Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning presents
Process → Project: What Comes Out of Our Sketchbooks

An exhibition organized by the Southeast Queens Artist Alliance

On view: February 4 - March 20, 2021
By appointment at JCAL’s Miller Gallery
161-04 Jamaica Ave, Jamaica, NY 11432
And online at JCAL.org/process-project

January 22, 2021 (New York) -- Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning (JCAL) is excited to partner with the Southeast Queens Artist Alliance (SEQAA) to present Process → Project: What Comes Out of Our Sketchbooks.
Sketchbooks, curated by Rejin Leys and Damali Abrams. This collaboration is one of several events comprising JCAL’s lineup of programs and events for Black History Month.

In this exhibition, the curators invited members of SEQAA and guest artists from outside Southeast Queens to show pages from their sketchbooks and other works that show different aspects of the creative process. At a time when many people ask “How did we get here?” with regard to the current cultural moment, there is a general desire to analyze and retrace one’s steps. Though at the intimate scale of individual art-making, Leys and Abrams provide a platform for artists to reveal the building blocks and sometimes nonlinear routes that are travelled as they arrive at their final works.

The exhibition begins with a press opening on Thurs., Feb. 4, 12 to 4pm, with members of the press invited to make appointments to see the work in the gallery and to speak with the curators. Appointments can be made by contacting JCAL Marketing Manager Tyrel Hunt (347-515-3652 or tyrelh@jcal.org). The exhibition is open to the public, by appointment only, from Thurs., Feb. 4 to Sat., March 20, 2021, on weekdays and select Saturdays as of Feb. 6. More information can be found at JCAL.org/visit-the-gallery. The exhibition is also on view online at JCAL.org/process-project.

Public programs to accompany the exhibition include “Make Your Own Sketchbook,” a one-hour live virtual workshop conducted by Leys, set for Sat., Feb. 6, 4pm, on JCAL’s YouTube Channel. Participants can learn how to make their own sketchbook and try a few exercises to spark ideas and develop drawing and observational skills. Activity kits (helpful but not required) will be available at JCAL as of Feb. 4. On Thurs., March 18, 6pm, there will also be an in-person, socially distanced Artist Talk featuring short presentations as well as a Q&A with the curators. The event will also be streamed live on the JCAL’s YouTube Channel.

“Sketchbooks provide a behind the scenes look at the artistic process,” noted Leys and Abrams in a joint curatorial statement. “In their sketches, artists test out ideas, record observations, practice skills, and plan future projects. This exhibition will present sketches, both loose and bound, by working artists with diverse practices: writing, painting, drawing, photography, collage, assemblage, sculpture, and paper-making. The shared act of sketching unites them.

Opening an artist's sketchbook can become a journey inside the artist's mind. Often representing intimate encounters with their thinking process, this invitation to experience such uninhibited experimentation is usually limited to those close to the artist, if at all. Public access to sketchbooks often become available only after the artist has died.

An exhibition of living artists’ sketchbooks provides perhaps more than a studio visit since multiple approaches to ideas are recorded that introduces the artist's practice and highlights the conscious work executed behind the scenes.”
“JCAL is honored to welcome the expansive vision of SEQAA once more to our gallery – and now online,” added Interim Executive Director Leonard Jacobs and Interim Artistic Director Courtney Ffrench in a joint statement. “The depth and scope of the work is a tribute to the inventiveness and creativity of the curators and all of SEQAA’s artists -- something made even more dynamic and illuminating by the inclusion of artists from outside our Southeast Queens community.”

_Process → Project:_ _What Comes Out of Our Sketchbooks_ is made possible with funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, with additional support from Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, the Queens Delegation of the New York City Council, the JCAL Board of Directors, and individual donors to JCAL.

**About SEQAA**

“The Southeast Queens Artists Alliance is comprised of visual, literary, and multidisciplinary artists. Our mission is to nurture local talent and to support quality cultural programming by artists who want to share their work with people in the community and beyond. At the same time, we want to participate in the ongoing discussions in the neighborhood around development and gentrification, and the role of art and culture in our community.”

**About JCAL**

**Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning (JCAL),** founded in 1972, is a multidisciplinary arts center based in the diverse community of Southeast Queens. Our mission is devoted to offering quality visual, performing, and literary arts, and to providing accessible education programs to encourage participation in the arts. JCAL’s offices and arts spaces are open in strict accordance with state and local COVID-19 guidelines. Operating hours by appointment: Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm, and galleries on Saturdays; closed major holidays. For additional information, call JCAL at 718-658-7400 or visit [www.JCAL.org](http://www.JCAL.org).

**Media Contact:**

Tyrel Hunt, Marketing Manager, 347-515-3652 or tyrelh@jcal.org.

For more information, visit [www.jcal.org](http://www.jcal.org).
For Immediate Release

Press Contact: Tyrel Hunt
Email: tyrelh@jcal.org
Cell: 347-515-3652

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