one of the eight monumental metal figures of the artists' masterpiece, *Crude Awakening*. In *Crude Awakening*, these eight figures surrounded a 99-foot tall wooden oil derrick in gestures of prostration, worship and exaltation. The figures represented the 'faithful'; the religious peoples of the world in their various postures of worship, all joining together in homage of the ominous symbol of the oil derrick. The installation culminated in a massive firework and fire display, and in the burning of the oil derrick. It was the biggest and most memorable burn to date at the Burning Man event.

Alone, *Ecstasy* embarks on a hopeful journey. Instead of throwing her head back in reverie to the oil derrick, she gazes wistfully into the open sky as she steps forward into the future. Her name expresses a sudden change of attitude and belief in hope; an moment of being overcome by passionate optimism in a future beyond our culture's dependency on fossil fuel.

Made from salvaged and recycled steel, this six ton, 30 foot tall work retains its' environmental message. Through much of their work, artists Dan Das Mann and Karen Cusolito resolve to use reclaimed materials, exemplifying resourcefulness as part of the creative process and challenging our cultures consumerist tendencies. Found objects, structural steel scrap, and old machine and car parts comprise *Ecstasy's* body; the strands of her hair are retired lifting chains. Her structural armature is made of 10" schedule 40 pipe, harvested from a disused factory in Oakland, Ca.

### **About the Artists:**

Dan Das Mann's fascination with large-scale work began with a landscape architecture degree from Rutgers University. He is a self-taught jack-of-all-trades, and has created a large body of work including *The One Tree*, *The Faces of the Man* as well as a line of sculptures produced for the consumer market.

Karen Cusolito studied at Rhode Island School of Design and Massachusetts College of Art and has produced several public art installations in and around the Boston area. She is passionate about the human form as a means of expression. Her work includes painting and mixed-media sculpture, as well as photography and literary "vignettes."

Dan and Karen began their collaboration in 2005, creating *Passage*, which BRAF supported to be installed near Peir 14 in San Francisco in the summer of 2007.

Dan and Karen have inspired an active and lively community of artists and volunteers, without whom, their large-scale works would not be possible. Their management of the huge artists' workspace in Oakland, Ca, American Steel, is breaking ground in demonstrating how to support artists and promote community.

### **About Patricia's Green:**

Through their Civic Arts Program, the Black Rock Arts Foundation is pleased to further the evolution of this artwork's message by exposing it to a new audience and community, and to return to the site of Patricia's Green. In 2005, this location became the site of BRAF's first public art project. Working closely with the residents and business owners in the Hayes Valley neighborhood, BRAF established a model of community collaboration towards the curation and installation of public art. These community members continued to work on bringing art into their neighborhood, forming the Hayes Valley Arts Coalition. The installation of *Ecstasy* at Patricia's Green further affirms the success of this collaboration, and of the model of public, temporary art installation.

### **About funding for *Ecstasy*:**

The display of *Ecstasy* is funded largely in part from a grant from the Grants for the Arts, San Francisco Hotel Tax fund, and from individual donations towards the project.

**About The Black Rock Arts Foundation:**

Established in 2001, the Black Rock Arts Foundation is a San Francisco-based 501c3 nonprofit organization with the objective of supporting and promoting community-based art and civic participation. BRAF supports art that generates social participation and inspires immediate actions that connect people to one another in a larger communal context.

**For more about the project, and for images, please visit:**

<http://www.blackrockarts.org/projects/ecstasy>

**For more information, please contact:**

Tomas McCabe, Executive Director

(415) 626-1248

[tomas@blackrockarts.org](mailto:tomas@blackrockarts.org)