



## **We the People Project**

*We the People Project* is an annual EWI project that gives voice to immigrant, refugee and American-born artists working for cultural integration, economic opportunity, social transformation and community building. Last year, participating artists in the project were invited to interpret the theme, *hope* and *opportunity* as seen through their eyes, and express their thoughts, ideals and vision of a country that embraces the arts and celebrates innovation, diversity and creativity.

This year we are honored to present *We the People Project 2010: Art for Human Rights* at the Amnesty International Human Rights Art Festival as a way to bring to the public art and stories that inspire multicultural dialogue and enhance understanding and respect between people of all cultures.

During the course of the three days over 35 immigrant and refugee artist members and graduates of Empowered Women International's business incubator together with students, activists, and educators, will participate in a series of community events sponsored by Empowered Women International. The program includes hands-on art making workshops (needlework, paintings, storybooks, installation works) for children and families, and panels of discussions and talks on issues related to human rights, women's rights, immigration and the role of art in preserving and celebrating cultural heritage, telling our stories and connecting people of diverse backgrounds, teaching history and honoring our past, present and the future. EWI artist and member of the board of directors, Kate Campbell Stevenson will present on Saturday, April 24, at 7 pm one-hour performance, *Petticoats in Politics*.

A special feature of Empowered Women International's participation in this festival is the art installation project, *We the People 2010: Art for Human Rights*. Over 10 artists, members of the EWI have volunteered to produce a series of artistically embellished life-size cutouts/silhouettes representing human rights activists, suffragist women, women journalist activists, activists against domestic violence and peacemakers. Each artwork will tell the story of an activist and how their actions have transformed our society and continue to inspire social change in our country and around the world. The artworks will be placed in selected venues in downtown Silver Spring during the festival.

Community members and event participants will be invited to vote on best installation piece, which will determine the People's Choice Award. EWI and HRAF have partnered to offer a prize of \$500 for the People's Choice Award (voted best in show by community members) and 3 honorable mentions (gift certificates and award plaques). In addition, EWI will present each participating artist in We the People Project 2010 with certificates of merit, and recognition on EWI's website and through media publicity. A panel of discussion with participating artists will be presented on Sunday, April 25, 4-5:30 pm. The awards and certificates will be handed out after this panel.

### **About EWI**

Empowered Women International is a non-profit organization that helps immigrant and refugee women in the Greater DC Metro area integrate, participate as new citizens, and become self-sufficient by using the arts as an economic driver and a catalyst for social and cultural integration.

EWI strives to educate people about cultures, artistic heritages and traditions embedded in immigrant women's lives and history. EWI raises awareness about immigrant women's efforts to overcome cultural differences and economic boundaries by choosing the arts as a universal language of self-expression meant to bridge the gaps that push people apart. We believe **art** is the medium for promoting goodwill, lasting friendships,

and harmony among the different peoples who make up the fabric of metro DC and the nation.

EWI was created in 2002 by Romanian immigrant, former journalist, and social entrepreneur, Marga Fripp, who immigrated in the aftermath of 9-11. Marga experienced firsthand the plight of immigrant women struggling to establish a new life, find work opportunities and integrate into the US economy and culture. She created EWI to help immigrant and refugee women marshal their talents, skills, artistic and cultural assets to integrate in their communities and generate work and entrepreneurial opportunities. More at [www.ewint.org](http://www.ewint.org)