



Art Gallery

CONTEMPORARY TRIBAL MARKINGS A PORTRAIT SERIES AT THE NEW JERSEY ARTS INCUBATOR GALLERY

West Orange, New Jersey, November 1, 2010 - The New Jersey Arts Incubator is proud to present **Contemporary Tribal Markings**. The newest exhibit, curated by Lorena La Grassa, is an on-going collaborative effort between photographer Tony Cordoza and visual artist Gina Rivas-Velasquez. The first edition of the exhibit debuted this past summer at the Iron Works Gallery in Orange, NJ as part of Valley Arts' 6th Art Loop to rave reviews.

The **Contemporary Tribal Markings** exhibit will be on display from November 13 – January 8, 2011 at the New Jersey Arts Incubator Gallery located at 495 Prospect Avenue, Essex Green on the Courtyard. Just 'follow the art' down the walkway to the AMC Cinema entrance and turn right at the beautiful new mural. **Meet the artists reception Saturday, November 13th from 5pm – 8pm. The gallery is open Saturday and Sundays 1pm – 5pm and by appointment.**

In April of 2010, Tony was preparing to shoot a new portrait series when his wife Judy mentioned that her friend Gina had just added "Face-Tag," or face and body painting, to the list of services her company offered. Judy suggested that they work together. Gina's daring and dramatic artwork is heavily influenced by her rich Mexican and Creole heritage so a tribal theme for the series was undisputed. She was to design a collection of face art and Tony was to capture it as she brought it to life.

Gina researched tribal markings from Africa, South America and Australia looking for inspiration and visualizing what her subjects would look like. Tony gave Gina creative license, but had one specific request... black and white paint only. No color, no glitter, no sparkles. As the models were transformed, it became clear how each person brought something different to the series. They became warriors, evoking inner grit and charm. Some snarled and growled at the lens while others cried or simply stared. For some the experience was comical, for others cathartic.

This is the evolution of the portrait. Since the artwork is inspired and not historical, the series was entitled **Contemporary Tribal Markings**. Each tribal design is indicative of how one might identify oneself. The face we put on changes simultaneously with our moods, and our tribes are formed based on our relationships, our lifestyles and the roles we play. An artist's tribal marking is different than the lawyer's, whose marking is different from the teacher's, whose is different from the student's.

Contemporary Tribal Markings.... what tribe are you in?

For this Incubator Gallery exhibit Gina Rivas-Velesques will also bring a series of her original paintings inspired by the same theme.

***The Incubator Galley** presents a year-round schedule of changing exhibitions devoted to contemporary arts. The mission of the Incubator Galley is to curate and present the work of emerging and established artists with a commitment to providing exhibition programming with depth and relevance to multiple disciplinary perspectives and a diverse community audience. In particular, the gallery strives to provide an environment dedicated to inspiration and culture enrichment.*

***The New Jersey Arts Incubator's** mission is the economic development of artists and arts organizations through technical assistance, employment, marketing, programming, performance, and education in an effort to support, sustain, and promote viable arts agencies to act as economic drivers in communities across the State of New Jersey.*

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