

For Immediate Release

April 15, 2009

Painter and Political Cartoonist

Issa Nyaphaga

What: Issa Nyaphaga **Talk and Performance**

Where: Tipton Hall

When: May 4, 2009 @ 6pm

How Much: Any comfortable donation

SFAI Artist-in-Residence, Issa Nyaphaga, will give a talk about his work with the non-profit organization he founded, **Hope International for Tikar People (HITIP)**. Following the talk, Nyaphaga will do a performative painting piece with the accompaniment of live, local musicians as part of his "Urban Way" philosophy.

Issa Nyaphaga was born in Douala, Cameroon (central Africa) in 1967 and grew up in the small village of the Tikar tribe, called Nditam, in the very heart of Cameroon's equatorial forest. As a child of the fields, Issa was in contact with the earth and nature through artistic practice. "As a young artist, it wasn't enough to be what I was. I needed to do more, getting involved in something significant and crazy", Issa said. After High School, Issa started working as a political cartoonist and reporter in a weekly satirical newspaper, Le Messenger Popoli. His opposition to the political regime in Cameroon, led him to several trips to jail in 1994 for his publications.

Issa currently divides his time between Paris and the United States where he shares his work and advice with students and young artists. Issa also has been working on the development of a philosophical concept called "Urban Way," in which he paints his body and stages live performances that include live music. It is an act of protest against not being able to return home freely. Since early 2008, Issa is co-directing "Return to the belly of the Beast" a documentary project with Nicoletta Fagiolo.

Hope International for Tikar People (HITIP) is a non-profit, community-based organization established to improve the quality of life for marginalized indigenous Tikar and Pygmy people in Cameroon. HITIP collaborates with local villages to implement sustainable health and education projects to meet the needs of at-risk individuals and communities as a whole. Issa says, "I know people who are wasting a lot of resources and money every day... and I know people who need that help. I've seen kids who need books and toys to be happy... how can I go to sleep without doing anything?! I don't want to make people feel guilty, I just want to connect the two worlds."

For more information, images, or interview requests, please contact Michelle Laflamme-Childs at mchildsfai.org or call (505) 424-5050.

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The Santa Fe Art Institute, an independent educational non-profit organization founded in 1985, is committed to programs that nurture artists and enhance and promote the arts as an essential element of American culture and society.

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