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Lynne Williamson, 860-278-2044 x251, [lynne.williamson@icrweb.org](mailto:lynne.williamson@icrweb.org)

**Find Exquisite Decorative Arts and Gifts at Unique Arts Marketplace**

Hartford, CT – NOVEMBER 7, 2011 – An exciting array of artists from ethnic communities will demonstrate and sell their crafts at a folk artists' Marketplace on **Saturday, November 12, 2010 from 11 am to 4 pm** at The Institute for Community Research (ICR), 2 Hartford Square West, Suite 100 in Hartford, CT. The event, which is free and open to the public, will feature carpet weavers, basket makers, crochet artists, embroiderers, henna painters, and jewelry makers. Artists represent countries of origin including Sri Lanka, Lithuania, Somalia, Burma, Iran, Iraq, Romania, and Laos, and are all living in the Greater Hartford area now. Organized by ICR's CT Cultural Heritage Arts Program (CHAP), the Marketplace is part of Hartford Open Studios Weekend, a creative showcase for local artists held annually in Hartford.

"We are happy to present this opportunity during Hartford Open Studios Weekend for rarely seen artists to meet the public and showcase their work, all of which is unusual, beautiful, and exquisitely made," says CHAP Director Lynne Williamson.

CHAP has developed a collaborative initiative to encourage learning and production of traditional crafts among the many immigrant communities in the Greater Hartford area and across the state. A number of the artists have had success demonstrating and selling their work at area venues including the Billings Forge and North End Farmers Markets and the Hillstead Museum, and several of the pieces have won prizes for craftsmanship. "This effort is really important for ICR because part of our mission is to work with local communities whose voices are not often heard, and who are hoping to expand their access to cultural resources," says ICR Executive Director Margaret Weeks, Ph.D.

At this time of year, the Marketplace is a great place to find special holiday gifts while supporting local artists in their new venture. Visitors to the marketplace will also be able to view the beautiful exhibit *Rugs of Remembrance: Bosnian Weaving in Hartford* now on display in ICR's Gallery. For more information, contact Lynne Williamson at 860-278-2044 ext. 251 or [Lynne.Williamson@icrweb.org](mailto:Lynne.Williamson@icrweb.org)

Photographs are available for press use.

The Institute for Community Research is an independent research institute that conducts applied research and supports community enhancement programs on issues of health, education and cultural heritage. Its Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program encourages and promotes traditional artists and their communities through an active process of documentation, technical assistance, and public presentations to bring their work and the history of their communities to new audiences. Project supporters include the Aurora Foundation for Women and Girls, the National Endowment for the Arts, the City of Hartford, the Greater Hartford Arts Council through contributors to the United Arts campaign, and the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.

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