

Alice Mizrachi's "Renaissance Women" Sculpture Debuts in Manhattan's Marcus Garvey Park

Famed muralist Alice Mizrachi's creates a hand forged, steel sculpture, her first, as a tribute to the women of the Harlem Renaissance.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA, October 22, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The pandemic may have delayed her arrival, but "Renaissance Women," artist [Alice Mizrachi](#)'s tribute to the women of the Harlem Renaissance, has finally debuted in Harlem's famed Marcus Garvey Park.

The hand forged steel sculpture was formally installed Saturday, Sept. 16th on a grassy meadow near the corner of 124th Street and Fifth Avenue, west of the park's aquatic center.

"For me, this is so significant to have my piece in this park, which has such rich cultural history," Mizrachi said. "I could not ask for a better location. It feels like the perfect place for it."

The piece evokes Harlem jazz icon Billie Holiday's smile but "is representative of all of the women of the Harlem Renaissance, from Zora Neale Hurston to Dorothy West," Mizrachi said. Fashioned in Mizrachi's signature single line style, it will remain at that location until August 2022, before being moved to a permanent site.

Mizrachi has enjoyed success in other art genres – she has designed murals across the United States and for international clients in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Tel Aviv. A Christian Siriano jacket and train Mizrachi accessorized for singer Jennifer Nettles was a hit at the 2019 Country Music Association Awards in Nashville.

"Renaissance Women" is her first sculpture. Hand forged from Mizrachi's design in a Hudson



Artist Alice Mizrachi with her "Renaissance Women" sculpture in Marcus Garvey Park. Photo by Christelo Gerard.

Valley foundry, it is painted in silver enamel.

“My dad, Jacob Mizrachi, is an auto body man and all of my life I have watched him bending metal, so initially I wanted to be a sculptor,” Mizrachi said. “In (Parsons School of Design) I mainly focused on painting and drawing, but I always had this idea of wanting to develop a sculpture.

“So this is like a dream come true,” she said. “I feel really good about it.”

Joining Mizrachi at the ceremony were her father, husband Joel Blenz, brother, Eli, sister in law Avital, mentor Russell Goings, and members of the Harlem Arts Alliance and the [Marcus Garvey Park Alliance](#). A lively jazz quartet provided background music as well wishers welcomed the park’s newest arrival.



Alice Mizrachi and her father, Jacob, at the Renaissance Women debut. Photo by Christelo Gerard.

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West and 120th Street.

“It’s not a common thing to see women represented” in public art, said Connie Lee, the Alliance’s immediate past president who met with Mizrachi two years ago to get the project off the ground. “It’s also not common to see abstract, contemporary 21st century artists doing this work.

“We need more of this type of thing,” Lee said. “Monuments need to change; they need to be different. We don’t need stuffy old statues that no one looks at after three months.”

Alliance President Bradley agreed, noting that public art brings people into the park that her group and residents have worked hard over the years to make safe and accessible.

“Not many women get the recognition they deserve for the role they played during the Harlem Renaissance,” said Marcus Garvey Park Alliance Co-founder and President Valerie Jo Bradley. “This statue is celebrating the women who helped make the Harlem Renaissance what it was.”

Bradley said the sculpture is part of the Alliance’s Art in the Park program and is the first depicting a woman to be installed in the 20-acre park, which is bordered by 124th Street, Mount Morris Park Avenue, Mount Morris Park

“At one time no one would walk in this park, and now they do,” Bradley said. “They use it because it is beautiful. We have a renovated amphitheater, a renovated fire watchtower, which is all about preserving the history of this neighborhood and this park, which is one of the oldest parks in Manhattan.

“When you have activities that make the park active, you bring people into the park, new users, and that sometimes keep the bad elements out, which is one of the objectives.”



Artist Alice Mizrachi with her father, Jacob, and mentor Russell Goings. Photo by Christelo Gerard

“The Marcus Garvey Alliance is beautifully focused on not just activating the park culturally, but bringing people in, showing them this jewel, and collaborating with all kinds of different institutions and artists,” said Shawn Hill, local resident and cofounder of the [Greater Harlem Coalition](#), a collection of more than 100 groups that, according to its website, “advocates for a vibrant, tolerant, clean and safe Harlem.”

“There is something for everybody in Marcus Garvey Park, and this organization helps keep it alive.”

In 1977 Mount Morris Park was renamed for famed Harlem resident and United Negro Improvement Association President Marcus Garvey.

While she had an idea for the sculpture in 2019, Mizrachi, who has taught art at nearby Harlem Village Academy, St. Aloysius School and the famed Studio Museum of Harlem, said it took many months of revisions before the design was finalized. She also had to raise the money for the piece, which was built in a Hudson Valley foundry.

Alliance Secretary Carla McIntosh said “Renaissance Women” is a welcome addition to Marcus Garvey Park’s many offerings that she hopes will attract visitors like the pool and other activities, like the popular summer reading circle.

“The park is a place where anyone can come and enjoy open space,” McIntosh said. “We try to bring art and culture to the space as well.”

“Renaissance Women” serves a dual purpose as an installation, she said, because “it is important to have an image that looks like an African American person so the people up here can see themselves reflected in art. This piece is general and particular at the same time.

"It appeals to everyone, regardless of their background."

Mizrachi said she is pleased to have followed her mentor and Studio Museum cofounder Goings' advice to keep expanding her repertoire.

"I am constantly working with Russ to figure how I can push my limits," she said. "Being able to have "Renaissance Women" on display in Marcus Garvey Park is such a great honor."

To see more of Alice's work check her out on Instagram @am_nyc, or her website, www.alicemizrachi.com.

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