



COMMUNITY RELEASE
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In Search of Artists from Crown Heights and Beyond to Join Us in Celebrating Community and Rejecting Violence

The S.O.S. Crown Heights (Save Our Streets) program invites artists of all ages to participate in the Second Annual "Arts to End Violence" Contest (deadline April 5th) and Festival (May 19th-24th 2012.) During the festival, art will be displayed publically in businesses, galleries, and schools in the neighborhood to stimulate conversations about nonviolence and community building and demonstrate the creativity and beauty of the neighborhood.

Shootings have been dramatically reduced in the S.O.S. target area in the past two years, from 23 incidents in 2010 to only 12 in 2011. Outreach Worker Supervisor Lavon Walker says that "everyone in the neighborhood has a role to play in ending gun violence." Unifying the community to stand against gun violence is central to the work of S.O.S.

Another part of the S.O.S. program is to recruit young people to spread the message that gun violence is not acceptable. Marlon Peterson, director of **Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets (YO S.O.S.)**, believes that "many young people have powerful and creative messages of anti-violence they want to share. They have the power to influence their peers."

Artists of all ages are invited to submit art in any genre or medium. Youth artists (19 and younger) are especially encouraged to submit art in three categories for the opportunity to win **cash prizes: 2-dimensional art, video shorts, and t-shirt designs.** The public will vote on the best works in these categories during the festival to determine the winners of the cash prizes. **Submissions are due by April 5th.** The winning artists will be announced **during "Increase the Peace" week, June 3rd-June 10th.**

For more info about Arts to End Violence visit www.artstoendviolence.tumblr.com.

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The Save Our Streets Crown Heights Team