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**NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS' PUBLIC ARTIST IN RESIDENCE TANIA BRUGUERA
LAUNCHES "CYCLENEWS"**

On bicycle routes in and around Corona, Queens, CycleNews will bring information on essential government services to immigrant-rich communities and communicate community needs back to local government

CycleNews aims to build trust between immigrant communities and local government

CycleNews is a project by Immigrant Movement International initiated by Tania Bruguera in collaboration with Mujeres en Movimiento and Kollektiv Migrantas

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NEW YORK—Today, NYC Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl and Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal joined artist Tania Bruguera and the Mujeres en Movimiento to launch "CycleNews," a new collaborative art project that seeks to build bridges between New York City government and its immigrant residents by demonstrating that we respect and protect all of our communities. The announcement was made at a rally for Immigrant Respect on the steps of City Hall. Pictures of the project in action are available [here](#).

"Art has the power to heal, to transform, and to bring us together. This groundbreaking collaboration between the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, our Public Artist in Residence Tania Bruguera, and the Mujeres en Movimiento is an extraordinary example of this," said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. "Two of my great passions in life are bicycles and social activist art, so I'm thrilled for the launch of CycleNews. Local government is responsible to local residents, and it's our obligation to work with them and listen closely to their needs – something that this project powerfully expresses."

"At a time when immigrant communities are under attack, it is more critical than ever to keep the channels of communication open and reinforce that the City of New York still has your back," said **Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Nisha Agarwal**. "The work of

Mujeres en Movimiento to empower their neighbors and networks through information is precisely the type of inspiring community action that the City wants to uplift and support at this important moment for so many of our residents.”

CycleNews is a project by Immigrant Movement International initiated by Tania Bruguera, in collaboration with Mujeres en Movimiento and Kollektiv Migrantas. Tania Bruguera is the Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) with the NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and Department of Cultural Affairs. The project seeks, among other things, to build trust between government agencies and new and undocumented immigrants, and to connect immigrant populations to critical services MOIA provides: IDNYC, ActionNYC legal services, English conversation classes, and know your rights materials.

“After spending time getting to know the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, I wanted to build on MOIA’s community outreach strategies and initiatives, furthering their relationship with the communities they serve,” said **Public Artist in Residence Tania Bruguera**. “The idea for CycleNews is to create a two way street where immigrant communities are able to trust the government and, equally important, the government demonstrates that it trusts the immigrant communities of New York City.”

CycleNews will begin with a pilot program in Corona, Queens working in collaboration with approximately 15 women from Mujeres en Movimiento, a local group of Spanish-speaking mothers and neighborhood advocates. The Mujeres formed from Bruguera’s Immigrant Movement International, an art project/think tank/community center initiated in 2011 in Corona with Creative Time and the Queens Museum. Coming together through self-organized fitness classes in Immigrant Movement International, the Mujeres have since become neighborhood leaders, using tactics from art and community organizing to advocate for community improvements, including adding bike lanes along Roosevelt Avenue.

“We feel very proud to be part of CycleNews because this project makes us more aware of our rights, reinforces our community power, and unites us as immigrants with renewed freedom and pride in our roots,” said **Mujeres en Movimiento**. CycleNews helps us to be better citizens who live and work around the clock in and for our New York City.”

“Nos sentimos muy orgullosas de ser parte de Cyclenews porque este proyecto nos hace ser más conscientes de nuestros derechos, refuerza nuestro poder comunitario, a la vez que nos une como inmigrantes y nos empodera con respeto, libertad y orgullo de nuestras raíces,” dijeron **Mujeres en Movimiento**. “Este proyecto nos ayuda a ser mejores ciudadanas, viviendo y trabajando de sol a sol en esta nuestra ciudad de Nueva York.”

The Mujeres have been working with Bruguera and training with MOIA to develop strategies to educate and engage immigrant residents about their rights and the services available to them. One of the initial steps of this collaboration was to revisit the way that services are communicated. By working with Kollektiv Migrantas, a Berlin-based artist collective specializing in migrant rights, Bruguera, the Mujeres, MOIA, and DCLA came together to co-create picture-based materials that outline critical MOIA services while centering on immigrant experiences. The materials were created through a series of participatory storytelling workshops

facilitated by Kollektiv Migrantas with the Mujeres and MOIA, separately. Kollektiv Migrantas combined these images and stories into the graphic materials ultimately produced.

The Mujeres will deliver this specially crafted information on CycleNews bicycles, as bike messengers, and in accompanying uniforms; serve as a direct point of contact between immigrant communities and government institutions; and bring first-hand feedback, ideas, hopes, and fears from immigrant communities to City officials and policymakers. CycleNews aims to strengthen direct lines of communication between policymakers and those most affected by immigration policies.

At the press conference, attendees heard from Queens Poet Joyce Sanchez of Poem Songs - Salmos de Fronteras, of Ecuadorian heritage, who performed an original poem titled *Mujeres* in English, Spanish, and Quechua; a singer from the New Day United Methodist Worship Team in the Bronx, Rae Wesley, who sang about immigrant rights and family; and Mobile Print Power, a multi-generational artist collective based out of Immigrant Movement International in Corona, Queens. Mobile Print Power uses silkscreen printmaking and participatory design in public space to engage communities and explore social and cultural situations.

“I’m proud of the City of New York for taking a strong stand in solidarity with our neighbors in immigrant communities working just like us to realize a better life for themselves and their families,” said **Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. “As the Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, I firmly believe that art has a unique power to connect us to each other and helps to break down barriers so that all can find a sense of place and community where they live. I’m thrilled that this new collaboration between world renowned artist-in-residence Tania Bruguera, Mujeres en Movimiento, and the City of New York, will connect immigrant communities with the resources they need to feel fully protected, respected, and empowered.”

“Our City is finding new and creative ways to build trust between government and immigrant communities,” said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca, Chair of the Immigration Committee**. “When agencies and artists collaborate they close the divides that separate residents from City activities and services. I look forward to the work of Public Artist in Residence, Tania Bruguera, and Mujeres en Movimiento as the Cycle News project shows how art can promote mutual respect among New Yorkers.”

Bruguera was the [first Public Artist in Residence announced](#) as the program was expanded under Mayor Bill de Blasio. Other PAIRs include artist Mary Miss with the Department of Design and Construction; Bryan Doerries with the Department of Veterans Services; and The Lost Collective with the Administration for Children’s Services. More information is available [on DCLA’s website](#).

About NYC Public Artists in Residence (PAIR) Program

Launched by the Department of Cultural Affairs in 2015, New York City’s PAIR – [Public Artists in Residence](#) – is a municipal artist residency program that embeds artists in city government to propose and implement creative solutions to pressing civic challenges. PAIR artists create lasting impact by working collaboratively and in open-ended processes to build community bonds, open

channels for dialogue, and create new possibilities for those who experience and participate in the work.

About Tania Bruguera + Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)

Bruguera asks the questions: how can immigrant communities trust the government and how, in turn, will the government demonstrate that it trusts immigrant communities? Bruguera began her research phase at MOIA in the fall of 2016. CycleNews marks her first major project with MOIA.

Tania Bruguera was born in 1968 in Havana, Cuba. Bruguera, a politically motivated performance artist, explores the relationship between art, activism, and social change in works that examine the social effects of political and economic power. By creating proposals and aesthetic models for others to use and adapt, she defines herself as an initiator rather than an author, and often collaborates with multiple institutions as well as many individuals so that the full realization of her artwork occurs when others adopt and perpetuate it. Advancing the concept of arte útil (literally translated to useful art; art as a benefit and a tool), she proposes solutions to sociopolitical problems through the implementation of art, and has developed long-term projects that include a community center and a political party for immigrants, and a school for behavior art.

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