



For Immediate Release
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Faces of Haiti: Paintings by Dianne G. Coyle

Hartford — The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Faces of Haiti: Paintings by Dianne G. Coyle*. This exhibition is free and open to the public and extends from August 11–October 17, 2013. A reception will be held on Saturday, August 10th from 5:00–7:30 p.m. At the reception, Coyle will invite her friend, photographer Kyn Tolson, to discuss both of their “processes of documentation.” Additionally, Tolson’s work for the organization Outreach to Haiti and the plight of the Haitian people will be discussed.

Coyle discovered her talent for painting portraits in 2010 and wished to use her gift to create culturally meaningful work. Her friend, Tolson, was working in Haiti documenting the Haitian people and their environs. After viewing Tolson’s images, Coyle was moved to use some of Tolson’s photographs as a jumping off point for her portraits. Coyle’s focus became painting the faces of the Haitian people affected by their country’s difficulties, especially after the earthquake (January 2010).

The artistic process began with sifting through hundreds of photographs for ones that touched her. She was not just looking at the faces, but also the surrounding context to produce a better understanding of Haiti’s difficult conditions. The portraits exhibit a cross-section of people and places telling a story of struggle, but more importantly hope. Coyle believes the Haitian people use a combination of their faith, humor and simple approach to life as their strength when managing to survive.

Coyle’s process continues as she uses prayer to build her images little by little. She paints the face first, then regularly employs artistic license to construct the environs. She does not copy, but chooses various elements from multiple photographs, or chooses only the elements that tell the story best (leaving out details). Her joy comes from seeing the paintings develop slowly until the portraits tell her they are complete. Coyle’s hope is that the portraits will “speak” to viewers, just as if the person is standing in the same space as the viewer. She wants the viewers to listen and hear the stories of the Haitian people.

During the 1980s, Dianne G. Coyle lived and worked in Madison, Connecticut. Much of her design aesthetic was developed being employed at the Ray Coyle Gallery, a stained glass studio. She briefly studied with Anthony Massaro at the Branford Art Studio and currently utilizes the Don Keene studio in Madison as her working space. A former member of the Madison Art Society, Coyle has shown her work in member shows.

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery’s hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The Gallery and all related events are open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church, and the facility is handicapped accessible. More information may be found at www.spsact.org, click “Community Life” and then “Clare Gallery”.