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A MURAL THAT FEELS LIKE HOME

Mural for New Homeless Shelter Comes to Life at Maud Morgan Arts

CAMBRIDGE, MA (February 3, 2016) – “I see the city line every day. When I go to the shelter, that’s not what I want to see.” So said one of the homeless youth at a design meeting for a mural recently completed by volunteer artists at Maud Morgan Arts. The mural will hang in Y2Y, a new shelter in Harvard Square for homeless 18-24 year-olds that opened in December. During the day, the shelter provides space for Youth on Fire, a drop-in program for homeless and street-involved youth.

Kitty Zen, an artist and a member of Y2Y’s Young Adult Advisory Council, designed the mural with input from young people who attend Youth on Fire. According to Wendy Prellwitz, the Maud Morgan Arts Advisory Board Member who spearheaded the mural project, the young people wanted a mural that was timeless, abstract, soothing, and that “makes people feel at home.”

Zen says the mural incorporates “flow, shapes, patterns, and interchangeable transitions...with inspiration taken from fluid and moving shapes, such as circles, waves and water” because “these elements offer endless possibilities for stories of the human condition.” The 6-by-36 foot mural is reminiscent of a tie-dyed design, with purple-blue swirls and spirals melting into ribbons of yellow-orange and bright green.

With this mural project, Prellwitz hopes to connect more young people with the scholarship opportunities that Maud Morgan Arts offers for Youth on Fire participants. According to Zen, “self-expression is...necessary in personal growth and confronting and overcoming life's challenges.” Zen says that “simply observing art can make the mind feel more inspired and an environment feel more welcome and alive,” and she hopes the mural will help motivate Y2Y guests “to transition into a more free and self-supporting reality.”

Maud Morgan Arts is a program under the umbrella of the Agassiz Baldwin Community, a private non-profit organization with a forty-year history of quality programs and services in the Cambridge community. Maud Morgan Arts comprises a full arts program of classes and workshops for all ages, the Chandler Gallery, and a collection of original art by noted artist and community resident Maud Morgan (1903-1999). The agency works to reflect the diversity and talents of the community, bringing people together to make art, share art, and support visual arts education.

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