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Barclays Center Construction Offset By "Works In Progress" Art Installation

By: Jeanine Ramirez



The construction surrounding Brooklyn's new Barclays Center may have been an eyesore to some, but a new Artbridge installation is adorning the area with 20 decorative works by local artists. NY1's Jeanine Ramirez filed the following report. In the midst of the frantically paced construction and the congestion of car and foot traffic, there's a calm escape at the site of the new Barclays Center.

Twenty works by Brooklyn artists are now displayed along Flatbush Avenue and Dean Street, decorating the blue plywood set up along the arena's perimeter.

"I think it looks very beautiful," said one resident. "I think it makes it look a little bit better since this construction isn't really fully done yet," said another.

The theme is "works in progress." With 84 percent of the arena's steel now in place and a completion date scheduled for next summer, the nonprofit group Artbridge called on emerging artists from the borough to submit their work for the exhibition.

"Your work had to be something about process, not just a finished piece to mimic the process of the installation of the stadium," said Rodney Durso, founder of Artbridge.

Artbridge received about 200 entries and chose 20 artists whose names appear on their work.

This is the fourth art installation the organization has done at construction sites around the city. The idea is to transform overhead scaffolding into a larger-than-life canvas for new artists to exhibit their work. With this 2,500-foot display, Atlantic Yards is the group's largest public exhibit yet.

"Artbridge really wanted to make artists feel a part of the space down here and that they can really influence and shape the landscape," said Jordana Zeldin, director of Artbridge.

The group also wanted to help bridge the divide the controversial project caused by displacing some neighborhood residents and businesses that sat in the footprint of the arena.

"We knew that it was being built. There wasn't much that we could do about that. And we thought if we could help somehow both the neighborhood accepting this structure and the artists," said Durso.

The art installation will be up through March.