

WORLD REFUGEE DAY ON CANVAS

Posted by *Joanna* on June 21, 2011 · 2 Comments



It was World Refugee Day yesterday, when advocacy groups, resettlement programs and survivors of displacement reflected on stories of survival and the challenges ahead for the over 15 million refugees still searching for home.

At the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (*USCRI*), staff members reflected on another huge number as well: 100 years of serving refugees and immigrants seeking resettlement in the United States. In order to put their history into perspective and remember all that they've accomplished in the last century, USCRI commissioned 10 paintings by award-winning muralist Joel Bergner to portray each of the 10 decades of the organization's work.



In the exhibit, entitled "Out of Many One," Bergner depicts the refugee experience using photographs of USCRI's history, handmade stencils of cultural patterns, and personal experience. His family immigrated to the United States after fleeing the Russian pogroms, and he has worked with international refugees and at-risk immigrant youth for many years.

Showing the storylines of so many people groups and moments in history can be "really challenging" according to USCRI's Development Officer Zoann Murphy. "So often what you see is someone in total distress, and that's a piece – it's an important piece – but the refugees that come to the US...bring with them a lot of endurance and contributions."

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USCRI used the paintings to make a poster series for their 33 partner agencies around the United States. They are still deciding what to do with the original artwork.



Learn more about the artist and his vision for the works.


View the *entire collection*.

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2 Responses to “World Refugee Day On Canvas”

Joan says:

June 21, 2011 at 10:41 am

Nice Job!

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Leah Thomason Bromberg says:

June 21, 2011 at 5:26 pm

This is awesome.

It reminded me immediately of an article in the NY Times about the new wave of art in Iraq—all these people dealing with turbulent times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/19/world/asia/19iraq.html>

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