

NATIONAL CALL TO VISUAL ARTISTS WITH A DISABILITY – April 2009

H/E/R/O/S is a multimedia, visual art exhibit to be presented by Kickstart Disability Arts & Culture. It will showcase twenty artists with a disability at the Pendulum Gallery in downtown Vancouver, February-March 2010.

The Greek word “hero” originally referred to a demigod, the offspring a mortal and a deity. Straddling both worlds, part of and apart from each, the demigod sees each world from a privileged yet marginal perspective. Through the centuries the hero has come to refer to the protagonist who rises above mere mortals through acts of selflessness, courage or physical prowess.

Various dynamics are observed in relation to the disability community and the concept of “heroism”:

- non-disabled people’s exaggerated or patronizing perception of the normal requirements of functioning with a disability as courageous, even “heroic”, which obscures the real experience of disability;
- a backlash within the disability community against expectations that every person with a disability “perform” like Rick Hanson, Terry Fox and their ilk;
- the real value of role models for youth with disabilities, etc.

Exploring the duality inherent in the historical terms, and teasing out a disability perspective from the very human need for inspiration in a troubled world, this curated exhibition will invite visual meditation or commentary within the context of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Kickstart is looking for artists who wish to convey something about the ideas above, or to reinterpret “heroism” on their own personal terms. We encourage artistic adventurousness, and work that draws from the disability experience.

Up to three pieces from twenty artists may be selected by a curatorial committee. We welcome submissions of painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, assemblage, fibre etc. New media works will not be considered in this call. Two dimensional works are generally limited to 3 feet by 4 feet in size, or works that will disassemble or fold down to that size. Larger pieces MAY be considered but please speak to us before submitting your proposal. A fee will be paid to artists chosen to participate. Collaborations are welcome, but for the purpose of payment, artist teams are considered single artists.

If you would like to participate, send a letter indicating your interest, accompanied by a sample of past work (limit of 10 images), and/or a sketch or brief description of your idea(s) for this show. Your proposal must be postmarked by Wednesday, June 17th 2009. Please do not send original artwork, and if you want any material returned, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Shefrin, co-curator, at: visualarts@kickstart-arts.ca. Submissions must be mailed to:

Kickstart HEROS Exhibit
2702 Norland Avenue
Burnaby, BC V5A 3A6