

MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA HONORS THOSE WHO SERVE THE COMMUNITY AMID CRISIS

ExtraOrdinary Figures Project Recognizes Sacrifices in Wake of the Pandemic

PHILADELPHIA – May 12, 2020 – Mural Arts Philadelphia announces a new project to memorialize the brave individuals who have answered the call to rise in the face of the pandemic. **The *ExtraOrdinary Figures* portrait project seeks to recognize and honor the bravery of the many individuals who are protecting and serving our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.** In response to unprecedented challenges, otherwise ordinary acts of resilience have become extraordinary. *ExtraOrdinary Figures* is a shining examples of the bravery and integrity of everyday people: first responders and hospital workers who are directly caring for the sick, grocery workers and truck drivers who are keeping food and essential supplies stocked and available, janitors who are working to keep our spaces clean and sanitized, and so many others.

Now, **the public can nominate someone to be painted by one of the artists selected to participate in the *ExtraOrdinary Figures* portrait project.** For thousands of years, important figures have been immortalized through portraiture. Portraits capture unique stories and moments in time by paying homage to individuals who have shaped human history, and ensure these important stories are never forgotten. Once the portraits are complete, they will be featured in an online gallery on the Mural Arts website and in social media. The goal, once circumstances allow, is to have an exhibition featuring the portraits in public.

“In the wake of the stay-at-home order, Mural Arts quickly shifted, providing new programs, employing artists, and bringing together art and public health messaging,” said **Jane Golden, Executive Director of Mural Arts Philadelphia.** “We recognize the role that public art can play during these times to inspire, celebrate, and bring hope, while providing support to our creative economy by commissioning new work. I look forward to seeing the beautiful stories these portraits will bring to light.”

The *ExtraOrdinary Figures* project is inspired by Luis Suave Gonzalez’s *Heroes of the Day* project. Mural Arts Philadelphia wants to recognize and honor individuals by sharing their

faces and telling their inspirational stories through art. The project offers another opportunity for exposure for Mural Arts artists and members of the community who responded to COVID-19.

Submissions for **ExtraOrdinary**

Figures will be accepted until Friday,

May 22, 2020. This project is citywide

and open to the general public. If chosen, nominators will be reached out to directly by a Mural Arts representative. Upon contact, nominators will connect Mural Arts with nominees and/or their families and provide a photograph of the nominee. Those interested may submit their nominations at www.muralarts.org/artworks/extraordinary-figures. For any additional information or questions please reach out to info@muralarts.org.



Portraits from Luis Suave Gonzalez's Heroes of the Day project

ExtraOrdinary Figures is supported by the Hummingbird Foundation.

Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For more than 35 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative and equitable process, creating nearly 4,000 artworks that have transformed public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts aims to empower people, stimulate dialogue, and build bridges to understanding with projects that attract artists from Philadelphia and around the world, and programs that focus on youth education, restorative justice, mental health and wellness, and public art and its preservation. Popular mural tours offer a firsthand glimpse into the inspiring stories behind Mural Arts' iconic and unparalleled collection, which has earned Philadelphia worldwide recognition as the "City of Murals." For more information, call 215-685-0750 or visit muralarts.org. Follow along on social media: [@muralarts](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and [@MuralArtsPhiladelphia](#) on Facebook, and [phillymuralarts](#) on YouTube.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: high-resolution images are available in the Mural Arts Philadelphia press room at <http://bit.ly/MuralArtsPressKit>.