

**BROOKLYN ARTISTS ON BROOKLYN GENTRIFICATION
OF GENTLE BIRTH OPENS NOVEMBER 7**

**A Group Visual Art Exhibition and Live Event Series
At Repair The World NYC in Crown Heights
Curated by Jonathan Allen**



Kameelah Janan Rasheed, *Utica Avenue*
Digital C-Print, 16 x 20, 2015

New York, NY, October 14, 2015 – In response to the ongoing gentrification of Crown Heights, Bed-Stuy, and Lefferts Gardens, painter / collage / performing artist **Jonathan Allen** has brought together 11 artists to present work at **Repair the World NYC** (808 Nostrand Ave.) from **November 7 – December 20, 2015**. The photography, paintings, and live events engage directly with the themes of place, displacement, change, and community. **A list of participants, who are all based in Brooklyn, and a schedule of events is below.**

Highlights include a **slideshow of photographs by Carl E. Hazlewood** that documents an eight-story condo rising swiftly behind his apartment near Eastern Parkway, a series of portraits of barbers and their clients by **Hidemi Takagi**, and a site-specific wall painting by **Gabriel Specter**. A series of live events include a reading and artist talk with novelists **Jason Reynolds** and **Brendan Kiely** on their new book, *All American Boys*, an evening of stories

from long time Crown Heights residents, and Heather Hart's Barter Town, which may at first look like a street fair or block party, but is run on the barter system only.



Hidemi Takagi

“As talk of gentrification and change continues and as the plot of land was cleared, I noticed trucks carting away huge smooth boulders, and smaller rocks from the site. Then I remembered that this area we live in, Eastern Parkway and vicinity, was at the leading edge of the Cleveland Glacier, which covered practically the entire land area of the US. Those rocks are part of what remains of the 'moraine' — glacial debris—gravel, sand and rocks ground down and pushed along by the advancing or retreating glacier. It was bracing to think of our time and place in relation to that scale. Those thousand or million-year-old rocks being removed to make way for a new condo in the evolving neighborhood, put the idea of what real 'change' is into perspective.” – Carl E. Hazelwood on the construction site behind his apartment on Eastern Parkway.

From the curator: I've lived in Crown Heights for 12 years, seen changes to the local business owners and patrons in that time and gotten to know my neighbors who lived here in the 1960s and 1970s. Recently I find myself asking what do the artists and young white people signal to the local community, who've seen and known this neighborhood through extraordinarily challenging times? Artists are regularly confronted by economic marginalization and restricted means and agency - issues that resonate strongly with the current conversations surrounding gentrification, but pale in comparison to the structural racism the Crown Heights community has endured for decades. This group of artists has prepared poetic and passionate responses to these issues and I'm interested to hear them

question privilege, creativity, and community, and see their work provoke others to join in the asking and sharing. – Jonathan Allen

Allen, the participating artists, and Repair the World NYC are coming together in hopes to further dialogue, and celebrate the personal experiences of those who live in these neighborhoods.

OF GENTLE BIRTH

Brooklyn artists on Brooklyn gentrification

Saturday, November 7 – Sunday, December 20, 2015*

Open Thursday–Saturday 12–6pm

Opening reception: Saturday, November 7 from 6–9pm

Free admission

**Calendar of special events below*

OF GENTLE BIRTH is closed November 26–29

<http://www.jonathanallen.org/of-gentle-birth>

Repair the World NYC

808 Nostrand Avenue

Brooklyn, NY 11216

Featuring work by:

Daniel Bejar <http://www.danielbejar.com/>

Zachary Fabri <http://www.zacharyfabri.com/>

Heather Hart <http://heather-hart.com/>

Carl E. Hazlewood <http://www.artslant.com/global/artists/show/231706-carl-e-hazlewood>

Naomi Safran-Hon <http://naomisafranhon.com/home.html>

Steffani Jemison <http://steffanijemison.com/>

Baseera Khan <http://www.baseerakhan.com/>

Kameelah Janan Rasheed <http://www.kameelahr.com/>

Gabriel Specter <http://www.specterart.com/>

Hidemi Takagi <http://hidemitakagi.com>

Claudia Weber <http://www.claudiaweber.net/>

Curated by:

Jonathan Allen <http://www.jonathanallen.org/>

Schedule of Events

November 7 6–9pm

OF GENTLE BIRTH OPENING RECEPTION

Artists and exhibit organizers kick off this six-week exhibition and series of live events.

November 10 5–7pm

ARTIST TALK: ALL AMERICAN BOYS

Novelists **Jason Reynolds** and **Brendan Kiely** read from their unforgettable new novel in which two teens—one black, one white—grapple with the repercussions of a single violent act that leaves their school, their community, and, ultimately, the country bitterly divided by racial tension.

November 18 Time 7:30–9pm

PARTICIPATORY EVENT: STORIES OF CROWN HEIGHTS

Longtime residents of Crown Heights share personal stories.

December 12 3–5pm

PARTICIPATORY EVENT: BARTER TOWN

As part of her ongoing Trading Post series, **Heather Hart** presents what may look like a carnival or block party but is run on bartering only. Participants are invited to bring ideas, services, songs, stories, unwanted goods, canned goods, handmade art, appliances, anything they think hold value, and haggle for something that they want.

About Jonathan Allen

Jonathan Allen works in painting, collage, video, and performance. He holds a B.A. in Visual Arts / Art History from Columbia University, and in New York has exhibited at Lu Magnus, PS122, Exit Art, Socrates Sculpture Park, Artists Space, Bravin Lee, Caren Folden, Oliver Kamm, and BRIC Gallery. He has participated in Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)'s *Workspace*, *Process Space*, and *Swing Space* residency programs, the Bronx Museum of Art's *Artist in the Marketplace* program, and has been awarded residencies at the Bogliasco Foundation in Italy, Cill Rialaig in Ireland, Blue Mountain Center, and Micro Art Space. A recipient of grants from the Pollock-Krasner, Chenven, Puffin, George Sugarman foundations and Brooklyn Arts Council, Allen is the on-site assistant in LMCC's Arts Center at Governors Island. He frequently collaborates with poets and performers, recently appearing in Joanna Kotze's *FIND YOURSELF HERE* at Baryshnikov Arts Center, and is currently working on *ABOUT A MINUTE*, a series of short videos with New York poets, and *FOUNDERS*, a series of pop-up performances at NYC contemporary art museums.

About Repair the World NYC

Repair the World NYC launched in the fall of 2015 to tackle pressing local needs by mobilizing communities to volunteer. We enable people to transform their neighborhoods, city and lives through meaningful service experiences, rooted in Jewish values, history and heritage. Our team of eight full time fellows partners with sixteen organizations in Crown Heights and Bed Stuy to recruit and train the volunteers needed to address education and food justice needs in Central Brooklyn. Repair the World's collaborative community storefront space at 808 Nostrand Ave is a hub for service and social justice initiatives.

Of Gentle Birth is sponsored, in part, by the Greater New York Arts Development Fund of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, administered by Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC).

<http://www.jonathanallen.org/of-gentle-birth>

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