

Borough's creativity on display at Queens Art Intervention Day

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QAI queens art intervention september 27th 2014 (rain date october 4th)

QAI Queens Art Intervention a Rego Park Green Alliance event
www.regoparkgreenalliance.org

Queens' cultural scene will reclaim the spotlight as things get downright edgy with unexpected happenings and creative jolts in the form of 30 public art installations and performance pieces which will pop up across the borough during Saturday's Queens Art Intervention Day.

The Rego Park Green Alliance Studio requested proposals from New Yorkers who had something creative to say and received more than 150 responses.

"RPGA is all about using creativity to address community issues. Some communities feel that they are not a part of the creative goings on. They feel like only some neighborhoods are seen as hubs of creativity," said Yvonne Shortt, the nonprofit's executive director. "We think this program will also bring economic development to the fabulous borough of Queens."

RPGA selected 30 projects for this weekend's pilot program, which Shortt, who started the group six years ago, hopes will become a yearly event.

Designed to address community issues and shake things up a bit, Queens-style, the unique projects -- some whimsical but all with a message to share -- were conjured by creative types, mostly from Queens, who have a desire to connect with the public.

Artist Blanka Amezkua hopes to gather Astoria residents together to create a piece called "Pipe Cleaner."

Amezkua, who lives in the Bronx, will begin on 31st Street around 11 a.m. and wander along Ditmars Boulevard depositing a trail of multi-colored pipe cleaners twisted together, like a post-modern Gretel sans Hansel, ending her journey under the Hell Gate Bridge around 2 p.m.

The final piece, which the artist called a message of hope, possibility and interconnectedness, will be donated to the Queens Library or another Astoria non-profit.

Shortt's group plans to present its cow installation titled "MooMoo."

"It draws attention to our past as a pastoral land, while looking at the present with its 3D printed hooves and ears," said Shortt. "She will be a pop-up installation around Queens in a variety of neighborhoods."

Another one of RPGA Studio's pieces is focused on changing behaviors of motorists, pedestrians and cyclists and the dangers along Queens Boulevard in Forest Hills.

Stat Girl, a super hero created by RPGA, will be in schools and on the streets giving out statistical data about dangerous intersections.



Deborah Wasserman's intervention FLOWAGE at Travers Park, Queens, NYC, Sept 2014

Another intervention to look for is FLOWAGE, which will appear at Travers Park Play Street in Jackson Heights between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Born in Sao Paulo, Brazil and raised in Israel, Brooklyn artist Deborah Wasserman's project is made up of hundreds of pairs of girls' shoes.

"This joyful and life celebrating installation represents my respect, admiration and love for women -- small and little -- worldwide," said Wasserman.

A mother with two daughters, Wasserman saved every single pair of shoes they have worn since birth.

"For me, these shoes serve as a metaphor for their growth and mine, as well as our walk through time," she said. "The shoes track the growth of my children and represent the journey in time and space that they are taking, as they continually grow and mature."

In Whitestone at the Waldbaum's Shopping Center located at 153-01 10th Ave., students will read from bound works of original poetry as part of H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths Poetry Reading

The Bronx-based non-profit -- an acronym for health, education, academic, life skills, training and help -- fills the gap left by after-school programs and other mentor organizations across the city by providing various workshops to assist young people in a variety of areas. It also helps place students in appropriate internships and encourages them to give back to the community.

Pop-up Inter-Generational Collaboration in Laurelton will discuss, through photos and video, community members' concerns regarding changes they want to see along Merrick Boulevard, while the Youth Mural at 30-02 12th St. in Astoria hopes to promote and inspire peace in the Middle East.

Shortt said it's important to have creative programs across Queens that benefit all communities, as well as the artists, who get the chance to network and help each other by sharing ideas, materials and experiences.