

Local artists make huge impact

[Karen Clements](#), Jamaica Examiner

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Artist William Mwazi displays his work at his studio at 90-26 161st Street Credits: k. clements

The artists in residence at 90-26 161th Street represent a diverse mix of styles. Chashama, in conjunction with the Greater Jamaica Business Development Corporation, takes care of the space charging artists a reasonable fee without the hassles seen in other commercial spaces. Artists are granted use of the studio at all hours and in some cases, provided with paints and tools for their craft. The affordability allows artists to continue practicing their craft and have their works circulating in appropriate venues rather than showcasing in their homes. Artists site it as a great means for the young and newly rising to get their start. Below is a profile of some of the artists in residence.

Cythnia Epps is a visual artist who has a wide ranging portfolio and resume. Proficient in many artistic styles her impact lies in her simplicity. Her photography captures the quietest of moments effortlessly and it is not uncommon to mistake her strong artful hand for photography. She is enthusiastic and friendly with a broad wonderful smile.

There is immediate recognition in William Mwazi's art due to the public figures who are melding into superheros in his works. There may be a chuckle from seeing these figures in their new roles but eventually there is pause and thought on the larger message of principles being conveyed and an appreciation of the level of talent able to convey such principles in an easily relatable manner.

Lawrence Joyner is not only an artist in residence but the founder of Reconstruct Art Inc. a community outreach organization for at risk youths and adults. The program occupies to top floor of the space and is divided into many different art project rooms. Lawrence opted to forgo his career as a Wall Street Broker to follow his passion and talent (clearly the right pursuit). His Reconstruct Art organization has several outreach projects in the works including a mural in Far

Rockaway, a series of art classes at Queens Library and a Sean Bell “I am A Man” exhibit featuring a dialog segment with community members.

Flory Ramoreboil is a South Africa native who hopes to one day return and help her homeland. Her artwork has a feminine flair with both girlish and sophisticated qualities. She is also a hairdresser who showcases her artwork in her nearby salon.

Babatunde Ajiboye, the only fashion designer in residence, feels he is among good company. He gathers inspiration for his work from the artists around him. His work was in evidence on another artist, Flory, who aptly wore his one of a kind scarf. Just back from a working costume design on an upcoming Hollywood movie, his upward mobility seems evident.

Tishawn Gonsalves was one of the featured artists on exhibit that evening. Featured in the exhibit was “Containment” was a collage of styles depicting elements of the classic “Native Son” narrative and its themes of the urban experience.

Anthony Newton’s admits being in the game for a while and that longevity reflects positively in his distinctive style. A product of the meaner streets of Pennsylvania, his works reflects a compassion for urban realities. He is currently towards on a collection for exhibit and looking forward to teaching with Reconstruct Art.