FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Philip Hare's "Shots & Prayers" Confronts the Global Persecution of Queer Lives

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL, Nova Scotia (June 18, 2026) – ARTSPLACE Gallery presents "Shots & Prayers", a new installation by Nova Scotia artist Philip Hare, on view from August 1 through September 12, 2026. The exhibition confronts the ongoing criminalization and violence faced by LGBTQ+ people in over 60 countries worldwide, pairing hard statistical documentation with a large-scale textile work of striking colour and defiant joy.

At the heart of the installation is a tension between two kinds of witness. One wall of the gallery holds pages of statistics compiled by Hare documenting the legal status and state-sanctioned treatment of LGBTQ+ people in 55 countries, jurisdictions where being gay or trans can mean imprisonment, torture, or death. The data is presented plainly, without graphic imagery, and its cumulative weight conveys the message effectively.

Facing that documentation is Hare's large hand-stitched textile assemblage: exuberant and unambiguously queer. Made from felt, buttons and muslin, the work draws on a long tradition of queer art-making as survival and resistance. The title echoes the AIDS-era dismissal of queer suffering with hollow consolation, "thoughts and prayers", and reclaims that historical moment as a source of collective resilience.

"Our response brought the queer community together in an unprecedented way," Hare has written of that period. "We fought back. We marched. We held each other." The textile carries that inheritance forward.

"Researching the treatment of LGBTQ+ people around the world has been very challenging and deeply disturbing," says Hare. "These were people who just wanted to live their lives. Queer folk around the world face a disturbing rise in violence. We need to respond now more than ever."

Gallery Director Sophie Paskins notes that the exhibition speaks directly to the gallery's commitment to work that is both locally rooted and outward-looking. "Philip's practice has long engaged with queer politics and community, but "Shots & Prayers" asks us to hold a much larger picture in mind, one that implicates not only distant governments but also the ongoing debates around gender, sexuality, and belonging taking place within Canadian society."

Board member Ted Lind sees the installation as an opportunity for the local community to engage with something that may feel geographically distant but is not. "This exhibition gives our community a place to sit with difficult realities and to feel the force of art as a genuine response to injustice. Philip's textile work is generous and alive, it invites you in even as the statistics around it demand a reckoning."

"Shots & Prayers" opening reception, Sat. August 1, 2026, 12-2 p.m. Light refreshments served, all welcome. Exhibition continues through September 12.

Philip Hare is a multi-disciplinary artist, his practice is primarily textile-based. He studied silk-screen printing at OCAD and Open Studio in Toronto. Hare became involved in queer politics in the mid-1980s; phallic imagery and political commentary through a queer lens have been prominent features of his work since. His large hand-stitched assemblages have been exhibited across Canada.

ARTSPLACE is a public Art Gallery that is operated by the Annapolis Region Community Arts Council, a registered charitable, community organization dedicated to encouraging and promoting the arts. Supported through the Province of Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts.

ARTSPLACE Gallery is located at 396 St. George Street in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

For more information please contact:
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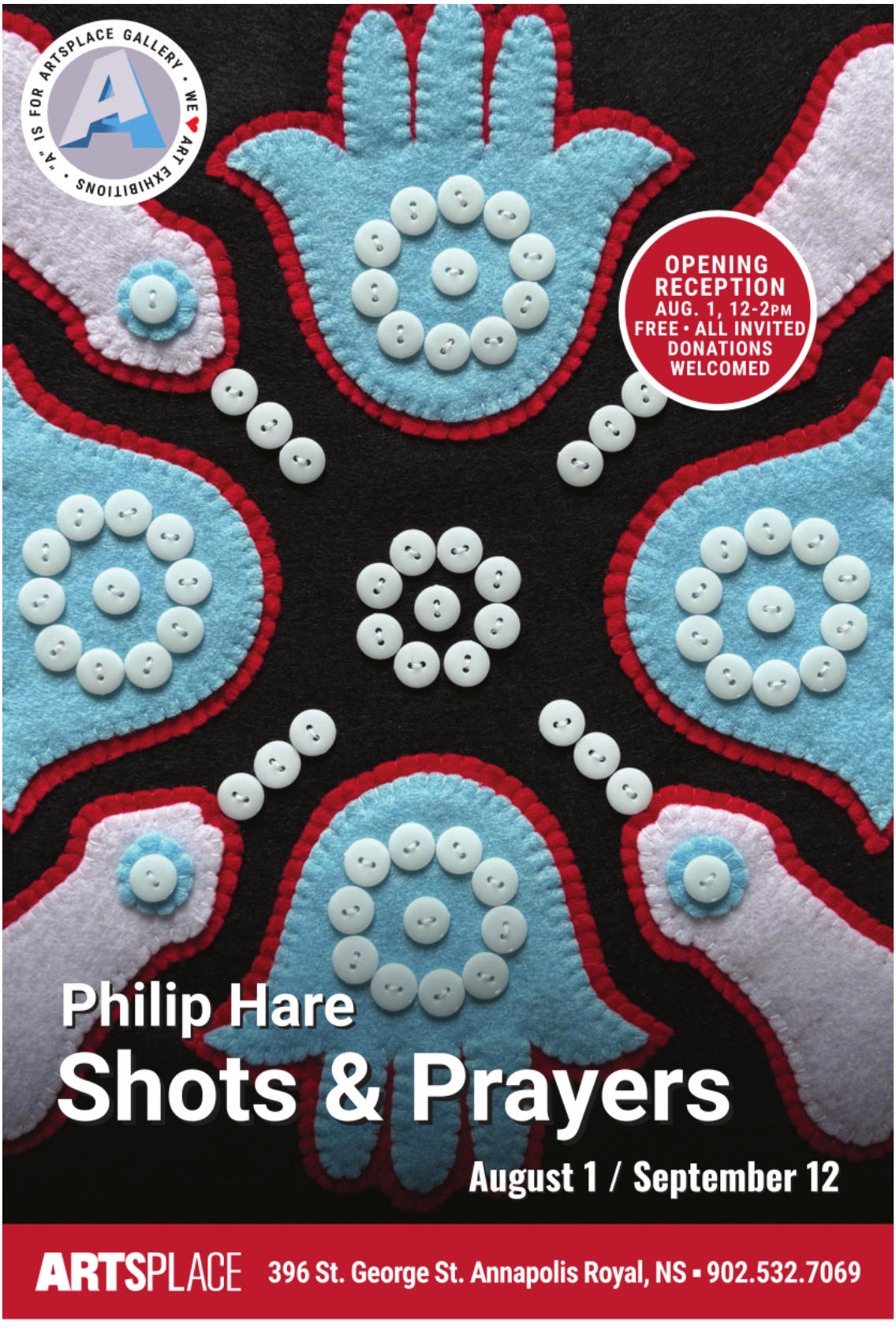
Facebook: ARTSPLACEGallery / Instagram: arcac.artsplace



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