

Bailey's Cafe

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***“As Quiet As It's Kept, We Thrive: Stories and Portraits from the Heart of BedStuy”
an installation and celebration of the longtime residents of the Jackie Robinson Housing Complex
(Fulton Park) and their neighbors***

***Featured Artists: Pia Monique Murray, Interviews and Documentary
and Marienne “Yen” Thomas, Painted Portraits***

Opening & Artists Reception, Saturday, March 4, 2023

2 PM to 5 PM

**Presented by Bailey's Cafe
324 Malcolm X Boulevard
Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn**

As Quiet As It's Kept, We Thrive: Stories and Portraits from the Heart of BedStuy brings visibility to the residents of BedStuy whose voices are seldom heard, honored and celebrated. The portrait and mini-documentary series comes out of a larger community-based movement to offer alternatives to the violence that continues to erupt in our neighborhood, which has been centered around the Jackie Robinson Housing Complex and the Park Playground. The focus is to bring positive, life-affirming activities to those who may not feel that they are normally included.

The gallery exhibit will include interactive activities as well as additional information about the participants and Jackie Robinson, who had the Jackie Robinson Housing Complex built specifically for Black people who had been left out of the housing market. Robinson's connection to the housing complex has been erased by the current owner who now calls the complex, Fulton Park. With the support of Photoville, we will bring the portraits and words of the residents into public view through an installation of life size banners in spaces surrounding the housing complex, spring 2023. Our mini-documentary and portrait project is one of a series of steps, along with the other life-affirming activities, towards building a more trusting, interconnected community that works together to create an environment that doesn't push out or leave out anyone because of race, economic status or formal education.

As Quiet As It's Kept, We Thrive is supported by the Emmanuel Baptist Church Benevolence Fund, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs and our individual donors.

Thank You

Bailey's Cafe is eternally grateful for our community participants: Antoine Cassidy, Barry Cooper, Valerie Ferguson, Donna Heyward, Ralph James and Quelinda James, Nequan McLean, Pastor Renee Sheffey, and Justine Warren. Photographers: Jacob Gordon and Jendayi McGeachy. And Dr. Surrencia T. Albert for therapeutic support.

Bios

[Pia Monique Murray](#) is a choreographer, performer, teacher, arts administrator, stage, tour/company manager, rehearsal assistant and creative producer. She has worked with nora chipaumire, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Camille A. Brown, Dianne McIntyre, Chanon Judson, Monica L. Williams, Vangelina Theater and the late Blondell Cummings in various capacities. She performs contemporary dance with RAKIA! and leads the Pia Monique Murray Dance Collective (PMMDC). Pia is is Bailey's Cafe's Producing Artistic Director, Creative Producer of Kendra J. Ross' The Sankofa Residency, an Urban Bush Women CCI 2.0 Producing Fellow, Associate Producer of Haint Blu by Chanon Judson and Mame Diarra Speis. and creator of Black Daisies. Pia was a 2022 LMCC Artist-in-Residence on Governors Island. Her multidisciplinary project (installation & photography) Black Daisies is currently on view at Bailey's Cafe in Brooklyn, NY.

[Marianne "Yen" Thomas](#), artistically known as Yen, is an amazing multipotentialite. She is a multi-talented painter, jewelry maker, natural hair stylist, choir director, playwright, actress, and youth leader, bringing her passionate, outgoing, and energetic personality to all that she undertakes. Born and raised in Brooklyn, Yen is a self-taught artist. Yen came to Bailey's Café, a Brooklyn-based arts and cultural center, as a volunteer in the fall of 2007, and quickly became our lead teaching artist, then director of youth programs. Yen has always been a lover of the arts since she was a child but, It was her variable experiences as a new caregiver for her Mom that awakened the dormant painter inside her. It was there, where she found her true craft and tool for her own wellness. Her experiences with Bailey's Café has deepened her understanding of her own talents. Painting has become Yen's primary focus of her creative work. It is through her connection with Bailey's that Yen learned about the Fulton Art Fair organization and became a member. Her work has been exhibited in the Weeksville Heritage Center, the Adam Clayton Powell Jr. State building, Art On The Ave NYC and the El Barrio Art Space to name a few.

[Bailey's Cafe](#) is a space of community healing and belonging -- a secular church, a home, a kitchen table. Bailey's welcomes all with an open heart, compassion and love, generating a culture of belongingness, non-judgment, acceptance, community, and space to be your full self. This is Bailey's unique value. Please consider making a donation to [Bailey's Cafe](#)