A NYC Youth-Led Response to COVID-19
YOUNG EXHIBITION MAKERS (Y.EX)

is an exhibition and curatorial learning program for youth, ages 14-19, led by Curator-Artist-Educator, Catherine Feliz. The program focuses on curation, art, and social justice literacy, as well as professional development. Our programmatic activities cultivate an understanding of the exhibition process, logistics, communication, and critical thinking. This year, Y.Ex began with a focus on mental health and disability activism, which led into the virtual exhibition curated by the youth in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants met with visiting curators, including Ashley James, PhD, Taraneh Fazeli, and BARTALK, and had virtual studio visits with artists such as Carolyn Lazard to develop their understanding of the field. In addition to writing a curatorial essay inspired by the youth, curator, educator, poet, and writer, Danilo Machado also worked with the young curators to develop their writing practice as they progressed in their exhibition of youth art.

Y.EX PROGRAM GOALS:
The curriculum for Young Exhibition Makers is designed to be a youth-centered learning program that offers participants the opportunities and platforms to expand their critical thinking and communication skills through:

1. Increasing knowledge of the meaning, function, and significance of an exhibition.
2. Developing an understanding of exhibition-related careers and pathways in the arts.
3. Interacting with curators, artists, and arts professionals to gain exposure to the field.
4. Understanding the art world and the abilities to distinguish between museums, galleries, residencies, and public art.
5. Learning about social justice, cultural and political literacy in order to unpack and create exhibitions.
6. Awareness about mental health and disability justice in order to envision potential solutions.
7. Contributing to NLE exhibition programming and engagements.

NO LONGER EMPTY (NLE) curates bold, site-responsive exhibitions in unconventional locations across New York City. We foreground art as a catalyst for community-led conversations about place, and we commission diverse artists at all stages of their careers to expand their practices through site-specific works.

Since 2009, No Longer Empty’s educational programs have inspired New York City’s youth and families to share their voices through collective storytelling and to re-imagine public space through art.
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, No Longer Empty’s Young Exhibition Makers (Y.Ex) invited fellow youth, ages 14–19, to submit artworks to an open call for youth artists for a virtual exhibition focusing on mental health and care in the time of COVID-19. Y.Ex-ers wanted to capture how other youths were thinking, feeling, and taking care of themselves during this time of physical isolation. They asked their fellow youth artists questions such as, “In what ways are you caring for your mental health and/or that of others around you?”

Artistic submissions directly reflect personal responses to the current pandemic through personal narratives, experiences, perspectives, storytelling, and feelings that address the times. Artwork submissions of all mediums were accepted and welcomed by Y.Ex youth throughout all boroughs of New York City. From the numerous and incredibly meaningful submissions, 30 works were selected as finalists, and 45 youth artists were given honorable mentions.

– CATHERINE FELIZ
Lead Curator-Educator / Young Exhibition Makers

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

LEONARDO ALMEIDA-RAMIREZ
JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN
TAMARA BUENO
HAOYUE CHEN
JUNIOR STEVEN CLAVIJO
camelia dias
Awa diop
EMILY EBER
JEREMY ARTURO FELIZ
OMAR GARCIA
LAMEES HADOU
RADEHA HAQUE
ELIJAH HASSAN
BRIANNA HERNANDEZ
MAIA KILLAN
YOONA LEE
KRISTYNA LORENZO
ITZEL MALDONADO
GIOVANNA MARTINEZ
STEPHANIE MATA
JULIA MITCHELL
VALERIE OLIVARES
ANNA PHILIPPE
JESSICA RANDAZZO
PEARL SKELETON
CHRISTOPHER SZCZYTOWSKI
SHONNAE IMEI TEEL
FRANK TRAN
MARISA YANG
KAITYLYN YOUN


KALIA ASENCIO
JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN
HAILEY DELVALLE
KARILYN DURAN
GIVIENNA GENEVA GORDON
AYAH HASSAN
EMILIA PALEGANO-TITMUSS
JULIAN SHARP
SHONNAE IMEI TEEL
KENISHA TERRY

Y.EX CURATORS
KAIA ABRAHAM
Queens, (she/her)

RABIYA AKTER
Bronx, (she/her)

NATALIA ALEGARBE
Brooklyn, (she/her)

BINTOU BAYSMORE
Brooklyn, (she/her)

MILANA BLOKHINA
Brooklyn, (she/her)

YIHONG CHEN
Queens, (she/her)

CAMILA DANGOT
Manhattan, (she/her)

LUCAS DIMARCO
Manhattan, (he/him)

FANJIN DING
Queens, (she/her)

KAYNE GLASS
Manhattan, (he/him)

TATIANA GONZALEZ
Bronx, (she/her)

PARKER GOODMAN
Manhattan, (he/him)

JACK GRIFFIN
Manhattan, (he/him)

ROCCO GUIDA
Queens, (he/him)

JAYDEN JONES
Brooklyn, (he/him)

TERESA JUAREZ MORA
Brooklyn, (she/her)

SAMMY KALIKOW
Manhattan, (she/her)

MAYA KENDALL
Brooklyn, (she/her)

MAIA KILIAN
Brooklyn, (she/her)

JELISSA LOPEZ
Brooklyn, (she/her)

AIRA YZABEL MANAMPAN
Queens, (she/her)

MICHAELA MARTINEZ
Brooklyn, (she/her)

AZRIEL MCCALL
Brooklyn, (he/him)

HONEY MCDOWELL
Brooklyn, (she/her)

MIGUEL MENDOZA
Brooklyn, (he/him)

FRED MIDGLEY
Brooklyn, (he/him)

CARTER MONTGOMERY
Brooklyn, (he/him)

BRITANY PAEZ
Brooklyn, (she/her)

LARA PALOMBIA
Bronx, (she/her)

ZOE POLINSKY
Manhattan, (she/her)

ANTHONY RANGEL-APREZA
Brooklyn, (he/him)

JUAN RIVERA
Queens, (he/him)

LEON ROSEN
Manhattan, (he/him)

NOELLE SALAUN
Queens, (she/her)

JONAH SCHUMIEISTER
Manhattan, (he/him)

SCARLETT SHEPARD
Brooklyn, (she/her)

EMILY SHI
Manhattan, (she/her)

BEN SNAZELLE
Queens, (he/him)

OLIVIA SPIELMAN
Manhattan, (she/her)

RIO TAKAHASHI
Queens, (they/them)

SOFIIA TELEK
Brooklyn, (she/her)

MILES TONG
Queens, (he/him)

KATE TOWNSEND
Brooklyn, (she/her)

ALEX YASHARIAN
Queens, (he/him)

AMY ZHENG
Queens, (she/her)

HONORABLE MENTIONS

I write this from our kitchen table, where I write most things nowadays. On it, my silver desktop rotates, and my coffee mugs and water glasses orbit the sometimes-shaky surface. The table is set against a window sill of plants, rocks, candles, and light. The trees outside are mostly green, and the eye-level electric cables are like the bars of sheet music. In the near distance, I see the towers of Kings County Hospital. Gloves litter the street below. Bikers pass by wearing masks. I hear the ambulances down Brooklyn Avenue, but not as often as before, I think. At least the birds seem more audible.

Most nights, we pull the table out to make room for dinner. My desktop goes gently on the floor in the corner, the wireless mouse and keyboard often atop notebooks. We set three place mats and a record. Sometimes I'll do some writing after dinner, but sometimes I wait until the next morning to lift my computer back up and place it on the table for the day. Where it is placed dictates what the other rectangular Zoom screens see behind me. One spot—prone to dog cameos—shows the rest of our living room and kitchen. Another is in front of an olive green wall with a grid of framed records, Aretha Franklin’s You at the center. If I sit on the opposite side of the table, a floating shelf of red books is visible below a framed postcard of a painting by Alice Neel. The furniture where we keep records is topped with plants. Above them is a print I pulled myself, shades of blue and yellow, and green reading “YOU BELONG HERE.”

I think about this table often. Previously, it was in the context of the company that would gather around it, but now it is in the deepened intimacy of quarantine space.

I am interested in spaces and how the people in them navigate and interact. Before the pandemic, my practice as a curator and writer primarily considered the spaces of public programs and exhibitions. From intimate poetry readers cramped in a Bushwick bookstore, to a full orchestra filling an auditorium at a museum, there is a rush of co-inhabiting and co-creating a space together with others.

But now, our sense of space has scrambled and shrunk and pixelated. Now, there is no in-person art viewing, no crowding around a live performance, no gathering. Instead, we inhabit too many Zoom rooms, sometimes with a handful of peers and other times with many strangers. We look at digital files and digital videos (live or pre-recorded) representing artists and artworks, poets, and poetry. Our eyes are tired, but curation and teaching continue.

As curators and educators, we’re asking some of the same questions: what stories need to be told? What can we learn from the past? From the present? But now, we’re also asking new ones: how will this translate to a computer screen? To a phone? To a video call?

Of course, this new digital space is not inherently accessible or even friendly, regardless of assumed fluency. The jolting shifts that this moment has demanded of us have not just been technological. Many of us have had significant changes in our routine, in the spaces we occupy, in who we’re around, and in how we spend our days. These changes have been amidst significant loss and precarity, much of which has doubled down on existing inequities. And yet, some are trying to recreate the same demands and expectations. And yet, some are yelling to “open up.”

Young people and educators have been forced into new modes of learning and teaching, many not accessible or sustainable. Youth are experiencing Zoom fatigue, too. Youth are mourning milestones, family members, and senses of normalcy. They see the racial disparities of the pandemic firsthand.

I hear my partner teaching math from our bedroom and tell me about how the virtual classroom is impacting students and their work as an educator. I’ve heard from my brother and how he finished the semester virtually, now unsure of how next semester will take place. And, of course, I’ve been able to share space with the Young Exhibition Makers of No Longer Empty, who have curated this urgent and thoughtful show.

ON CURATING, ON TABLES \ DANilo MACHADO \ INVITED CURATOR-EDUCATOR NLE LAB
They have chosen a dynamic grouping of artworks created by their peers and have done the hard work of collective learning and collaboration—no easy feat even under non-pandemic circumstances. Along the way, they have delved into curatorial practice, artist process, and exhibition writing, bringing in their own lived experiences. This selection shows a striking range of observations, emotions, and concerns—creating one portrait of being a young person in this historic moment.

The ripple effects of this pandemic will be significant and long-term. Even when the city begins to reopen, many businesses, organizations, and institutions—including those with art programs and pipelines for young people—will downsize or close. Many have already shown where their priorities are.

We’ve seen how artists and educators have been specifically impacted and will continue to be among the many vulnerable. There is still significant uncertainty around when in-person exhibitions, programs, and classrooms will be possible again. An exhibition I was curating was set to open in April but will now tentatively open in January.

Still, I see potential. In my own work, I’ve adapted the reading series I co-curate online, raising money to pay poets and featuring readers from around the world like never before. I help to produce programs that now have a global reach. I see potential in how more accessible frameworks and practices we’ve developed can continue to be a standard part of more inclusive organizations and communities. I see more people building and supporting mutual aid efforts, learning from the survival strategies developed by marginalized folks.

Curators, programmers, and educators have an outstanding capacity to collaborate and to uplift artists and communities. But, as much as the modes of creation are energizing and often urgent, they are not always possible or easy.

Daily, our emotional and physical capacities fluctuate alongside a whirl of news. It’s ever-clear that the way that we care for ourselves and for others allows us to do this work, and in turn, becomes the work itself. Many everyday threats to safety and sustainability demand it.

Earlier, out my window, a police helicopter floated on blue sky. The clouds are bigger, and the green trees are closer. There was another protest a handful of blocks away. Masses in masked proximity, in mourning and rage, rage and mourning. It’s dark now, and I still hear helicopters. I’m at the same table, but the scene feels different.

Language feels lacking.

The helicopters continue, as have the demonstrations. I hear them both. I don’t know what to write.

Let’s return to the table. I’ve set it to welcome you. We’ve been growing new plants: basil, tomato, violet. They surround us, too, positioned for direct sunlight. The table and our daily, nightly ritual leave some questions, perhaps they are useful. How is room made? Where does light come in? Who has a chair and a glass and a plate? Let’s sit together.
Y.EX CURATORIAL STATEMENTS

KALIA ASENCIO
For me, this youth art exhibition that I helped to curate means sharing a glimpse into the lives of my fellow teen artists. Going through an unprecedented period of a global pandemic and socially distancing, it is difficult to see how other people are coping. Creating this show gave me the opportunity to share my community’s voice. Filled with diverse youth artists throughout NYC, my hope is that people see that there are common themes within the different types of approaches, mediums and concepts in their work. I also hope that the main message is clear: we are all in this together.

JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN
I would describe the exhibition as a representation of a “collective NYC family” because, even though we are each going through a hard time right now, we all support each other in many ways. The exhibition is also a reflection of the YAC program, which was personally helpful for me. The group taught me how to have more passion for my work and boosted up my curatorial drive to create and show more work in the future. I believe the impact of the show is that it is going to help people be aware of what we’re working on as youth and how art can be a form of information, even if it’s not through written communication.

LEFT: MAIA KILLAN, 7PM Essential Worker Celebration, (detail), 2020.
HAILEY DELVALLE
This exhibition that we curated is a representation of the thoughts, emotions, and struggles that today’s youths are experiencing. In the wake of a global pandemic and being in the midst of an uprising for equality, there are too many things to process at once. It is only natural that we reach for creative expression as a way to deal with the present state of the world. We have felt lost, overwhelmed, and powerless, and we have been trying to cope. I hope that this beautiful and striking collection of artwork can serve as a time capsule for our children and our children’s children, so that they can know where our minds were at in 2020.

KARILYN DURAN
This exhibition has compiled the viewpoints of people my age during COVID-19, an unprecedented and emotionally trying time. We have ideas, we have emotions, we have struggles, and the pandemic has deeply impacted our extremely socially-driven generation. It has created such a massive sense of loss, and it’s important to give young people a place to grieve and express themselves. A lot of people tend to diminish the viewpoints of the younger generations. Since we’re not adults, our opinions seem to matter less. This exhibition amplifies the voices of young people to a larger audience beyond traditional demographics. I hope people see the value in our voices, our capability to create change, and recognize the validity of our emotions.
Being a curator of this youth art exhibition means a lot to me. From day one, we’ve all been working hard to make it the best show possible, despite the current, challenging circumstances. This exhibition is a chance to use art in order to connect to the problems we are facing now and the emotions we are experiencing in dealing with COVID-19. The impact I want to have is to demonstrate, through the arts, how NYC youth feel when it comes to COVID-19. I want to make sure that this exhibition offers others a chance to experience our emotions and share our powerful insights. Also, to hopefully understand that the difficulties we are going through now are just a temporary part of life, and will pass.

AYAH HASSAN
Being part of this youth art exhibition means a lot to me. It taught me so many important lessons. I learned about ways to be inclusive of all people—whether it be in a piece of art, a label, or a caption. I also learned how to represent and make everyone feel equal and welcomed. In addition, organizing this show open my eyes to the idea that everyone portrays things differently, even if they are going through a similar experience. Everyone imagines things differently and understands different artworks from different perspectives. Being a curator includes the ability to share your ideas with the majority of viewers and I learned that a good label and caption must be added to the artwork in order to have that happen. This exhibition has been a very creative process and, considering the moment we are in, it is even more inspirational still. I just hope that when viewing this exhibition, people understand that creativity can arise even in the worst of times.

LEFT: VALERIE OLIVARES, Passing the time, (detail), 2020.
EMILIA PALEGANO-TITMUSS
No one has seen or experienced anything like the coronavirus pandemic. It is something that many of us will look back on and learn from. What we are experiencing right now—being away from friends and family, while trying to stay safe—is always on our minds. It is important to document our feelings and emotions when something unprecedented happens because our generation, as well as older generations and the ones to come, can reflect and learn something from us. Teenagers and young adults are this world’s future. Through sharing our unique experiences and insights, we can help others see things in new ways. For example, I have learned that when you are stuck at home and inside your own head all day, with just your mind for company, that this can be the best time for you to create meaningful artwork that is influenced by your own thoughts. I hope whomever our audience may be, they will use this exhibition to learn, to experience the pandemic from a different perspective, and even to relate to the messages of our participating artists.

JULIAN SHARP
This exhibition captures a unique and difficult moment in history that the entire world is going through together right now. Collectively, the participating artists reveal how young people are feeling about the pandemic as a whole. It means a lot to me to be able to curate this show because of how interesting the artwork is and because of how hard we have been working as a group to collaboratively make it happen. I hope that people are able to look at the art and feel a connection to others who are feeling similar to them or be able to sympathize with the artists’ viewpoints and insights. Additionally, it would be very interesting if people could look back at the exhibit in the future as capturing an important time in history.

SHONNAE IMEI TEEL
This youth art exhibition is a vivid representation of the various interdisciplinary works created by artists in different spaces throughout NYC. Creative expression in times of hardship provides a sense of tranquility and clairvoyance by allowing emotions to be connected to the inner self. As youths, utilizing mindfulness in curation has been an important part of selecting the art created for this exhibition. Inclusivity and understanding the cultural dynamics of our work has helped build a sense of unity throughout this journey. The grief within our communities, regarding the current state of the world, is a starting point in amplifying the voices needed for change. Action comes through movement and this exhibition has helped put into motion opportunities for many of us young individuals in the art world.


KENISHA TERRY
This youth art exhibition means a lot to me. It showed me that not only are there people of all races acknowledging what’s wrong in the world and what needs to be fixed, but they are also being proactive and standing together for change. It taught me a lot. I hope the exhibition impacts others and their mindset so that they can see why the artwork was created and have a better understanding of the social injustices happening now. In addition to awareness, I hope it encourages people to help change things and support those who are already working to make things better.

Y.EX CURATORIAL STATEMENTS
LEONARDO ALMEIDA-RAMIREZ
The Gamble, 2020

Drawing: Oil Pastel and Ink on Paper

In today’s world, social contact and going outside, in general, now represent a potential gamble with life and death. In order to capture the gamble of living alongside a silent virus, Almeida-Ramirez portrays a severed hand gambling with a skeleton angel. Gambling, though characterized by chance, also includes being aware of your surroundings and the risks involved. Ramirez wants to promote conscious decision making, especially at such a dire time.

An oil pastel drawing shows a severed hand on a wooden table surrounded by two red dice, a cup of red liquid, and a blue and gray skeleton with gray and black wings. On the left side, clouds read “life is a gamble” in black calligraphy.
We are in remarkable circumstances this year
The pandemic of COVID-19 makes it very clear.
Global human interconnectedness
and the responsibilities we have towards cleanliness.

No more shaking hands.
Do not touch your face.
Never stand too close
Especially in a crowded place

People are pressured
around the world,
The volunteers are in a whirl,
working hard to bring you sources
as they stand tall in armed forces.

Many people died because of the virus
Be Careful Be Safe From the Anti-Virus.
Some people’s mental health are unfortunately broken
But spending time with your family is a token

I would reach out to you,
But a simple hand touch wouldn’t do.
Lysol spray became our perfume,
Hand sanitizer has become our friend
The news has become very gloom

Dark days are fastly approaching.
We have to be aware.
Hygiene is our only shield
To this Virus who waits out there.

What the future holds could be anybody’s guess
But the masses believe we are in a forever mess
The way to stay safe is to reside at home
Meanwhile relax and take your bubble bath with foam

Spiritually awoken to the sun
These current conditions are zero fun

Like a plane
High in the sky
With no stars to see or nowhere to fly

Yet still I rise
Yet still I rise
Yet still I climb
Up these stairs of life

JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN
The Anti-Virus, 2020

Poetry

This poem describes the changes that people have started to face. It speaks to the new struggles that have come up during a time of panic. It honestly explores what’s going on in the real world at this time. Bowen asks difficult questions such as, “How can healthcare volunteers help infected people in the hospital instead of taking care of themselves by quarantining with their families?” This literary work helps empower and support people in a time when many feel powerless.
TAMARA BUENO
Screens of distraction, 2020
Digital Drawing

*Screens of distraction* portrays the bombardment of information and news on multiple media platforms: on the television, in a “Google Classroom” on the iPad, and in an article on the computer. The person on the phone symbolizes the idea that things that were once for entertainment are now distractions from what’s happening. There are also empty food wrappers carelessly scattered around, suggesting that now snacks, instead of for enjoyment, are also a distraction from the horrors going on in the world. This work is accessible and very relatable to what is currently going on. It connects to current events and offers solidarity to all of us who feel the same way.

This digital image shows a light-skinned figure lying down on a wooden floor. Around the figure are asthma inhalers, paint, and paintbrushes, a spilled can of soda labeled “POP,” light blue wireless headphones, a digital tablet, a laptop open to Tiger King, and a bag of chips. On the wall is a TV showing a reporter wearing a hoodie, mask, and goggles. The figure, wearing a pink shirt and light-colored pants, is facing away from the viewer and looking at a phone screen displaying a close-up face.
HAOYUE CHEN

Hope, 2020

Painting: Watercolor on Paper

Hope illustrates the sentiment between a younger generation and an older generation in despair. As a representation of hope, the young boy, as displayed, provides a feeling of warmth to his elder, seemingly surrounded by grief. Cultural pieces, such as this drawing, reflect the depth and symbolism within Chen’s artwork.

This watercolor painting shows two brown-skinned figures outdoors on the grass. The one on the left is an older woman and the other, on the right, is a young child. The woman is on her knees and covering her eyes, wearing clothing in shades of brown. The child is wearing a yellow shirt, holding out a blue flower to her. Above them, the clouds in the sky have parted, revealing a bright sun.
JUNIOR STEVEN CLAVIJO
Growth in Hardships, 2020

Painting

*Growth in Hardships* depicts the outer world as a place that has lost its form. The character represents people who are isolated and waiting for the world to become whole again. Clavijo says that he used dark colors to represent the world’s current events. The surrounding plants are meant to establish growth through that isolation. They represent the personal growth that everyone is going through during isolation.

This painting shows a starry night sky with thick, intersecting white lines through it. Around the sky and growing from the bottom of the painting are rich green leaves. Within these leaves is a single figure whose body is decorated with black and white patterns.
"It’s a surrealistic artwork about a beautiful girl that attracts demons," according to Dias. *Drealistic Fairy* is both morbid and optimistic at the same time with the artist’s use of a light background and the beautiful girl in contrast to the dark colors of the demons. In the wake of COVID-19 and the impact it has had on mental illness, the demons can be seen as a metaphor for the virus’s negative psychological effects.

This drawing depicts three figures. On the lower right side is a young woman with long black hair, red lipstick, and a light blue shirt faded into white. She is wearing makeup and has a visible earring and nose ring. On the left are two demonic figures. The top one appears to be dead or decomposing and is wearing a cross-shaped earring. It has a long red tongue that is extended far enough out to just touch her hair. The one below has skin the color of shades of gray and dark blue with spiky hair and no eyes. The figure holds up a hand with razor tipped fingers with one entwined in her hair.
AWA DIOP

in you i see a HERO, 2020

Digital Art: Mixed-Media Collage of Found Images and Stickers

Diop has produced a work that thanks our doctors, nurses, and hospital staff that are working long hours to care for those infected by the coronavirus. She looks for the heroes in our struggling world with optimism and hopes that her artwork “brightens someone’s day.” In her artwork, she provides multiple images of doctors and nurses hard at work surrounding the definition of a hero. Her image choices carry out the message she is trying to give to viewers on the appreciation of health care workers who are dedicated to their job, even when they might be risking their own lives to care for others. For the artist, that is true heroism.

This work contains a dictionary definition of the word “hero” overlaid with various illustrations of medical workers, many in white coats and in motion. The rectangular background is framed by shades of deep green lines and a close-up image of leaves. On the top of the surrounding frame, overlaid on the leaves are the words “in you, i see a HERO” and at the bottom are the words “in me, you restore HOPE,” both in white sans serif type.
EMILY EBER
Untitled, 2020

Mixed Media: Papier-mâché, Painting, and Collage

*Untitled* is made almost entirely out of recycled materials using multiple techniques such as papier-mâché, painting, and collage. Eber has incorporated contradictory imagery in hopes that the viewer will interpret meaning(s) from whatever place, emotionally or physically, feels natural to them. The element of surprise is also an important aspect of the work. This “sense of the unexpected,” the artist notes, “can be compared to the way our current situation has come about.”

The top of this sculpture-relief is composed of a group of pink flowers with yellow centers surrounded by black and white butterflies and green leaves. Falling head first, out of the flora, is a person depicted in black and white, caught in mid-scream.
Jeremy Arturo Feliz

Frustrations, 2020

Mixed Media: Watercolor and Ink on Paper

Feliz represents the internalized emotions multiple people have felt throughout quarantine. This image could also portray the unspoken message within the recent anti-Asian attacks and propaganda surrounding the spread of COVID-19 across the globe. Along with the contrast in colors, the use of watercolor washes and ink splatters create an integration of realistic drawing and abstract visuals. The power within this image speaks volumes about social issues regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

This work depicts a brown-skinned person's face with black hair and closed eyes. The person is holding two hands across his face, fingers meeting at the bridge of their nose. They appear in pain, pressured or overwhelmed while two disembodied, light-skinned hands are squeezing the top and sides of the person's head. The textured background contains splatters of ink and paint.
OMAR GARCIA
Indoor Beauty, 2020

Video and Poetry: Duration 00:42

Using visual art to create a powerful message, Garcia wants people to know that it is important for us to stay strong and think of a better future. His poetic language and closeness of the camera are significant and important in showing us that there is beauty in the smallest things, even when we cannot see it.

The thumbnails of the video to the right show a hand pulling down window blinds to see the buildings outside. On the bottom of the images is the following sequential text: "Don’t look out the window sill...to the street below...Beauty...is in restraint...practice that...and beauty you’ll know.”
LAMEES HADOU
Earth Needs You, 2020

Digital Drawing

Hadou expresses the stress the Earth is put under because of environmental degradation and now with the COVID-19 pandemic. The scars made by the hands of the figure depict the severity of the damage, and the mask personifies the planet as it begs for its people to care for it. Hadou wants to communicate a sense of urgency and that people should recognize their responsibility to do their part in order to curb the effects of both COVID-19 and environmental issues.

This digital drawing shows a figure, outlined in glowing white lines, holding a globe. From the center of the cracked globe, a plant with two green leaves grows. A black band hugs the bottom of the earth with two disks with two blue X’s on either side. Between them is a line with spikes and dips, reminiscent of EKG. Below the figure, in a purple box, are the words “It’s a bad time, we can’t keep abusing the Earth, help stop the cause.”
RADEHA HAQUE
Distractions, 2020

Digital Drawing

Within the drawing Haque depicts the many overwhelming aspects of the world now and tries to solve them by meditating. The doctors in the foreground are symbols of healing and support that stand out in her artwork. Together, these reference the importance of taking care of both our mental and physical health now more than ever, since the pandemic affects us all.

This digital drawing shows a central, brown-skinned figure with long, black hair sitting with their legs crossed on a rounded purple form. They are wearing a burnt orange shirt and blue pants. Surrounding them are line drawings of every day objects such as: books, a computer with a WiFi symbol on the screen, a heart, and a newspaper. Below them are two brown-skinned doctors, wearing protective masks against a background of three coronavirus cells.
ELIJAH HASSAN
Monochrome Media, 2020

Digital Photo Collage

With his friend’s picture being captured by a Canon camera, Hassan created this piece to show a way “to stay in the social media mix,” and “keep your presence in the media consistent,” during the COVID-19 pandemic. Being forced to stay at home, Hassan created this piece to show a way that youth can stay connected by keeping up with their profiles on social media and be able to make their presence known.

This digital collage uses the format of a magazine cover as its structure. Above the masthead, “MONOCROME MEDIA,” are the words “ALL NEW ISSUES MAR 2020” and, below, in cursive, are the words “the teen panel.” The central figure looks at the camera. They have black hair tangled with thin string lights, glowing yellow and white, and wearing a woolly garment. Around the figure are titles and subtitles alluding to articles within the issue, such as “STUCK AT HOME: WAYS TO POSE FOR THE ‘GRAM’ AT HOME,” in white sans serif font.
Hernandez spent countless hours making this detailed portrait of herself on a walk in the park. For the artist, the blossoming tree that can be seen in this work shows that Mother Nature is still hard at work, even during a pandemic. As a constant in our lives, Nature is a stabilizing force, and seeing familiar things during a stressful period can put people at ease. She says that nature and its calming aspects allow her to remain positive and confident that the world will get through this one step at a time.

This digital drawing shows a person with dark hair in two ponytails with dark blue scrunchies, rounded sunglasses, and a light blue medical mask. They wear thin silver jewelry and a black shirt, and there is a yellow strap over their left shoulder, perhaps for a backpack or bag. Behind the figure is a large pink cherry blossom, surrounded by other greenery and a fence.
This photograph of a celebration for essential workers was converted into black and white by hand. The centering of a joyful get-together through the capturing of smiles and bubbles during a time of isolation and sickness, in the words of Killan, makes her feel connected. Though only three people are being shown, the entire block participates in the celebration bringing the community together.

This black-and-white photograph depicts three figures on a stoop. One figure looks younger and is wearing a mask while holding out a bubble wand. The other two older figures are sitting on the stoop, one wearing a mask and both in the middle of clapping. The brick, windows, and shadows of the building behind them are visible, and a handful of bubbles surrounds them all.
YOONA LEE
I am human too, 2020

Drawing: Pastels and Ink on Paper

*I am human too* shows a dark-haired person looking stressed and pressured, surrounded by racist comments and phrases about Asians, blaming them for the coronavirus. There are also bruises on the person’s arms as though they were literally harmed because of what was being said. This work is easy to relate to, and very intimately connects to current events. The artist’s intent is to let people see how the things they say can have a large, negative impact on people, as well as to create awareness of the damage that racism and bias create.

This drawing depicts a masked-covered face with black hair looking at the viewer with seemingly reddened, bruised eyes. Two disembodied, bruised hands are gripping the head on either side. Handwritten words and phrases such as “I CAN’T BELIEVE I HAVE TO BE AFRAID OF BEING ASIAN IN 2020” and “ATTACKS ON ASIAN-AMERICANS SKYROCKET TO 100 PER DAY DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC,” surround the top of the head and below are underlined words such as “I’M HUMAN TOO.”
This painting shows the link between the heart and brain during the present difficult situation. The artist uses this piece to symbolize that, during these difficult times, the heart usually gets in the way of making logical decisions. The heart and brain are connected by a string because, in times like these, people tend to think that their brain has the same emotion that their hearts do. It is up to them to stay safe and cut the string that connects the brain and the heart together.

This painting is composed of shades of blue and purple depicting a brain contained in a jar atop a table with a heart next to it. Joining both together is a thin yellow string that goes around the top of the closed jar and then loops around the heart.
ITZEL MALDONADO
Remote Learning, 2020

Painting: Acrylic on Canvas

In Remote Learning, Maldonado emphasizes the importance of mental health in learning and education. A plethora of youth have struggled over the past few months to complete their assignments using a totally new system and platform. The artist added her eyes to the hands as a way of creating a self-portrait and connecting to the theme in the work. This can also potentially be seen as a symbol of the social pressure by others onto students. The minimal details and monochromatic scheme illustrated in the background add to the powerful weight in this artwork.

This painting shows a laptop screen listing "MISSING" items, each circled in red. The list reads: "test, essay, quiz, project." The screen also shows a black box with the words "DAYS LEFT" and a yellow smiley-face and yellow sad-face besides a black question mark. Below it on the screen is the word "COMPLETE" in blue with the circled words "DATE" and "NAME" below. The background of the computer is a field of pink below a field of gray with a repeating pattern of white eyes. In the foreground of the painting are two brown-skinned hands with brown eyes on each of the palms.
GIOVANNA MARTINEZ
The Fearful Shadow Behind the Chained and Masked World, 2020

Drawing: Ink on Paper

Martinez’s work encapsulates the overall sense of being trapped, powerless, and confused—which powerfully summarizes the feelings for many of us in 2020. With clean forms and a grayscale color palette, the artist’s message is strong and accessible. Martinez also states that her work “represents a voice to the unheard who are afraid and unable to get help during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

This black-and-white drawing shows an open hand with black nails clasped around the globe. Behind it is a black figure, and across the globe is a linked chain going down diagonally to the bottom right of the drawing.
Due to all the uncertainty during this pandemic, information overload can be overwhelming. Many people are rightfully scared, and “do not panic” is often used as an ineffectual method of telling people how to cope. Mata describes the portrait as pieces of the person falling apart somewhere between hand sanitizer and virus cells.

This digital drawing shows a central masked face with their eyes covered by the words “Do Not Panic.” Above the person’s head are multiple red and gray models of coronavirus, Purell hand sanitizer, toilet paper, and two hands in front of a faucet covered in soap, connected by multi-colored fine lines. The figure’s neck is coming apart in petal-like shapes, each with a word describing an emotion such as: “fear,” “powerlessness,” “loneliness,” “grief,” “confused,” and “overwhelmed.”
JULIA MITCHELL
Within the Chaos, 2020

Mixed Media: Watercolor and Newspaper Collage on Paper

The work is showing the way that most people are feeling during this time. Many people feel different emotions because they aren’t used to being in this kind of situation. Mitchell says, “It is to show the stress and tension that builds up while being in quarantine.” This work allows us to see that she is in pain with all that she is dealing with because of the pandemic.

This painting and collage of a screaming, brown-skinned face is surrounded by translucent, blurred and overlapping watercolors. The face is contorted in a wide open scream with blood dripping from their eyes. Framing the disembodied head are torn strips of recent news articles on the virus.
VALERIE OLIVARES
Passing the Time, 2020

Mixed Media: Painting and Collage on Paper

This work depicts Olivares lying in bed, trying to escape the world around her. The cut-up articles from *The New Yorker* magazine with specific words relating to COVID-19 symbolize the barrage of confusing and conflicting information surrounding her and the anxiety it causes.

This mixed-media piece uses a page from the March 30, 2020 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine as the background for a self-portrait of a collaged and painted figure including other torn article pages from the magazine. The figure has black hair and has an expression of pain. The figure is surrounded by patches of yellow and blue.
ANNA PHILIPPE
Know It All: COVID-19, 2020
Digital Vector Drawing and Design

Philippe has created an informational manual about COVID-19 and how to cope. Her "tool-kit" is accessible and inviting - even humorous at times - so it is very easy to navigate and find what you are looking for. Also, her aesthetic choice of font and background design captures the reader’s attention. Know It All: COVID-19 offers information, recommendations, and hopes that all people, old and young, battling this pandemic really need. She provides information about the virus overall and how it is currently being eradicated as well as offers health and fitness tips and even a cross-word puzzle.

Download the large-print, full 19-page version of Know It All: COVID-19 at www.nolongeremptyedu.org
Head, 2020
Digital Drawing

*Head* depicts the way that people can use masks as symbolic bandages to cover their “true” faces. The written descriptors of negative emotions reveal the potential feelings that lie underneath, due to the stress and isolation of COVID-19. The red rope binding their hands can be seen as the lack of choice and control at this time. Randazzo wanted to let the viewers see, “There’s a lot of different things going through your head as the world falls into chaos.”

This digital drawing shows a brown-skinned figure whose face is mostly covered and whose arms are tied by a bright red string. Colorful, energetic strokes convey movement and tension. The words “ANGER,” “APATHY,” “ANNOYED,” “ISOLATED,” and “CONFUSED” are visible in red across the figure’s face. Around the head are circles of red, yellow, green, and blue radiating outward. Below them are shades of darker blue and purple overlaid with black vibrating lines.
PEARL SKELTON  
Active and Passive, 2020  
Digital Photography

Using different photographic elements such as focus, cropping, color and juxtaposition, Skelton has been able to show how the coronavirus pandemic has affected her. She includes a mask to symbolize the coronavirus and how making masks has helped her cope during these unpredictable times. The white mask is set against a bright red table, a powerful contrast that seems to reinforce both the dangerous and protective qualities that the mask represents for the artist.

This color photograph depicts a white mask hanging in focus, almost in the middle of the frame. In the background, the blurred surroundings depict a red table, atop of which are art supplies, a notebook, and a desktop screen. On the left side, there is a cork board with a similarly blurred calendar.
CHRISTOPHER SZCZYTOWSKI
Passing Time, 2020
Pastel on Paper

Szczytowski utilizes different shades of pastel colors and depicts different figures expressing different emotions. The figures represent Szczytowski in quarantine and his thoughts through this time. The figures all show the range of emotions of anger, boredom, anxiety, and everything in between. Depicting the figures in this manner shows the mental state of a person in a long term confined place.

This drawing depicts a hooded figure with a blue face and fingers, seeming to look at their hands while emerging from a bed. There is a figure on the top right corner with white eyes and a smile, hanging upside down and only visible from the torso. Closer to the foreground is a blue cylindrical table, atop of which is a small figure leaning on a short, open box containing a green potted plant. On the bottom, there is another figure sleeping. On the left is a ladder going up diagonally and other disembodied limbs in climbing motions. Under the bed are two pairs of glowing eyes.
SHONNAE IMEI TEEL
Your Colors Carry On, 2020

Poetry

The literary arts carry strong messages, and Teel has portrayed that in her poem. She uses the flame that describes the pain that everyone is going through during this pandemic. At the end of her poem, she uses the term “fly” so she can tell the reader that you can overcome a problem by staying positive.

My dear flame,
I know you are in pain.

Like a window, you embody the pane.

That the light in your color burns you til’ you sleep.
Slowly vanish, but please don’t weep.

But not the rest where you eventually awake,
the kind where you eternally quake.

In silence.

Your flame attracts those who want to see you cry,
so they extinguish your reminiscence to see something die.

Yet,
You live and learn to fly.
FRANK TRAN
We Are Not A Virus, 2020

Mixed Media: Watercolor and Colored Pencil on Paper

Tran makes the pain of anti-Asian discrimination felt in this portrait of the artist’s younger brother riding the subway. The Chinese characters for the sentence “We are not a virus” are inscribed in the background. The artwork is autobiographical, personal, provocative, and sincere. Tran notes, “My family, fellow Asian friends, and I are still people. We practice social distancing like any New Yorker...We shouldn’t be afraid of getting attacked because of things we cannot control.”

This watercolor shows a masked figure looking at the viewer. They are wearing a light blue shirt and darker blue pants. Their hands are together in the bottom center of the image. Overlaid atop the figure are outlined, calligraphic, Chinese characters.
MARISSA YANG
21st Century House, 2020
Digital Drawing

21st Century House takes place in a loop going back and forth between chaos and hope. During these unprecedented times, everyone is faced with inevitable signs of uncertainty and fear. Supposedly, staying in our homes will keep us safe and sound, but this notion does not necessarily apply to us mentally. Yang wanted to portray how the environment is controlling her silent, yet chaotic mind, and how there’s a coexistence of hopefulness and hopelessness that depends on the information we hear from the outside world. Using different shapes and colors, Yang has portrayed how the coronavirus pandemic lockdown has affected her state of mind. How she has been stuck in isolation. For Yang, the choice of colors are connected to states-of-mind. For example, the color red represents the chaos not only in her mind but also in the world, while the yellow symbolizes how there is still hope for a better future.

With a large black field of color are four figures within the composition: one stands barefoot in front of a red-screened television; one, wearing dark red pants and a long blue shirt, cradles themselves in the fetal position; one stands on top of a ladder wearing a teal hoodie and blue pants; one, in burnt orange, is seen sideways looking into what looks like a telescope. Patterns of lines and asymmetrical, geometric spaces surround and contain the figures.
KAITLYN YOUN
Burden, 2020

Drawing: Lead Pencil on Paper

This drawing is a pencil sketch that depicts the artist and all of the artist’s stress due to COVID-19. The background includes a pile of clothing, which Youn says represents the responsibilities that she used to have. Overall, the artwork is meant to portray the feeling of uncertainty for what happens next.

This pencil drawing depicts a pile of clothing almost to the top of the frame. On the left-hand side is a figure with their legs crossed, looking down on a table with their hands together.
Y.EX OPEN CALL FOR ARTISTS \ No Longer Empty’s Young Exhibition Makers invited fellow youth artists, ages 14–19, to submit artworks to their NLE Youth Artist Open Call. They designed the outreach flyer with a houseplant and colorful graphics to symbolize a call for creativity and growth while sheltering-in-place in their homes.

ASHLEY JAMES \ Young Exhibition Makers welcomed Ashley James, Associate Curator, Contemporary Art at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum as part of our program. Ashley spoke to Y.Ex-ers about her career path as well as about the art of curatorial work. She shared tips on how to hone their own curatorial practice from a young age and discussed some approaches to the big decisions that curators make. Youth learned so much about the curatorial process that greatly informed their decision making as they prepared for their own exhibition, “A NYC Youth-Led Response to COVID-19.”

@ohashuhlee

TOP: Ashley James. A brown-skinned person with long black hair smiles at the camera. They are wearing black headphones and a green-and-white striped sweater.

FACING PAGE: Outreach graphic for Y.Ex Open Call. Text is on a gradient background from yellow-to black overlaid with photos of leaves of a monstera plant and geometric-shaped graphics in yellow to orange gradients.
TARANEH FAZELI \ Young Exhibition Makers welcomed Curator, Educator and NLE Invited Artistic Director, Taraneh Fazeli, to speak about her curatorial practice and processes. Taraneh shared her insights on what an exhibition means to her, and her focus on disability art and justice in her work. Taraneh also explained her non-traditional approach to artist studio visits and her methodology of inclusion.

She also spoke to the importance of access in the arts and taught Y.Ex-ers about many of the methods and tools available such as descriptive captioning and introductions for the visually impaired.

BELOW: Taraneh Fazeli. A light-skinned person with brown, wavy hair is speaking while holding up a broadside catalog titled Notes for the Waiting Room along with a leaf-like graphic printed in black.

FACING PAGE TOP: Carolyn Lazard, CRIP TIME, 2018. A video still of two brown-skinned hands as they (Lazard) appropriate a week’s supply of their medications into a colorful plastic [blue and dark and light green are shown] pill containers.

FACING PAGE BOTTOM: Carolyn Lazard. A brown-skinned person with short hair smiles as speaking. They are wearing white earbuds and a dark-colored shirt. A bookshelf can be seen in the background.

CAROLYN LAZARD \ Young Exhibition Makers had an in-depth and enlightening studio visit with artist Carolyn Lazard and Taraneh Fazeli. Carolyn shared insights into her practice and the concepts that drive their work. They also discussed the importance of disability art and justice and accessibility within the arts both for artists and viewers alike.

Y.Ex-ers experienced first hand the importance of a studio visit and understanding an artist’s thought process, values, and motives within their practice.
SKY CUBACUB \ Youth Action Council and Young Exhibition Makers welcomed Sky Cubacub and collaborator-photographer Sandra Oviedo to host their culminating event! Sky Cubacub is a nonbinary queer and disabled Filipinx artist from Chicago, IL. Their fashion line, Rebirth Garments, aims to create gender non-conforming wearables and accessories for people on the full spectrum of gender, size, and ability. Sky maintains the notion of Radical Visibility, a movement based on claiming one’s body and, through the use of bright colors, exuberant fabrics, and innovative designs, highlighting parts that society typically shuns.

Thank you Sky and Sandra for showing us the importance of challenging mainstream beauty standards that are sizest, ableist, and conform to the gender binary! @rebirthgarments

SANDRA OVIEDO (A.K.A.) COLECTIVOMULTIPOLAR \ Sandra is a Chicago based photographer who loves the dance floor, artists, and their creative spaces. Inspired by a diverse collective of artists that she often sees, she began to use ColectivoMultipolar in honor of that diversity. @colectivomultipolar

A figure is looking to the side while holding a zine titled “Radical Visibility: A QueerCrip Dress Reform Movement Manifesto.” They are wearing headphones and a pink and black geometric patterned top and a multi-colored headpiece. Their makeup consists of purple unevenly applied lipstick and black crystal shaped eye liner on their right eye.

TOP: Sandra Oviedo. A figure with a black hair in a ponytail and round sunglasses is facing the camera, speaking. They are wearing a checkered black and white shirt with hands together. The background is flooded in blue light.

BOTTOM: Sky Cubacub Radical Visibility dance party. A group of people are dancing in brightly colored pink and purple outfits. In the foreground are the words “EMBRACE MY DISABILITY” in pink, capitalized text over a gray background.
LEONARDO ALMEIDA-RAMIREZ \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Leonardo Almeida-Ramirez is a student at Art and Design High School. He enjoys making art pieces for school, events, and for himself. He uses a variety of mediums to learn new techniques so he can better himself and his future career as an artist.

TAMARA BUENO \ Queens, (she/her)
Tamara Bueno is a 17-year-old self-taught artist from Queens, NY. Tamara grew up with a strong passion for the arts, including film, photography, painting, dance, and music. Recently she started to discover the world of digital art, transferring paper and paint onto a digital form. Embracing her love for art was very difficult. Towards the beginning of high school, she decided to follow an information technology career, but, in less than a year, she discovered she was quite miserable in that field. Although she enjoyed learning new things, she knew that she did not want to be in that industry for the rest of her life. She knew that she wanted to be in the art world. She wanted to be in a creative environment and design. She found the path that she wanted to walk on, and it was in art, the path of art.

HAOYUE CHEN \ Bronx, (she/her)
Haoyue Chen is a freshman attending The Bronx High School of Science. She is a proud member of the Extemporaneous Speech and Debate team, Key Club, and art clubs, such as the Painting Club. Haoyue is also a writer and publishes her work on various web publishing platforms anonymously. Ever since she began drawing when she was three, Haoyue has never stopped; she would always doodle in her notebooks and on her classwork, oftentimes earning an earful from the teacher. Haoyue continues to enjoy creating all kinds of art and experimenting with different mediums and forms.

JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Jordan Bowen is a 17-year-old content creator from Brooklyn, NY. Currently, Jordan focuses his work on poetry and has had a passion for art for a long time. As a student at Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH), Bowen has obtained the title of Student Government President for the academic year. This elevated his learning by introducing him to an array of various art forms and knowledge. His latest works consist of emotional artistry that exudes feelings on different topics. One, in particular, named “The Anti-Virus,” talks about the struggles of the current pandemic regarding COVID-19 and how it took a negative toll on people across the nation. From an artist’s perspective, Bowen strives to express himself in a plethora of ways and broadcast his productions by combining different cultural elements. All of his written art works can be seen at @jayy.artistryyy on Instagram.

JUNIOR STEVEN CLAVIJO \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Junior Steven Clavijo is a young artist and designer who attended the Brooklyn High School of the Arts. He is of Ecuadorian descent and born and raised in Brooklyn. The majority of his artwork revolves around shifting the negative perceptions of life in a positive direction. He uses a variety of mediums such as watercolor, acrylic, charcoal, pastel, pen, and ink. Junior’s main inspiration comes from his surroundings and past experiences. For Junior, the concept of transformation is also important within his work. His long term goal is to become an architect who creates spaces that motivate people and artists as well as fuels their creativity through inspiration and engagement. He believes that creation is influenced by his immediate environment and the people within it. Through interactions with others, he forms ideas that hold an emotional value that is then utilized in his works.
CAMELIA DIAS \ Bronx, (she/her)
Camelia Dias is a young professional artist in training at the Art and Design High School in Manhattan. She has been making art since she was 3 years old. Camelia is still sticking to this career because she is good at it and loves what she is doing to express her feelings. She has huge and scary dreams and sometimes feels like she won’t make it in life or that she’ll never be the greatest artist of all time. Camelia also believes that the right things come when you wait for it, so she is improving her work every day in order to be better. She is her only supporter, and she has come this far by supporting herself and giving herself hope that, yes, she can do better. She hopes that in the future, she will have more people that can support her with this dream.

AWA DIOP \ Manhattan, (she/her)
Awa Diop is a 15-year-old artist in New York. Awa dedicates her piece, in you i see a HERO, (2020), to healthcare workers, who for Awa, have been the true heroes during this pandemic. As a writer, the use of text and definition of words is central to her artistic practice and influences how she presents the subjects of her work, such as "HERO" in her collage exhibited in Y.Ex’s “A Youth Response to COVID-19.”

EMILY EBER \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Emily Eber is 17 years old and resides in Brooklyn. She is currently a junior at LaGuardia High School where she majors in fine arts. Emily has participated in an FIT pre-college course and has taken classes at the Art Students League. In 2018, Emily took part in a Black History Month showcase at DIFTA. Now, Emily is working on building her portfolio.

OMAR GARCIA \ Manhattan, (he/him)
Omar Garcia is an 18-year-old visual artist from New York City and a student at the High School of Art and Design. Omar believes that “everyone needs to do their part during the COVID-19 pandemic... it’s important for all of us to understand the benefits of restraint and social distancing. Just think of a time where all this will be over. This is a message for us to stay strong and think of a better future.”

JEREMY ARTURO FELIZ \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Jeremy Arturo Feliz is a young artist living in New York. Jeremy was born in the Dominican Republic, a small country in the Caribbean, where he spent most of his childhood living with his mother and other members of his family. Eventually, Jeremy moved to New York with his father to receive a better education, and, after five years, he graduated high school. Generally, he works with pencil and watercolor paint, as he has been using them for much longer than other materials. This does not stop him from trying out and experimenting with different mediums, as he has always enjoyed expanding his skills to keep on creating. What first drew him to art was the possibility of taking what he could see and put it down on paper. Now his practice is more about the freedom art gives him to create unique things. Jeremy’s greatest joy is taking what he sees, and more importantly what he feels, and translating it into art on paper. Art has always been present in his life, now more than ever, as he aims to make a profession of it rather than just a hobby.

LAMEES HADOU \ Queens, (she/her)
Lamees (Amin) Hadou is a 15-year-old student and artist who attends the High School of Art and Design in NYC. Although she struggles with the concepts of race and ethnicity, she identifies as an Egyptian-American practicing Muslim. Her goal is to one day become a show director or an animator for a television series or movie. Aside from art being her main hobby, she has an interest in literature and is currently practicing 3D modeling with the software Blender. When it comes to art styles, she “doodles,” “sketches,” and “details.” Lamees wants to expand into a hybrid of stylized realism. For her Y.Ex submission, Lamees used a variety of color palettes, making sure the Earth stood out from the galactic figure and the cosmic background. With her work, she tries to demonstrate the fact that the Earth is damaged, people are damaging it, and it’s time to stop and help the Earth. Lamees believes that even though it’s a hard time for all of us, that doesn’t mean we can’t get through it. She is glad to have participated in the Y.Ex exhibition.
RADEHA HAQUE \ Bronx, (she/her)
Radeha Haque is a junior at Bronx High School of Science. Radeha likes to grow as a change-maker in her community and enhance the importance of civics education. This year, she was offered to travel to two different states to learn from civic leaders and to collaborate with other like-minded young people who are equally passionate about making a positive impact. In the past, she interned at a firm that investigates police misconduct and she was a member of a national student leadership board that promotes civics education. She also conducts research at her lab. Last summer, Radeha worked with different types of technology to help people improve motor functions. At school, she is part of the starving artists’ society, her school’s physical sciences publication, her school’s equity team, desktop robotics club, and theatre production. She hopes to pursue engineering in the future. Her passions are influenced by her love of studio art. Growing up immersed in the artistry of drawing and painting, she developed her interest to build and create. Radeha loves to draw with various mediums, including paint, oil pastels, colored pencils, graphite, and ink. Recently, she has been exploring digital art. In her free time, she likes watching reruns of animated shows such as Avatar: The Last Airbender and 6teen, and considers herself to be a comic book enthusiast.

ELIJAH HASSAN \ Queens, (he/him)
Elijah Hassan is a current student at Bayside High School in the Digital Art and Design Program. The art classes he is currently taking are AP Studio Art (photography concentration) and Digital Media & Interactive Graphics. His medium of art would be Digital Design, with a hobby in video editing. Elijah excels in Digital Design, as he holds three Adobe certifications in Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. He will be attending the Fashion Institute of Technology with an intended major in Communication Design and Advertising Design. He plans to work in the Graphic Design industry as an advertising designer. Elijah also plans to learn UX/UI design to better develop his skills and make him a more versatile designer.

MAIA KILIAN \ Manhattan, (she/her)
Maia Kilian is a junior at LaGuardia High School. Maia has lived in New York City her whole life with her parents and younger sister. She has always loved taking pictures, especially on family vacations to many National Parks, but taking a photography class in school this year has really helped her grow as a photographer. She will be applying to colleges in the fall and is very excited to continue to pursue her love for photography wherever she goes next.

YOONA LEE \ Bronx, (she/her)
Yoona Lee is currently attending the High School of Art and Design. Ever since she was little, she grew up with a passion for the arts. Often, she would find herself doodling in notebooks and textbooks. With her friend’s suggestion, she decided to apply to a high school that specializes in art. In the High School of Art and Design, she learned more about different kinds of people. She learned more about art. She was inspired. One of her goals is to change the world into a better place. Through this artwork, she was hoping that she could share awareness upon the inequalities Asians are facing in the present. This artwork was not meant to "overshadow or detract" what the world is fighting for right now, but instead to "shed some light on other inequalities." With current events right now, she hopes that all people will fight for justice even if they are not impacted directly.

BRIANNA HERNANDEZ \ Bronx, (she/her)
Brianna Hernandez, born in 2005, grew up in Inwood, and has always considered herself an artist. She is currently a freshman at Riverdale Country School in the Bronx. Brianna is a determined and hardworking student and artist. She enjoys experimenting with art in her free time, using painting, animation, sculpting, photography, collaging, digital art, and more. For as long as she can remember, Brianna has been passionate about the arts. She played saxophone in middle school, was a member of her school chorus, and has performed in multiple plays and musicals. In addition, she will be a part of Riverdale’s dance team in her sophomore year. Brianna’s work is inspired by other artists, current events, and her imagination. She usually works with bright and soft pastel colors and many of her pieces depict nature, New York buildings, and abstract shapes.
**ITZEL MALDONADO \ Manhattan, (she/her)**

Itzel Maldonado grew up in New York City. Itzel will graduate from The NYC Museum School in June 2020 and head on to study at CUNY Brooklyn College this fall. As an avid fan and practitioner of the illustrative arts, Itzel's works are often self-reflective, utilizing her own experiences to convey meaning. Her talent and skills have won her first place in her high school's literary magazine, *The Archive Literacy Magazine*, during her sophomore and junior year. As well as a feature in The Joyce Theater’s May 2020 newsletter. Itzel hopes to make a career out of creating and selling her work.

**JULIA MITCHELL \ Brooklyn, (she/her)**

Julia Mitchell is an eighth grader from Manhattan Country School (MCS) and studies art while participating in an activism curriculum at school. The activism projects that take place at MCS allow her to get an understanding of mental health awareness which she tends to incorporate into her mixed-media work. She usually creates pieces with watercolor, graphite, or ink.

**KRISTYNA LORENZO \ Brooklyn, (she/her)**

Kristyna Lorenzo is a 15-year-old sophomore at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School, where she continues to strengthen and polish her love for art. From a young age, she had a passion for the arts, from her competitive dancing to her love for studio art in all mediums. Her parents carried colored pencils so she could draw. She would doodle on children’s restaurant menus. She competed in dance for five years in the tri-state area and her love for drawing always stood front and center. From originally drawing anime, she has progressed to now creating realistic portraits of her favorite movie and TV stars, as well as recording artists that give people a feel of nostalgia. Kristyna was very excited to attend I.S. 98 Bay Academy, where she studied art for three years.

**GIOVANNA MARTINEZ \ Brooklyn, (she/her)**

Giovanna Martinez is an artist from Brooklyn. Her main medium is drawing with life drawing being her preferred subject. Drawing from life allows her to portray what someone looks like based on the different perspectives that she perceives of the person. Perspective drawings are also of interest to her because it allows her to include different angles and viewpoints when drawing an object or person based on her subjective view in that moment. Another medium within her practice is digital collages made out of old magazines and edited found photos. Through taking something broken, and something old, and recreating it to make something new really helped form her own perception of things. Through her exploration of multiple periods within contemporary art history, she has discovered that the visual arts are key to forming personal viewpoints, perspectives, and perceptions. Although they may differ in medium, all are important forms of expression with the potential to become masterpieces that everyone can relate to.

**STEPHANIE MATA \ Bronx, (she/her)**

Stephanie Mata is a 16-year-old artist from the Bronx. She always sketched in her notebooks during class in middle school when bored, and soon took an interest in trying to improve her skills. Using the supplies her mother bought home and YouTube, Stephanie taught herself and expanded on her art style. In high school, she tried to start an art club with her art teacher to teach others. She is fond of realism and surrealism art styles. She uses digital art and pastels when creating art, and is inspired by social issues when creating new pieces. Stephanie wants her art to inform viewers of problems in society that need to be fixed. She wants to inspire other artists to create beautiful art that conveys messages that will help others in society. This spring will be the first time she will be able to present her art in No Longer Empty’s youth exhibition, and she hopes to make more art to be shown in the future.
ANNA PHILIPPE \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Anna Philippe is a 14-year-old student and visual artist residing in the borough of Brooklyn, New York. Anna is skilled in graphic design and digital art. Through this exhibition, she hopes that her work educates people about the virus, how to cope with it, and how to keep themselves safe in an accessible and pleasant way.

JESSICA RANDAZZO \ Staten Island, (they/them)
Jessica Randazzo is from NYC and is graduating this year from the High School of Art and Design. Jessica believes that art is something that is a constant in our world. The buildings that we see, the technology we use, the way we express ourselves, and so much more. Everything is an art form in some way. Art is essential to our existence, no matter the type or the meaning behind it, and without it the world would be a very simple place—the exact opposite of what life is.

VALERIE OLIVARES \ Queens, (she/her)
Valerie Olivares currently receives an art education at the High School of Art and Design, studying Fashion Design while participating in the Illustration classes. Her work includes using multiple mediums such as watercolor, markers, and ink to convey the expression of human emotions. Valerie will be attending Smith College next year in order to expand her knowledge in Latin American Studies while also doing art on her own time in Massachusetts. She currently lives in New York City with her family.

PEARL SKELTON \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Pearl Skelton is a junior at Hunter College High School. Passionate about both activism and the arts, she often includes current events or social issues in her work. Having been involved in protests, rallies, and political clubs, portraying a larger social movement through individual struggles is a theme throughout her work. While she is most often a painter, Pearl has also recently expanded into photography. She is currently working with a group of teen artists to raise money for Black Lives Matter and other related charities at @artists4gf on Twitter. Pearl is a passionate, driven, and friendly person and hopes that her art will foster connections as well as thoughtful discussions.

CHRISTOPHER SZCZYTOWSKI \ Manhattan, (he/him)
Christopher Szczytowski is a sophomore at the Art and Design High School majoring in illustration. Christopher has wanted to be an illustrator from an early age and is grateful for the opportunities to continue his journey as an artist. With his work, he wants to convey a message that will connect with and resonate with his audience, for each viewer to actually feel part of it, enjoy it, and feel a sense of nostalgia. Christopher wants there to be a connection between his work and the viewer.

SHONNAE IMEI TEEL \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Shonnae Imei Teel expresses individuality and divine femininity through her artwork as a young female creative. Living in Brooklyn, exposure to various cultural institutions has altered her view on artistic expression. Academic achievement in high school and college helped her obtain knowledge of the vast forms of art. Poetry, garment design, and makeup has allowed her to express feelings and creativity in a multitude of ways. Building an emotional and spiritual connection with her craft has guided her through the most important aspects of life; personal growth. With each chapter, Shonnae evolves into a better form of her artistic self which can be portrayed through her refined work.
Y. EX BIOS

FRANK TRAN \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Frank Tran is an 18-year-old Chinese and Vietnamese-American, artist and scientist. Tran paints because it’s one of the things he can do with his own power to influence others. With the overwhelming anti-Asian sentiment in the West, he wanted to remind everyone that his family, fellow Asian friends, and he are still people; people who ride the train and practice social distancing like any New Yorker, yet even the mere prospect of stepping outside puts Asian people’s lives at risk. People of Asian descent shouldn’t be afraid of getting attacked because of things out of their control.

MARISA YANG \ Manhattan, (she/her)
Marisa Yang is an 18-year-old student who is passionate about the visual arts. Marisa is currently a senior in the High School of Art and Design Living in New York City and is inspired by the complex beauty of the culture and everyday life. The idea of recording or creating her ideas into a reality excites her, and she hopes she can continue to share her voice with the world. Through fashion design and illustration, Marisa is able to explore and challenge the ways she can express herself as an artist. As she is only a few steps away from college, she aims to push herself creatively by integrating her authentic voice through different mediums.

KALIA ASENCIO \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Kalia Asencio is a person of Puerto Rican and Panamanian descent. Kalia loves to learn about new things and being able to apply it to her own knowledge and understanding. She is a native Brooklynite and believes that it’s the best borough. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends and getting to meet new people.

JORDAN (ISAAC) BOWEN \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
(Go to: PARTICIPATING ARTIST BIOS)

HAILEY DELVALLE \ Manhattan, (she/her)
Born in New York and raised in Puerto Rico, Hailey Delvalle is an 18-year-old student from the Lower East Side, Manhattan. She is an aspiring writer and activist. Her mission is to use mediums of art and creative writing to advocate for marginalized groups and seek justice for the oppressed. Hailey’s work spans from poems to paintings to film and various forms of mixed media. She has worked for many art institutions, including the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and El Museo del Barrio. Hailey has also written for the local news site City Limits, including the article “‘You Fat Cats in Your $500 Suits!’: A History of New Yorkers Reacting to Subway Fare Hikes.”

KAITYLN YOUN \ Bronx, (she/her)
Kaitlyn Youn is a 14-year-old Korean American sophomore at The Bronx High School of Science. Kaitlyn is an avid lover of the arts; ever since she was young, she always dreamed of becoming a fashion designer with her own fashion line walking down the catwalk of New York Fashion Week. She grew up in Queens and started taking art classes in the third grade. Kaitlyn started taking an interest in art at a young age due to her mom working as a fashion designer. She uses art as a creative outlet in order to express her own thoughts to the world. In her free time, she enjoys practicing art, music, and fencing or just hanging out with friends and family.

KARILYN DURAN \ Bronx, (she/her)
Karilyn Duran is a 17-year-old from the South Bronx, currently studying at the High School of Math, Science, and Engineering. She has been painting for years as a way to express herself. Karilyn believes that art has the power to heal, and it has been a support in her own mental health. She is glad to be part of a show that uplifts the voices of the youths feelings at a time like this.
GIVIENNA GENEVA GORDON \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Givienna Geneva Gordon (GiGe or Trip) loves to draw and is very protective of her friends and those close to her heart. She is willing to get to know anyone that wants to know her. She loves making connections with people close to her and will do anything for them.

AYAH HASSAN \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Ayah Hassan is a 17-year-old Muslim Egyptian-American with many passions and interests. She has a deep love for her culture and religion. For Ayah, these are two of the main things that drive her and keep her grounded. Although she struggles with some customs, she recognizes the important role these traditions play in her life for example, the Hijab (scarf). For Ayah, it’s more than just a piece of cloth—it’s a symbol of all her morals and rules that she believes is important for her to follow and embody. She also loves to read and write in her free time, and photography has a big place in her heart. These creative outlets are different ways for her to express herself in this world and make her voice heard.

EMILIA PALEGANO-TITMUSS \ Manhattan, (she/her)
Emilia Palegano-Titmuss is a rising junior at The Bronx High School of Science. She has been studying visual arts and storytelling with The Art Students League of New York since she was eight years old. She is a part of the National Speech and Debate Association and a varsity member of her school’s speech and debate team. Emilia was also given an award by the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. She is interested in pursuing mathematics as a career and is studying the effects of climate change at the Advanced Science Research Center. Emilia recently completed an international project on ways to combat COVID-19 with the New York Academy of Sciences. She loves to travel and has volunteered in a doctor’s office and tutored disabled children at a center in Ghana, Africa as well as studying three foreign languages: Italian, Latin, and Mandarin Chinese.

JULIAN SHARP \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Julian Sharp is a 17-year-old, Brooklyn-based high school junior currently attending Beacon High School in Manhattan. In his spare time, he likes to play soccer, read, and also manages a small business. Although he doesn’t consider himself an artist, he decided to join the NLE program to learn more about the process of being a curator and analyzing artistic pieces.

SHONNAE IMEI TEEL \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
(Go to: PARTICIPATING ARTIST BIOS)

KENISHA TERRY \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Kenisha Terry is a 15-year-old student from Brooklyn. She loves to swim and be outside, and describes herself as “extremely goofy” and when comfortable, “a very open person.” She is a fan of romantic comedies and action movies. Kenisha takes any opportunity to expand her learning so that she can be more knowledgeable. She sees herself as a very happy person, who “tends to talk a lot, but [is] very shy in front of a crowd.” She is kind, hardworking, and determined. She is committed to her friends and family and is constantly concerned for them, wanting to make sure that they are ok. Kenisha enjoys helping others and loves children, which is why she wants to be a child psychologist. She describes Y.Ex as “allowing me to feel comfortable by providing a safe space. It was very beneficial for me and allowed me to grow as a person.”
JUSTIN PEREZ, Education Intern, (he/him)
Justin Perez is a Latinx 17-year-old student living in the borough of Queens. He was born and raised in Puerto Rico and moved to the United States with his mother when he was 14 years old in order to further his education. He is currently an 11th-grade student at the International High School of Health Sciences. With an interest in psychology and drawing, Justin works with NLE as a Youth Advisor for content development.

DYLAN KENNEDY, Education Intern, (he/him)
Dylan Kennedy is a 19-year-old Brooklynite. He brings a wealth of training and experience to NLE from his internship with Exalt. Dylan is passionate about writing music, cooking, and his family. With an interest in learning about art networks and media, Dylan leads the No Longer Empty Education media development.

ANDRIN DIAZ, Education Intern, (he/him)
A.J. Diaz is a 17-year-old Afro-Dominican Taino from Bushwick, New York. He is a recent high school graduate from the Brooklyn School for Social Justice. He was recently accepted to LaGuardia Community College, and he will begin as a freshman this September. A.J. loves to read, acquire knowledge, and advocate for social justice. As a spiritual person who feels connected to nature, Andrin enjoys studying various religions. He also loves animals.
TARANEH FAZELI, Invited Artistic Director, (she/her)
Taranee Fazeli is a curator and educator living between New York City and Detroit. Her curatorial practice engages art as a site to interrogate the techniques of representation and dream of more just ways of being together. After a decade of leadership positions at NYC-based arts organizations, such as e-flux, Fazeli has worked primarily as an independent curator. Her peripatetic exhibition “Sick Time, Sleepy Time, Crip Time: Against Capitalism’s Temporal Bullying,” addresses the politics of health and disability while “I let them in. Conditional Hospitality and the Stranger” used hospitality as a lens to understand how racialized “white benevolence” operates.

DANilo Machado, Invited Curator-Educator NLE Lab, (they/them)
Danilo Machado is a poet and curator born in Medellín, Colombia currently living in Brooklyn, New York. Their writing has been featured in Hyperallergic, Brooklyn Rail, ArtCritical, TAYO Literary Magazine, and elsewhere. Machado is an Honors graduate of the University of Connecticut and currently a Producer of Public Programs at the Brooklyn Museum. Machado curated the exhibition “Otherwise Obscured: Erasure in Body and Text” at Franklin Street Works and is curating the forthcoming support structures at 8th Floor Gallery. Machado co-founded the poetry series Maracuyá Peach and the zine project Already Felt: Poems in Revolt and Bounty.

There is a massive need for healing on and to our planet.
While many communities have been seeking avenues of relief, repair, and liberation for some time, the COVID-19 global pandemic has illuminated these needs for many others. - Taranee Fazeli

CHRISTINE LICATA, Executive Director, (she/her)
Christine Licata has a wealth of experience in strategic leadership and social justice arts and education initiatives with artist-led, diverse, intergenerational local engagement at its core. A staunch artist advocate and community builder, her focus is expanding NLE’s transformational impact and contributions towards equitable social and cultural advancement. She has a B.F.A. from Parsons The New School for Design and an M.F.A. in Art Criticism and Writing from the School of Visual Arts.

TAHERA TAJBHAI, Executive & Program Coordinator, (she/her)
Tahera Tajbhai has a B.A. in Art History and a B.A. in Psychology from CUNY Brooklyn College, as well as an M.A. in Art History from CUNY Hunter College. She has worked in various art-based institutions over the past six years. As a first-generation U.S. American, her culturally-diverse background has had a large impact on how she approaches the world. She is a firm believer in mental health awareness and the power of art to heal.
Yet still I rise


No Longer Empty’s arts education programs Young Exhibition Makers (Y.Ex) and Youth Action Council (YAC) are made possible through the generous support of the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, the NYC COVID-19 Response and Impact Fund in The New York Community Trust, the National Endowment for the Arts, and individual donations.

Design: Elena Kim Design and PIGEON \ Website Design: Edward Velandria

Editor: Taylor Bradley

Visit www.nolongeremptyedu.org for more info and to download a pdf version of this catalog. @nolongerempty www.nolongerempty.org