



Resobox celebrates its home in Long Island City

Japanese gallery Resobox hosts ode to its nabe



WE LIC

Japanese gallery Resobox hosts ode to the nabe

By Josey Bartlett

Resobox, a small gallery off Queensboro Plaza, kicked off a show this month paying homage to its home nabe of Long Island City.

Gallery goers will see photographs and paintings depicting the neighborhood, works by Queens artists as those that inspire an LIC, via the show titled "Explosive LIC: Art, Time and History."

Queens County artist and conceptual artist, who even though he's not from the neighborhood he took a chance to do.

"I see things at these artists about Long Island City and how he is his home," Gonzalez said. "In a way I see a bit like Long Island City."

Consider west hometown for nearly eight years, but when his close friend died a couple years ago he decided he would have to leave his hometown for good.

Every year on the anniversary of his friend's death he writes down his own accomplishments for the occasion, then the paper boat, and sends them out onto the water.

"Little paper boats" is being displayed at Resobox along with "April Flowers," which represents the museum when he moved into his first home and saw some outside. They are brightly colored paintings with loose brush strokes.

Gabriel Castellari's drawings give a healthy dose of value to the exhibition. The artist, who was born in Manila, Manila but grew up in Spanish Harlem and now has a studio in LIC, says his drawings are about the "nabe."

"It's a reminder of a cultural obligation," Castellari said. "I focus on work, symbols, popular culture, political context, social class, working class, language, social/cultural change."

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PHOTOS BY JOSEY BARTLETT

Japanese gallery Resobox, celebrates its neighborhood of LIC with a group show including works, below, from artists

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by Josey Bartlett, qboro editor

Resobox, a small gallery off Queensboro Plaza, kicked off a show this month paying homage to its home nabe of Long Island City.

Gallery-goers will see photographs and paintings depicting the neighborhood, works by Queens artists or those that convey an LIC vibe in the show titled “Explore LIC: Life, Time and History.”

Suffolk County artist Jenri Gonzalez says that even though he’s not from the neighborhood he feels a closeness to it.

“I was hearing all these stories about Long Island City and how far it has come,” Gonzalez said. “In a way I am a lot like Long Island City.”

Gonzalez was homeless for nearly eight years, but when his close friend died a couple years ago he decided to work harder toward his goal of exhibiting artwork.

Every year on the anniversary of his friend’s death he writes down his own accomplishments for the year, folds them into paper boats and sends them out onto the water.

“Little paper boats” is being displayed at Resobox along with “April flowers,” which represents the moment when he moved into his first home and saw roses outside. They are brightly colored paintings with loose brush strokes.

Gabino Castelan’s drawings give a healthy dose of color to the exhibition. The artist, who was born in Puebla, Mexico but grew up in Spanish Harlem and now has a studio in LIC, says his drawings are about the “worker.”

“I consider myself a cultural sociologist,” Castelan said. “I focus on words, symbols, popular culture, political control, social class, working class, language, and cultural change.”

He uses images from history books to inspire his chalk, charcoal, chalk pastel, Sharpie and acrylic permanent marker drawings.

The works straddle the modern and the archaic by clearly being depictions of historical events, but shown in a new way with thick black outlines filled in with bright colors such as neon pink and orange.

Christopher Bailey of Washington Heights is showing his paintings for the first time — in fact he only began painting last January.

“It will now forever be written into my own personal history as a person and artist,” Bailey said. “I am so proud and grateful to say that.”

“Commute” is a sepia and shades of gray painting of the No. 7 train, but Bailey says the painting can connect to anyone. For him it reminds him of Chicago, where he lived until recently, where most trains are elevated.

Other works include photographs of the neighborhood several decades ago by Pierre Pullis and Eugene de Salignac, abstract paintings by Ana Sanchez, a student at LaGuardia Community College and LIC resident, and Rafael Gonzalez’s 360-degree photographs of LIC landscapes, along with many others.

Resobox founder Takashi Ikezawa said forming the show was no easy task.

“Unfortunately, this time, after we set up the theme for LIC, not so many artists could gather since arts in LIC have not yet matured, so we included the artists from Queens including Sunnyside or any other places,” Ikezawa said in an email.

But this is just a test run. Resobox, which also hosts a slew of Japanese culture classes, plans to host an LIC exhibition every year going forward.

‘Explore LIC: Life, Time and History’

When: Through Aug. 30, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. -to 6 p.m. and Saturday noon to 5 p.m.

Where: Resobox, 41-26 27 St., LIC

Tickets: Free, (718) 784-3680, resobox.com