

For Immediate Release

July 19, 2011 Contact: Myken Pullins, Public Affairs Coordinator
614.225.0980 or pullinsm@southeastinc.com

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery

Presents

Spirited Away
by Kim Promenschenkel
&
Dark Night of the Soul
by Derek Mortland

Columbus, Ohio – (43215) – Fresh A.I.R. (Artists in Recovery) Gallery presents two photographers exploring their journeys in recovery through their own unique lenses. *Spirited Away* by Kim Promenschenkel & *Dark Night of the Soul* by Derek Mortland opens Wednesday, July 20 and runs through August 26, 2011.

Please join us for the artists' reception on Wednesday, July 20, 2011 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Fresh A.I.R. Gallery. The exhibition will run through August 26. The reception is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Fresh A.I.R. Gallery is located at 131 N. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Derek Mortland is a tireless advocate for others with disabilities. Shortly after his spinal cord injury in 1997, Derek began doing consulting and training work related to the Americans with Disabilities Act. This eventually led to other advocacy and training efforts around the state and country for people with disabilities.

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During this time, Derek was also re-developing his musical side. His talents created opportunities to perform at International Music Festivals in Australia; VSA arts International Arts Festivals in Washington, D.C.; and local and regional arts festivals. He also received grants from the Ohio Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and Coca-Cola Corporation to fund these travel opportunities.

Through his work in surveying properties for ADA Compliance and writing articles about his musical travels and experiences for New Mobility and Disaboom magazines, Derek developed his documentary and photo-journalistic photography techniques. While using digital cameras for his work, he was also using them on the side to take personal snapshots of his travels, scenery, and objects that intrigued him.

In joining VSA Ohio as teaching artist in 2004, Derek eventually began to weave digital photography, along with music, into his residency programs with Central Ohio Schools. Through his successful residencies, Derek was one of five artists selected nationwide for the 2008-2009 VSA National Teaching Artist Fellowship. Derek was also honored along with musical collaborator Michael Joseph Ulery by receiving two 2008 Native American Music Awards Nominations for their CD “Skethes in Time,” and the 2009 Ohio Governor’s Arts Award for Individual Artist of the Year.

Derek has remained humble, enjoys serving his community, and has helped artists with disabilities locally and statewide in developing their professionalism through workshops, consultations, projects, and mentorships. He also leads programs at the Marion Correctional Institute to assist inmates in developing their professional and critical thinking skills. Derek has accomplished all of this in spite of his battles with A.D.D. and Depression.

The photographs on display by Kim Promenschenkel are from her recent visit to Japan where her camera became her best friend. Promenschenkel was raised in Dublin, Ohio and graduated from The Ohio State University in 2006 and received a BA in Sociology and Criminology and a BFA in Photography. She has been diagnosed with Bipolar disorder.

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Promenschenkel lived and worked in Nagoya, Japan for a year teaching English at Nanko Junior High School. She is currently working at Sears Portrait Studio.

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery's mission is to exhibit the works of these individuals affected by mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders. Through art, we educate the community and work to break down the stigma of mental illness by bringing focus to the artistic vision.

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery is operated by Southeast Inc. Southeast Inc. is a comprehensive provider of mental health, chemical dependency, physical healthcare and homeless services that has been serving Columbus since 1978 and five surrounding counties. Southeast's telephone number is (614) 225-0980 or Fax (614) 225-0986 or visit <http://www.southeastinc.com/freshair>

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