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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bronx Artists Selected to Transform Step Streets with Colorful, Health-Inspired Murals

*Using Outdoor Staircases as Public Art Canvas, Works by Laura Alvarez and Clark Fly ID
Will Promote Physical Activity and Community Connectivity at Two Sites in the West Bronx*

*Open Call for Artists Generated 50+ Mural Concepts;
Community Members Voted on Winning Designs*

New York, NY (October TK, 2016) - ArtBridge, in collaboration with the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), is proud to announce that Bronx-based artists Laura Alvarez and Clark Fly ID have been selected for *Step Up: Bronx in Motion*, an initiative to paint large-scale murals on two step street sites in the West Bronx. Step streets are public, open-air staircases that provide pedestrian shortcuts across the Bronx's hilly topography. Murals will be installed in early November, and are permitted by DOT's Artervention program. All paint materials for this project have been generously donated by Liquitex Artist Materials, the first in its field to develop water-based acrylic paints. [Note: renderings on following page.]

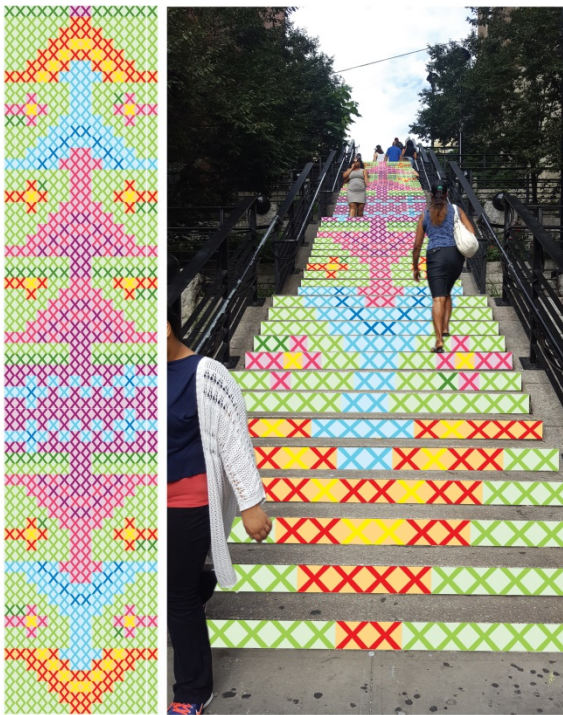
Laura Alvarez's design, *Cross-Street Stitches*, reflects the neighborhood's history of manual labor. "I vividly remember the older women in my family working at home taking care of the families but also sewing—creating those beautiful dresses for the children and adding embroidery," she said. "I want to beautify the neighborhood by adding that touch, creating a cross-stitch pattern along the stairs remembering the old traditions, the hand-made artisanal design in an era of technology and plastic." Laura is a co-founder of BxArts Factory, a nonprofit that supports Bronx-based artists.

Clark Fly ID's design, *I Love the Bronx*, riffs on the Bronx's history as the center of the graffiti art movement. Clark Fly ID is a life-long Bronx resident who has played a prominent role in the borough's history of street art. "This mural is a colorful reminder of our devotion to the Bronx," he said. "I find inspiration from the city."

The overarching goal of *Step Up: Bronx in Motion* is to rethink the intersection of public art, public health, and public space. "Activating these unique pathways with bright, engaging murals will highlight step streets as a cornerstone of Bronx pedestrian culture, showcase local artistic talent, and promote community health," ArtBridge executive director Stephen Pierson said.

Community engagement was central to *Step Up: Bronx in Motion*. In August, ArtBridge and DOHMH launched an RFP to Bronx artists that resulted in over 50 proposals. A curatorial panel of Bronx arts dignitaries (Bill Aguado, Leenda Bonilla, and Jodi Moise) then narrowed the submissions to six finalists. At a public open house event at New Settlement Community Center in September, more than 70 Bronx residents turned out to vote on their favorite murals. Artists Andre Trenier, Ashli Sisk, Jonathan Villoch were runners-up in the community selection process.

Step Up: Bronx in Motion is made possible with funding of \$30,000 provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, representing 100% of the total project costs.



A rendering of Laura Alvarez's Cross-Street Stitches, to be installed at 176th Street & Jerome Avenue

ABOUT LAURA ALVAREZ

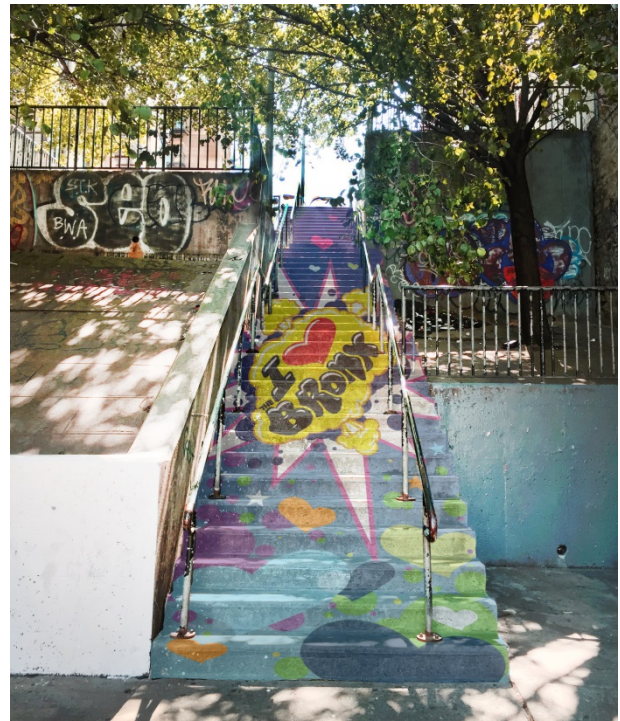
Laura is an experienced graphic designer and artist who has exhibited in collective and solo shows throughout the U.S. and Europe. She is the co-founder and vice president of the BxArts Factory, a nonprofit that supports Bronx-based artists who use their work for social change. She is also a teaching artist at the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, developing community outreach programs and organizing cultural events. Her notable public art projects include: "KHCC Grows," a mural project in collaboration with the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center and the NYC Department of Transportation, "Nature is Watching Us," a mural project with WHEDco and the BxArts Factory, among many others.

ABOUT ARTBRIDGE

ArtBridge is a New York City-based nonprofit that empowers local artists to transform outdoor sites into large-scale art exhibitions. www.art-bridge.org

ABOUT NYC DOT ART

Since 2008, the DOT Art Program has installed over 240 engaging temporary art installations throughout the city. The program partners with community-based organizations and artists to present murals, sculptures, and performances on public property such as: plazas, fences, barriers, bridges, step streets and sidewalks. Projects are presented within four program tracks: Arterventions, Art Display Case, Barrier Beautification and Community Commissions. As part of the Barrier Beautification program, thirty-three barriers spanning nearly six miles have been beautified throughout four out of the five boroughs. For more information about the DOT Art Program, visit www.nyc.dot.gov/dotart.



A rendering of Clark Fly ID's I Love the Bronx, to be installed at Henwood Place & Morris Avenue

ABOUT CLARK FLY ID

In the heart of the South Bronx in the eighties, a progressive graffiti artist widely known as "Clark" formed the crew Fly ID. Fly ID quickly became one of the leading Bronx graffiti art crews, developing a style that became emblematic of the decade's Bronx arts scene. After a decade of illegal artwork, Clark became involved in the legal side of the graffiti art form. Clark and his crew realized that their public artwork was having a profoundly positive effect in the communities where they painted, turning rundown blocks into large-scale inspirational messages. For the last twenty years, Clark has focused on creating positive and educational art pieces in the Bronx, producing dozens of murals throughout the borough.

ABOUT NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOHMH)

With an annual budget of \$1.6 billion and more than 6,000 employees throughout the five boroughs, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is one of the largest public health agencies in the world, serving 8 million New Yorkers from diverse ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds. With over 200 years of leadership in the field, the NYC DOHMH is also one of our nation's oldest public health agencies. nyc.gov/health

ABOUT LIQUITEX ARTIST MATERIALS

Liquitex offers the largest array of vibrant acrylic paints, mediums and tools to enable acrylic artists to continually explore their art and take it to new and unprecedented boundaries. www.liquitex.com

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