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# TOUCHSTONEGALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 6 – September 29, 2013.

Preview: September 4-5, 2013;

## ReBirth

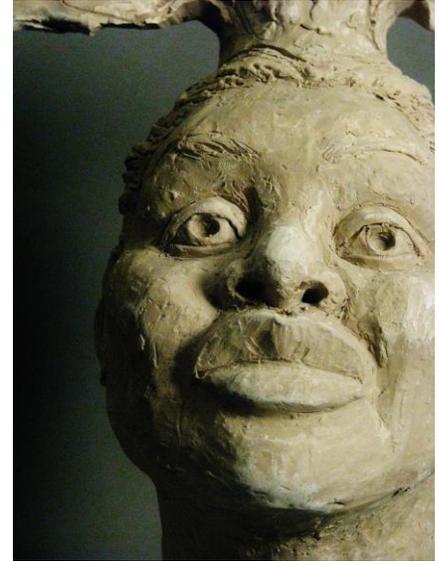
**JANATHEL SHAW**

**Opening Reception: September 6, 6pm-8:30pm.**

Artist Talk and Encore Party:

September 21, 4-6:30pm.

The idea of renewal was brought on by a variety of catalysts which inspired this new body of work. In Buddhism rebirth arises from previous actions or events that inevitably create a domino effect. The tumble results in a rebirth/awakening of mind and spirit that affect how we interact on a broader level. In this series, I'm targeting individual growth and societal practices that have caused us to re-evaluate our collective conscious.



In *Fallen Youth*, my desire is to have the viewer pause to consider what a young black male feels when he is devalued, profiled - the emotional and physical costs of street life - the ultimate damage of racism. This is a familiar exploration in my work. As a mother and educator the subject hits very close to home. I like to use my art to initiate critical discussion.

*ReBirth* salutes the resurgence of the phoenix. This figure represents a mature woman re-evaluating her goals. As she purges herself of regrets, doubts and negative factors, she embraces the process of moving forward. The broad, bold finger marks and textures represent the layers accumulated from living a full life. As she looks upward with joyful contemplation, her wings slowly unfurl in anticipation.

Each piece in the show tells a narrative. A few works make an unmistakable statement. Others will require you to seek the answer through careful scrutiny.

Another aspect of the theme of *ReBirth* is that of having time to sequester myself in my studio. It has proven a revival of the creative spirit. I have relished both the frustration of engaging in the ideation process and just getting down to mastering my craft. I love working with clay because it is a remarkably malleable and yet frustrating medium to manipulate. My hands and fingers woo and mold the clay. The stoneware is arranged by type, and like a master chef, I select which one will better suit my purpose. The act of squeezing, pushing, scraping, pounding, carving, hollowing, spritzing, rebuilding, and – yes, repairing - bring me contentment.



Drawing is a natural part of the whole process, in the beginning and throughout the design phase. You will find drawn marks on the clay as well as on paper. Drawn marks take on the form of either a chaotic dance or a controlled and layered product. My portrait drawings explore the same theme of the rebirth. Each person is shown in the act of reawakening.

Images: (top) *ReBirth*, Janathel Shaw, stoneware and (bottom) *Fallen Youth*, Janathel Shaw, stoneware.

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