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# NoMAA's 'Women in the Heights' show puts vibrancy of Northern Manhattan's burgeoning arts scene on display

Features works of 27 artists who range in age from 20s to 70s

Comments

BY **BRUCE DIAMOND** AND **MAX SASS** / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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BONNIE WALKER, PHOTOGRAPHER: "MANNEQUINS"

**Andrea Arroyo** gravitated to the East Village when she moved to New York City to pursue a career as an artist, nearly 25 years ago. As she became an established painter, she moved north to the upper West Side and, four years ago, to Washington Heights. Arroyo and others describe an Uptown arts community that is on the sharp upswing, one that reminds them of the city's better-known creative hotspots in earlier years. "Northern Manhattan now feels like the East Village once did, in terms of production," Arroyo says. "The only thing we're missing is more (exhibition) venues, but we're working on that." Enter the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance, or NoMAA, an organization that will turn 5 years old in September. The nonprofit has come to function as a crucible, of sorts, for this growing community of artists, providing exhibition space, technical expertise and more than \$300,000 in grants to local artists and organizations.

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There's still time to catch "Women in the Heights — Intersections," NoMAA's annual exhibit that opens each March in celebration of Women's History Month.

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Gesche Würfel, photographer: Untitled

The show, curated by Arroyo, features the work of 27 Northern Manhattan artists who work across the spectrum of media to explore themes centered on gender and the role of women in society. "Some artists approach these issues directly and you can see them very clearly, but others are more subtle," says Arroyo, who picked the works from a pool of about 60 artists who range in age from their 20s to 70s. "The show as a whole gives a sense of what women are doing today," she adds. "Some of the artists work in what is considered 'feminine' material, like quilting, but others use regular materials." NoMAA executive director [Sandra A. Garcia-Betancourt](#), who moved to Inwood from Park Slope several years back, says "Women in the Heights," captures the palpable energy of the flowering arts landscape. "It's an immigrant community but here you see all these different cultures, working together and living together, eating in the same places," Garcia-Betancourt says. "It's a very interesting dynamic and the artists really grow, they're really flourishing with that exchange and with being part of that. It's almost like they talk to each other with their art."

"Women in the Heights" runs through April 30 at 178 Bennett Ave. at 189th St., third floor. Gallery hours are Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and by appointment. For more info, call (212) 568-4396 or email [info@nomaanyc.org](mailto:info@nomaanyc.org).

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