



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Housing Community Fund, Artolution, NYCHA, Red Hook West Resident Association, Residents and Partners Unveil New 2,500 Square Foot Mural at NYCHA's Red Hook Houses West



Brooklyn, NY—The Public Housing Community Fund and Artolution are thrilled to announce the completion and unveiling of a vibrant 2,500-square-foot mural at the NYCHA's Red Hook Houses West. The mural adorns a wall housing external boiler systems, part of a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) resiliency project initiated after Superstorm Sandy.

Beginning April 9, 2024, Red Hook West residents collaborated with Artolution, a nonprofit art organization, and teaching artists from Woken Arts to brainstorm and develop ideas for the mural. This community-driven project saw fifteen youth from NYCHA's Red Hook Houses West leading the visioning process and participating in an innovative partnership with Snapchat. Over four weeks, these youth leaders engaged with two members of Snap's Lens Network to learn [Lens Studio](#). The resulting augmented reality (AR) Lens, designed by the youth, brings the mural to life in Snapchat. Beyond directly engaging in art-related programming and coding,

youth learned leadership skills and were provided a scholarship of \$500 upon completing the program.

"We are immensely proud of the collaborative effort that brought this vibrant mural to life at NYCHA's Red Hook Houses West. This project showcases the incredible artistic talents of our community residents, especially the youth, and demonstrates the power of partnership, innovation, and art to uplift communities. By combining traditional art with augmented reality through the support of Snapchat and other partners, we are celebrating the rich history and diverse culture of Red Hook in a way that is both timeless and forward-thinking. This mural is a testament to the resilience and creativity of the Red Hook community, with many images depicting the natural beauty found around Red Hook and the impact climate change has on this community, and we are honored to have been a part of this transformative initiative," **Public Housing Community Fund Executive Director Alex Zablocki said.**

"We are so proud of the Red Hook youth participants and the whole community who poured their heart and soul into this project! Dozens of individuals, from young children to elders, contributed their ideas and expressions to the mural, making it a truly unique collaboration and adding to the heritage of Red Hook. We are also blown away by the augmented reality experiences that the youth created, learning to program complex Snapchat lenses in just a matter of weeks. For years to come, this work of tech-infused public art will stand as a testament to the innovative and creative spirit of the residents of this community!" **Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of Artolution Joel Bergner said.**

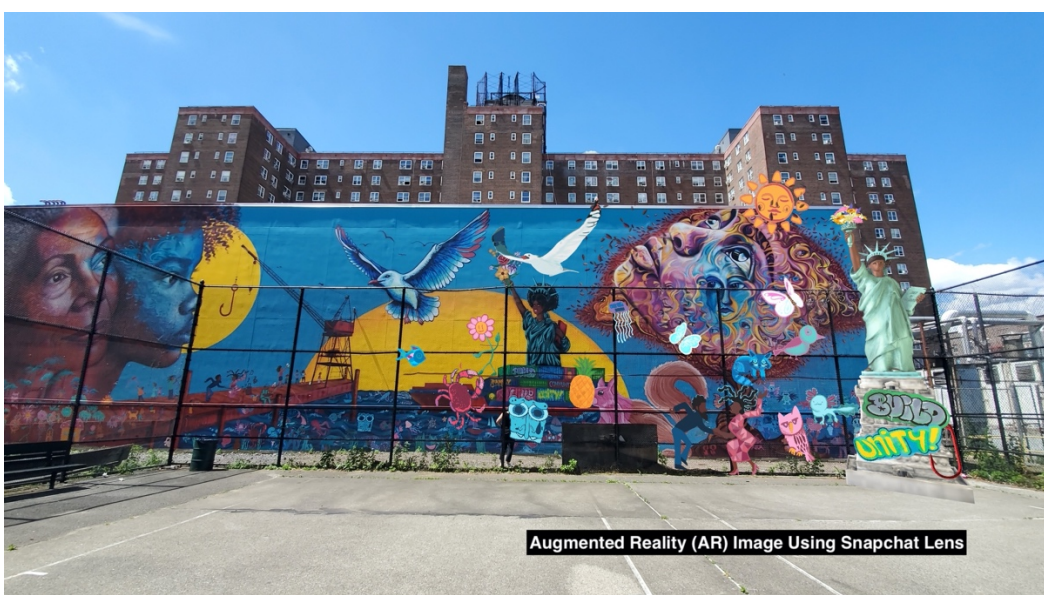
"When people come together, they unlock the power of possibility. This mural is a shining example of what a community can achieve when it works together. Red Hook residents cultivated a community of care—caring for each other, the environment, and themselves, and that shows in the mural they created. It's inspiring to see what is possible when we unite for a common goal," **Chief Creative Officer and Co-Founder of Artolution Dr. Max Frieder said.**

"Red Hook West's new, vibrant mural is a great representation of the resilience, depth, and determination of NYCHA's Red Hook residents," said **NYCHA Chief Executive Officer Lisa Bova-Hiatt**. "This magnificent and sprawling piece of artwork, which decorates an exterior wall containing a resiliency boiler system, will serve as a landmark in the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn for those that will inevitably pass by it day-in and day-out, and a testament to the changes and challenges its diverse community has faced, particularly after Hurricane Sandy. We thank our partners at the Public Housing Community Fund and Artolution for helping to bring this wonderful project and experience to life for Red Hook West residents."

"Snap is grateful for the opportunity to work with NYCHA, the community of Red Hook West, Artolution, and members of our Snap Lens Network to see this project come to fruition. We hope that both the physical mural and the Augmented Reality Lens serve to inspire for generations to come," **Snap Inc. Corporate Philanthropy lead Chandelle Wiebe Hakim said**

"Art has opened up endless possibilities for our youngest residents, showing them what they can achieve and inspiring them to dream about their futures. Art saves lives by giving hope and direction. This collaboration is a beacon of opportunity and creativity for our community and Red Hook West looks forward to collaborating on more programs like this in the future to bring residents together and have them actively engage in powerful programs," **Red Hook Houses West Resident Association President Karen Blondel** said.

The mural project also included a community paint day held in May, where residents came together to bring the mural to life and paint images that were special to them. The final artwork, unveiled on May 29, 2024, beautifully depicts scenes from Red Hook, a waterfront community in Brooklyn. It features wildlife, trees, climate change imagery, a reimagined Statue of Liberty signifying growth and change, and faces representing the diverse community of Red Hook past and present, all chosen and painted by NYCHA Red Hook West residents and artists.



To celebrate this artistic and technological achievement, a special event was held at the mural site, adjacent to Coffey Park. This celebration was part of a Student Climate Gathering for local school children, emphasizing community engagement and environmental awareness, and led by the Red Hook West Resident Association.

Partners: This mural project was made possible through the collaboration of the Red Hook West Resident Association, Snapchat, Artolution, Woken Arts, NYCHA, local students and teachers, and the Public Housing Community Fund.

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About Public Housing Community Fund

Public Housing Community Fund is a nonprofit that forges partnerships to power transformative programs that enhance the lives of over 500,000 residents across NYCHA communities. Our goal is to engage people and partners to build a stronger, more equitable New York City by investing in public housing communities. We invest in programs focused on leadership development, financial empowerment, community health, and workforce training for residents of the NYCHA community. www.communityfund.nyc

About NYCHA

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the largest public housing authority in North America, was created in 1935 to provide decent, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. NYCHA is home to 1 in 17 New Yorkers, providing affordable housing to 528,105 authorized residents through public housing and Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) programs as well as Section 8 housing. NYCHA has 177,569 apartments in 2,411 buildings across 335 conventional public housing and PACT developments. In addition, NYCHA connects residents to critical programs and services from external and internal partners, with a focus on economic opportunity, youth, seniors, and social services. With a housing stock that spans all five boroughs, NYCHA is a city within a city.

About Artolution

Artolution provides collaborative art-making experiences to participants in vulnerable communities, strengthening mental health, social inclusion, and livelihoods. Artolution's programming is led by inspiring local Teaching Artists. <https://www.artolution.org/>

About Snapchat

Snapchat is an app that empowers people to express themselves, live in the moment, learn about the world, and have fun together. It's the easiest and fastest way to communicate the full range of human emotions with your friends without pressure to be popular, pretty, or perfect.

Snap's camera supports real friendships through visual communication, self expression and storytelling. Moving forward, our camera will play a transformative role in how people experience the world around them, combining what they see in the real world, with all that's available to them in the digital world. <https://www.snapchat.com/>

Snapcode Instructions

1. Open Snapchat (make sure you have the latest version!)
2. Make sure you're on the camera as if you were about to Snap a photo (but not a selfie)
3. Point the camera at the Snapcode (not too close and not too far away):



4. A 'Snapcode Detected' icon will show up at the top of the screen. Tap it to activate!
5. Just like that – the Lens should automatically appear!
6. Enjoy – & don't forget to save your Snaps!





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AR Mural Lab

April - May 2024 | Community of Red Hook

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