



The New York Foundling unveils mural at Vital Brookdale - supportive housing

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Brooklyn, NY The New York Foundling unveiled 'Colors of My City', a mural at Vital Brookdale, the non-profit's recently built supportive housing complex in Brownsville. The nearly 1,000 s/f mural was designed and painted by artist Layqa Nuna Yawar and has been installed across the street from Vital Brookdale on a brick wall of neighboring Brookdale Hospital.

Colors of My City celebrates Brownsville with portraits of physicians, activists and neighbors, alongside everyday landmarks like the Brooklyn Bridge and nearby 3 train. One of its subjects, Patricia, is a resident of Vital Brookdale, where 36 people with developmental disabilities and young people exiting foster care live and receive wrap-around services as part of a larger affordable housing project. Patricia is pictured crocheting a blanket, one of her passions, and a symbol of "home."

Yawar developed the mural based on workshops with residents at Vital Brookdale and their

neighbors. He is best known for large-scale community-based murals, intricate portrait paintings, and multimedia projects that center around the complex narratives of black, immigrant and indigenous populations.

Opened in 2022, Vital Brookdale serves two distinct groups that often experience obstacles to living independently: young people aging out of foster care and adults with developmental disabilities. Vital Brookdale builds upon The Foundling's existing supportive housing and developmental disabilities residential programming to provide private apartments to participants that are ready to live on their own through supplemental services that ensure a successful transition into the next chapter of their lives.

"Our residents at Vital Brookdale deserved something beautiful, something that honored them and the whole neighborhood. I am so excited to see Layqa's finished mural in a place where people can reflect on it on their walk to work, or sitting on a bench in our courtyard. Colors of My City will become a community landmark," said Melanie Hartzog, president and CEO of The New York Foundling.

"I am so proud of this mural. I love its intimate, personal moments, like Patricia crocheting her beautiful blanket. We spent a lot of time talking to this community about who and what people wanted to see reflected in this wall. I hope that they look up at it every day and see themselves," said Yawar.

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