

**For Immediate Release**  
**7 September 2009**

**How the Arts Contribute To Anti-AIDS Efforts**  
***Learnings from three arts-based AIDS intervention projects in India***

How can art be a tool of education and information sharing? Are artists able to redirect how people think and act? Can art save lives? And how are artists essential to anti-AIDS efforts? These are some of the questions to be deliberated upon at a special dissemination organized by MAKE ART/STOP AIDS, at the Government Hospital of Thoracic Medicine (GHTM), Tambaram, scheduled for Monday, 7 September 2009.

Sharing their perspectives on the issue at the dissemination were Mr. Andrew Simkin, the U.S. Consul General, Chennai, who delivered the Keynote Address; Dr. Revathi, Assistant Project Director, Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society (TANSACS); Dr. C Chandraseker, Superintendent, GHTM and Dr. David Gere, Director, Art|Global Health Center at University of California, Los Angeles.

The dissemination event will offer insights on how the arts contribute to anti-AIDS efforts. The learnings from the three Ford Foundation-funded MAKE ART/STOP AIDS projects in India will be presented to a distinguished audience. The dissemination will also present evidence to showcase the 'power of arts to save lives.'

The day's program begins at GHTM with a Role Play by artists from Chennai-based NGO Nalamdana at the ART Out Patient Department against the backdrop of the ArtMoves exhibits.

Presenting the projects will be: Dr. Samiran Panda from SPARSHA, who will share the learnings from the project, *Art and Testimonial: A unique community-based approach to reducing HIV/AIDS stigma in rural West Bengal*. Parthiv Shah from Centre for Media and Alternative Communication will demonstrate through the *ArtMoves* project how art can be made portable and mobile and taken to people. Nithya Balaji from Nalmdana will trace the evolution and growth of the 'Are You Well–Art in Hospitals' Project at Tambaram. Shakthi Natarajan and Paresh Prasad from New Concept Information Systems will present findings from their recent evaluation of the *Are You Well* project.

A highlight of the day-long program will be a special evening performance for the in-patients at GHTM by Baul singers from West Bengal, Chennai-based shadow puppeteer Selvaraj, and artists from Nalamdana.

An initiative of the Art| Global Health Center at the University of California, Los Angeles, MAKE ART/STOP AIDS is an international network of scholars, artists, and activists committed to ending the global AIDS epidemic.

For more information on these projects or MAKE ART/STOP AIDS, please contact David Gere at [dgere@arts.ucla.edu](mailto:dgere@arts.ucla.edu) or Rajeev Varma at [rajeevmasa@gmail.com](mailto:rajeevmasa@gmail.com), 09811212753. URL: <http://makeartstopaids.org>.