

ARTCRAWL HARLEM



Averlyn speaks to tour participants at Canvas Paper and Stone Gallery * Jacqueline Orange (center) and Averlyn (right) pose with raffle winners * Birds-eye view of the ArtCrawl Reception at the Schomburg Library for Research in Black Culture.

The first bus guided tour of Harlem's contemporary art galleries which was held on Sunday, April 13 was a resounding success. Participants enjoyed a tour with knowledgeable gallery owners who discoursed on contemporary art, past and present, and passionate artists who spoke about their creative process. A post event survey revealed that more than 90% of the participants described the event as "excellent" and "interesting"; many said they would recommend the tour to friends. Gallery stops which included Canvas Paper and Stone Gallery, Essie Green Gallery, Hamilton Landmark Galleries, Heath Gallery, Gallery M, Tribal Spears Gallery and The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, offered something for everyone with work by artists including Romare Bearden, Francks Décéus, Thomas Heath, Charly Palmer, and Chris Olifi. After the tour the participants and gallery staff enjoyed a veritable feast at The Schomburg Center with hot hors d'oeuvres provided by Amor Cubano to the sounds of Cuban music in the background. A wine tasting provided by JTE Spirits was well received and added to

the festive feeling of the reception.

The objective of the ArtCrawl, to expose the greater New York area to Harlem's art galleries, was met when one visitor from Forest Hills, NY described the tour as "very informative and a great chance to find great spots I might not have found on my own." Expectations were surpassed when work by Décéus was sold at Canvas Paper and Stone Gallery. Participants came from as far away as Virginia to explore the various art galleries and purchase art. From Nyack a visitor found the ArtCrawl Harlem tour "unique and enjoyable" while a Harlem resident found it "excellent, well organized and informative." Based on the overwhelmingly positive response of survey participants, another ArtCrawl Harlem tour is being planned to kick off the fall gallery season.

Each gallery provided a singular environment: Canvas Paper and Stone featured two established artists who deconstruct political identity and who are staples at the National Black Fine Art Show. Founded in 1986, Gallery M since 2000 has been a leading force in Harlem for the representation of

exceptional contemporary established and emerging artists. Heath Gallery, located in a landmark townhouse in Central Harlem's historic Mount Morris Park district featured the works of Patrick-Earl Barnes and Thomas Heath and is home to the Harlem Gallery Coalition and the Institute for Emerging Artists. Hamilton Landmark Galleries uses its exhibitions to meet its threefold mission: the presentation of fine art, the development of contemporary artists, and the documentation of fine art collections. Essie Green Galleries, while focusing on the works of the masters, as dealers specialize in building the collections of prominent art enthusiasts from the worlds of business, finance, public service and entertainment. Participating galleries are members of the Harlem Gallery Coalition.

Visitors were escorted by tour guides, intimately aware of the rich cultural offerings of Harlem, to each venue where they participated in conversations with gallery staff and artists. In between galleries participants were treated to a visual tour of Harlem's rich historic and cultural sites such as the Apollo Theatre, Abyssinian Church, the Studio Muse-

um, and Marcus Garvey Park. Art sightings included the mosaic mural on the Capital One Bank Building at 125th Street and Frederick Douglass Blvd; Harriet Tubman sculpture at Frederick Douglass and West 122nd Street; Adam Clayton Powell sculpture at the Harlem State Office Building, the Studio Museum of Harlem and the Tree of Hope III sculpture at Adam Clayton Powell Blvd and West 131st Street.

A Taste of Harlem Food and Cultural Tours were created to introduce NYC residents and tourists to Harlem culture by way of its food and history. A food and culture enthusiast, the founder Jacqueline Orange tastes her way through 13 miles of Harlem enjoying soul food, and the cuisines of the Caribbean, Africa and Italy that make Harlem the Gumbo of Soul. Jacqueline has created this business by taking people to small shops, homes, galleries and locations while simultaneously giving them a taste of Harlem allowing people to go beyond the usual sightseeing to experience a destination more intimately.