

INTERACTIVE ART INSTALLATIONS AND ON-SITE ARTIST RESIDENCIES INVITE CMOM VISITORS TO CREATE, CLIMB, AND COLLABORATE

Opening June 2022, New CMOM Exhibition Fosters Community Building and Critical Early Learning Skills through Immersive Commissions by Artists Isidro Blasco and Aya Rodriguez-Izumi, and Architectural Group BARarchitekten



Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate features new large-scale and interactive visual art installations by contemporary artists and architects. Pictured above, on the left, a model of *Accumulation of Houses* by Isidro Blasco (image courtesy of the artist) and, on the right, a 2017 iteration of *Wish* by Aya Rodriguez-Izumi at Pulse Miami Beach presented by SVA and Pulse Project (image by Alexander Bustamante).

NEW YORK – March 28, 2022 – This June, the Children's Museum of Manhattan (CMOM) will open the next edition of its acclaimed visual art exhibition series designed to cultivate critical early learning skills through meaningful engagement with contemporary artworks, artists, and practices. ***Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate*** introduces children to powerful tools of self-expression and new ways of seeing everyday spaces with dynamic interactive art installations and commissions, including a surrealist inspired house by **Isidro Blasco** that children can explore, a wishing tree by **Aya Rodriguez-Izumi** that visitors can add to, and a multi-story installation designed by **BARarchitekten** in which art can be both viewed and made. Celebrating art as a vehicle for connection—particularly after two years of isolation and social distancing—the multimedia exhibition explores ideas of community, home, and self.

Opening June 18, 2022, *Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate* will be accompanied by daily art-making programs in the *Inside Art Makerspace* overseen by resident artists and CMOM arts educators. Within the context of the exhibition, these programs help CMOM's youngest learners further develop their physical, social, emotional skills alongside their peers and caregivers.

"Reflecting our dynamic role in New York City's cultural and educational ecosystem, CMOM has continued to expand our researched-backed programs and exhibitions to focus on key issues that children are facing today, with a goal of mitigating the social-emotional impact and learning loss suffered by children of all backgrounds during the pandemic," said Chief Program Officer Leslie Bushara. "CMOM's visual art exhibitions provide an important platform for our youngest New Yorkers to engage in issues of the day through art and artmaking. Our newest edition of *Inside Art* puts the lessons of the past two years

into action, emphasizing the importance of personal connections among both people and places and of building healthy, creative communities together.”

“*Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate* offers visitors unrestricted access to artworks that are beautiful, complex, and challenging; to working artists with unique styles and stories; and to opportunities to experiment with diverse materials and methods,” said David Rios, CMOM’s Director of Public Programs and Curator of Contemporary Art. “By uniting these experiences in a physically immersive environment, free from ‘distancing tape’ and other traditional barriers, we strive to equip children with a hands-on understanding of creative placemaking and empower their own artistic voices as tools of enduring social change.”

The new commissioned works on view will include:

- ***City Canvas***, a two-story, multiroom installation designed by German architecture firm **BARarchitekten** that will evolve during the exhibition’s run with new works by artists and visitors alike. Drawing inspiration from the legacy of mix-use community buildings, *City Canvas* invites children to explore its various rooms, where they encounter murals, sculptural works, and paintings by artists **Ebony Bolt**, **Francisco Donoso**, **Tijay Mohammed**, and **Armita Raafat** and can leave their own mark on the installation’s exteriors, interiors, and passageways. *City Canvas* will also be home to CMOM’s new short-term residency installations, which invite visitors to learn about and contribute to the practices of working artists.
- ***Accumulation of Houses*** by New York-based, Spanish artist **Isidro Blasco** (b. 1962, Madrid), which invites visitors to crawl and balance through a surreal three-dimensional assemblage inspired by twisted house interiors. Combining practices of architecture, photography, and installation, the work meshes dream-like fragments of windows, door frames, and other familiar forms to encourage explorations of perception and spatial memory.
- ***Wish*** by Harlem-based, Cuban/Puerto Rican/Japanese artist **Aya Rodriguez-Izumi** (b. 1986, Okinawa), an ongoing collaborative artwork based on the Japanese tradition of the *Ema*, in which community members share prayers, wishes, and expressions of gratitude. At CMOM, visitors are invited to sit by a calming pink floor-to-ceiling arboreal sculpture and record a wish, hope, or dream on wooden plaques that then are hung on a tree for others to read. With the addition of new wishes over the course of exhibition, the installation will continue to expand, forming a space of collective reflection and communication.

In addition, *Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate* will also feature continuing presentations of contemporary works and commissions currently on view, including: **Damien Davis**’ massive tabletop mystery puzzle; **Carlos Jesus Martinez Dominguez**’s graffiti mural; **Joiri Minaya**’s colorful and interactive installation of spandex walls that visitors can stretch, meander and peak through; and **Yezu & Chat**’s hanging cylindrical sculptures that provide glimpses of mirrored reflections, rainbows, and light.

Inside Art: Create, Climb, Collaborate is curated by David Rios, CMOM’s Director of Public Programs and Curator of Contemporary Art. The exhibition is supported by the Ford Foundation and, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

**CMOM Hours, Admissions, and Health & Safety Procedures**

CMOM is open Wednesday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., with timed entry throughout the day. Visitors are encouraged to [purchase timed-entry tickets](#) online in advance. Admission is free for all members and \$15 for non-members, and provides entry to all CMOM programs and exhibitions.

Visitors ages 5 and above must show proof of full vaccination and CMOM continues to require mask wearing in the Museum for all visitors ages 2 and above. A detailed overview of CMOM's health and safety protocols and what to expect during your visit, is available on the [museum's website](#).

To reserve tickets or learn more, please visit www.cmom.org.

About the Children's Museum of Manhattan

Established in 1973, the Children's Museum of Manhattan (CMOM) is a vital destination and resource for New York City children and their families, dedicated to cultivating life-long learners across backgrounds and boroughs. A steward of early childhood education and development, CMOM offers imaginative and enriching exhibitions and programs that support, challenge, and inspire. Beyond the Museum walls, CMOM mounts outreach programs in 60 sites across the city, equips colleagues via professional development training programs, and shares its award-winning content through traveling exhibitions and online offerings. To meet growing public demand and ensure that this child-centered, interactive resource is available for future generations, the Museum is planning a forthcoming move to an expanded home at 361 Central Park West, which will include state-of-the art exhibition and programmatic spaces.

For media inquiries, please contact:

Laurie Kamens / Kathryn Hanlon-Hall
Resnicow and Associates

lkamens@resnicow.com / khanlon-hall@resnicow.com

212.671.5178 / 212.671.5179