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F2



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ARTS

THE SUNDAY JOURNAL

GLOBAL IMPACT



Handmade baskets
are from Gantsi
Craft, Botswana.

Santa Fe International Folk Art Market brings
in artists and supports projects around the world

By AURELIO SANCHEZ
Journal Staff Writer

Haitian artist Michée Ramil Remy uses his hands to transform an ugly cast-off 55-gallon steel oil drum into a deeply mysterious and beautiful work of art.

Remy hand cuts and hand chisels whimsical angels, birds and beautiful women in flowing dreadlocks into his sculptures carved from the round ends and metal bodies of the oil drums.

"These (metal sculpture) artists are amazingly talented," said Charlene Cerny, executive director of the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market.

Remy will be among 147 folk artists from 45 countries showing their works next weekend during the sixth annual market. The works can come from a range of media, including cloth, wood, paper, clay, metal and more.

Almost half of the artists at the 2009 show will be new, while other popular artists will return, including basket weavers from Rwanda and textile artists from Afghanistan, Cerny said.

"It would take a lifetime of travel to find and buy the exceptional folk art treasures that are readily available at the market," market founder and folk art expert Judy Espinar said.

Visitors will have an other-world experience, with booths displaying everything from felt rugs from Kyrgyzstan to tribal garments from China. There's exotic food and live entertainment, ranging from Latin rock and Japanese Shigin, to music and dance of Senegal.

The festival also features irresistibly approachable folk artists acting as unofficial ambassadors with fascinating stories to tell, Espinar said.

"We celebrate the world and its cultures," Espinar said.

At the same time, the festival gives artists a chance to change their own lives, and it shows them that their work is much valued, Cerny said.

"We are not only opening doors for these artists in terms of opportunities, but the fair also has a profound impact on how they view themselves," Cerny said.

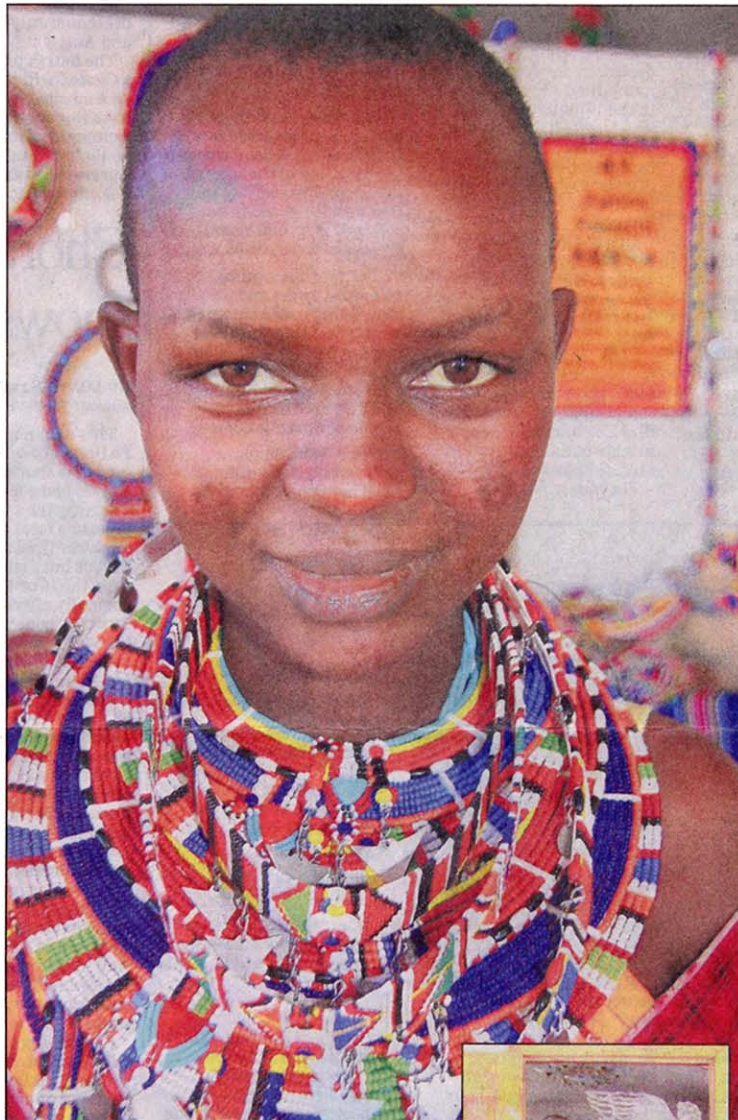
Asked how the festival changes lives, she said proceeds from the market, for example, help build schools, wells and health clinics. They buy food, clothing and medical aid for Sudanese refugee camps, AIDS support in South Africa and financial independence for Afghan women.

For Remy, his metal art does two things: It helps rid his home country of discarded trash left by international oil companies, but more important, it creates a sense of personal and national pride and honor in a country that's sorely in need of both.

Remy is part of a new generation of steel drum artists in Haiti who are gaining international renown for their sculptures paying tribute to Haiti's often tragic and deeply mysterious cultural heritage.

The images in his works reflect on a poverty-stricken Caribbean nation

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Masai bead artist Agnes Papatiti and her husband, Patrick, made their first journey to the United States to participate in the 2008 Folk Art Market.

If you go

WHAT: Santa Fe International Folk Art Market

WHEN: 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday, July 11, and 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, July 12

WHERE: Milner Plaza next to the International Folk Art Museum on Museum Hill, 706 Camino Lejo in Santa Fe

HOW MUCH: Saturday tickets are \$10 in advance, or \$15 at the gate, youths 16 and under free. Sunday is Family Day, with all tickets \$5, youths 16 and under free. Tickets available at all Museum of New Mexico Foundation Gift Shops, National Hispanic Cultural Center, online at www.folkartmarket.org or by calling 877-567-7380

Artist Michée Ramil Remy of Haiti creates metal sculptures out of empty steel oil drums.



Artists hail from around the globe

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steeped in a history of slavery, voodoo, political dictatorships and unrest.

Catastrophic weather and political instability historically plague Haiti.

"But its people have always shown an amazing ability to start over," Cerny said.

Remy and fellow metal artist and countryman Serge Jolimeau, along with metal artist Toyin Folorunso of Nigeria, were recipients of the President Bill Clinton Global Citizen Award, which recognizes artists who demonstrate innovation and

leadership.

Meanwhile, Market spokeswoman Clare Hertel said visitors can also enjoy live shows by international performers. The headliner is San Francisco-based Afro-Cuban singer and percussionist Bobi Céspedes. She will perform at a pre-market free concert at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 9, on the Santa Fe Plaza. Céspedes will also perform at the Artists Welcome Preview and Benefit from 6-8 p.m. on Friday.

Music and dance will continue throughout the weekend on the market stage, with performances

by Matthew Andrae, a Santa Fe Apache singer and songwriter, the Lion Dancers and other groups and individuals, including accomplished world performers making their premieres at the market.

All performances on Saturday and Sunday are free with market admission. For a full list of schedule performances, visit www.folkartmarket.org. The Rail Runner will provide service on Saturday only. Free buses will be available from the South Capitol station to and from the event on Saturday and Sunday.