



Harlem
Community
Development
Corporation

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HARLEM CDC AND PARTNERS HOST RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE WINNING HARLEM RIVER PARK ARTWORK AND ARTISTS

Images of the six banners and 15 plaques created by artists from the Greater Harlem community will be on display at the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building until June 13

Harlem Community Development Corporation (HCDC) today announced the opening of a month-long gallery exhibition of images by local artists whose works were selected by members of HCDC and the Harlem River Park Task Force (HRPTF) to be placed in and around the Harlem River Park waterfront esplanade.

The Harlem River Park Task Force's plaque project originated in 2008, beginning with a jury comprised of 20 community-based artists, curators, art collectors and art aficionados to review the artists' submissions. The Task Force then hired the 15 highest-ranking artists from the jury selection process and worked with them and a curator to create and finalize original artwork for the 9.5-by-15-inch etched steel plaques that will be mounted on the waterfront railing facing "Artist's Cove" in Harlem River Park near East 139th Street.

In 2010, the HRPTF enlisted its large-scale mural partner, Creative Arts Workshops for Kids (CAW), to create 3-by-8-foot banners for installation on the lamppost standards leading into Harlem River Park. CAW—interested in expanding its repertoire—engaged teaching artist Shannon Moran and 12 local school students from the Stanley M. Issacs Neighborhood Center to create six original images that provide a visual representation of history, philosophy, ethics, and oral literature, as well as moral, social, religious, political and aesthetic principles.

"Harlem River Park is not only a park, it is a cultural destination. With art from world-renowned artists, local artists and members of the community, it has quickly become akin to an outdoor museum and flash photography is entirely encouraged! I am so proud of the Harlem Community Development Corporation, which helped guide this project from its inception to the beautiful green reality we see today," said Assemblyman Keith Wright of Harlem, Chairman of the Harlem Community Development Corporation. "The artists who put their time and soul

into these projects deserve the thanks of the Harlem community and I am so grateful for their efforts on behalf of the neighborhoods of Northern Manhattan.”

“These art projects are prime examples of what can be done when art, youth employment and community cultures are brought together,” said Richard Touissant, Chairman of the Arts Committee of the Harlem River Park Task Force. “The result is the enduring beautification of the Harlem River Park waterfront and street entrances to the park.”

“The banners were created not only with the intent to make beautiful work, but to design images that would positively advertise the Harlem River Park Task Force's devotion to the community,” said Brian Ricklin, Executive Director of the Creative Arts Workshop for Kids. “The students had a transformative experience learning about the rich cultural history of Harlem and East Harlem and developing the technical tools and creative expression to design and create such striking banner imagery. In addition to the spectacular work product, evaluations revealed that 11 of out the 12 kids perceived they had made a significant contribution to the community and that such contribution was appreciated.”

"Being a part of the plaque project has been an artistic adventure! The project has brought participating artists closer together—allowing us to share in a common creative endeavor, while developing a relationship with Harlem River Park and the layered, complex process of its development,” said featured artist Misha McGlown. “I feel honored to work alongside neighboring artists whom I have long respected and admired and, moreover, to have been selected to engage in the making of this part of Harlem's history.”

The Harlem CDC and the HRPTF shared project management for this initiative and hired outside curators to attract the artists and frame the final submissions for the plaque project. Furthermore, HRPTF raised \$20,000 to fund the outreach, artists and curators for the plaque project. HCDC, HRPTF and CAW worked collaboratively on the management of the banners project. The featured works will be on display until June 13, 2011 by appointment only. Call (212) 949-5289 for details.

Harlem Community Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Empire State Development Corporation, serves the greater Harlem community through planning and implementing a range of community development and revitalization initiatives for restoring Upper Manhattan as an economically stable and culturally vibrant community. For more information on Harlem CDC and its role in Harlem River Park, please visit

http://www.harlemcdc.org/Planning/planning_hr_park.htm.



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