

Artist Alice Mizrachi Ends Year-Long Staten Island Artist in Residence with Giant Mental Health Awareness Mural

Public School 22 mural one of three July projects for fine artist and muralist Alice Mizrachi

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Art heals, art educates, art brings communities together.

Famed muralist and fine artist [Alice Mizrachi](#) this month capped a year-long stint as artist in residence with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOH) with the construction of a giant mural on the famed Public School 22 in Staten Island's Graniteville neighborhood.

The 2,950-square-foot mural was a joint effort of the DOH, the New York City Mural Arts Project, PS 22, Graniteville residents and Venture House, a Staten Island clubhouse that provides a support community for people living with mental illness. Mizrachi facilitated the discussion as the groups chose images that worked to de-stigmatize mental-health and increased awareness around the issue. Alice then sketched a design for the mural, which would go on two adjoining, massive walls at the school.

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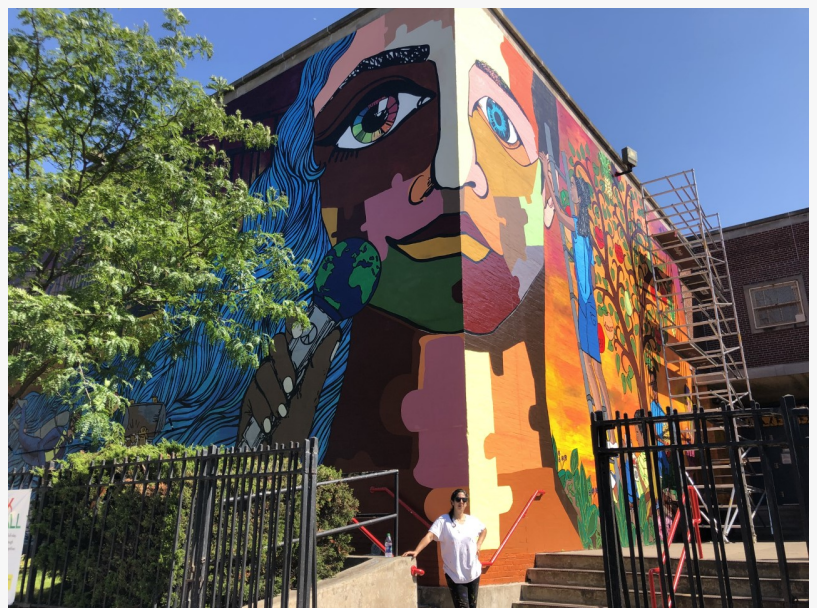
Alice Mizrachi

healthy using certain techniques like art. We talked about activities to become healthy and how to create awareness that just because you're mentally ill doesn't mean you have to be isolated or unappreciated.

Mizrachi conducted weekly art workshops with mental health peers (people living with the illness), students, their parents, and community members, where they refined the design.

Based on the weekly meetings with the mental health peers, Alice used multiple revisions to refine the concept.

The final design shows puzzle pieces that make up a portrait of a woman on one side and a man on the adjoining wall. “We wanted to focus on how we become a connected community through



The completed PS 22 mural

our different personalities and personas, whether they are healthy or not,” Mizrachi said.

Before it was installed, her design was approved by all member groups. PS 22 is also home to one of the most celebrated children’s choirs in the country.

“The collaborative process is something you have to embrace when you work like this,” Mizrachi said. “I guide participants through the design process while leaving space for what unfolds during the discovery process. It’s delightful to work with people who know very little about creating art but add suggestions based on their intuition and feelings.

“But that’s also the beauty of working with groups,” she said. “You have to be open to what other people bring to the table. I am so versed in arts I might not see something so obvious, something I might overlook because it’s so simple. At times it can be frustrating, but the reward of being able to get different perspectives, that’s just such a blessing.

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It was a busy month for Mizrachi, who mounted two other murals in the city; a temporary one in, Williamsburg, Brooklyn as part of a Proactiv skincare

campaign with the media company CNX as part of an anti-shaming campaign, and a permanent mural in the courtyard of the [Merchants River House](#) Restaurant in Manhattan’s Battery Park neighborhood.

The Merchants mural is “a floral design that creates a calm, peaceful feeling for folks to enjoy while they eat,” Mizrachi said.

Conde Nast and CNX hired Mizrachi after canvassing her website and Instagram page.

Unlike most of her projects, a third company, Colossal Media, was hired to paint the sixty-foot high, twenty-foot wide mural on the wall, located at North 12th and Berry streets, in Brooklyn’s Williamsburg neighborhood.

Phase 1 of the campaign, called “Paint Positivity; #Because Words Matter,” began online, with the company inviting people to list the hateful words they heard others say about their skin.

Those words were put on the mural first, before participants were invited to help “paint out the hate” in Phase 2.

Days later Mizrachi’s concept, a beautiful, earth Goddess-like woman, covered the space above the hateful words. The unpainted bottom of the mural was left in black and white for



Alice with the Merchants River House courtyard mural



Kendall Jenner in front of Proactiv mural

participants and community members to fill in.. “They wanted a serene, vibrant woman, someone who felt good about herself,” Mizrachi said.

Finally, the public was invited to paint over the hateful words, leaving only the positive message.

Proactive spokesperson Kendall Jenner was on hand for a photo shoot, as well as local media.

Mizrachi’s busy work schedule promises to continue this fall , with a solo exhibition alongside a women’s group exhibition she curated. That show, titled “EVOLUTION.” It will open on September 26th at The Andrew Freedman Home in the Bronx.
Stay tuned!

To see more of Alice’s work:

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