

Harlem Art Review

In the heart of Harlem, where the rhythm of culture beats ceaselessly against the backdrop of history, there is a canvas for urban expression. Street art stands out among the vibrant streets, amid the echoes of jazz and the pulse of life. In this essay, we will look at a piece of street art that I believe deserves some attention. We will examine this piece as a dynamic form of expression, beginning with its simple yet charming nature and progressing to the techniques used within it. This review will cover everything you need to know about this hidden but unique Harlem art piece.

We'll start this review with how I found it. It was the summer before my first semester at CCNY. I wanted to explore the area around campus and familiarize myself with it. As I explored I turned onto 142 st while walking down Amsterdam Ave. That's where I saw it. Hung up on the fence of Hope Stevens Garden alongside a lot of other art pieces. Amongst all the pieces was this one which caught my eye instantly. This all took place on August 1st 2023 and when the time came around for me to think about what I wanted to review this piece of art instantly came to mind.



This art piece is by an artist named Kayin Bann and it was picked and curated by Durhiwe Rushemeza from a project by the organization Harlem One Stop called Art In Windows. "Art in Windows" is a community, arts, and business engagement initiative sponsored by the West Harlem Development Corporation and produced by Harlem One Stop. The project states that its goal is to revitalize the commercial corridors, inspire youth, and raise awareness of the creative community and

visual artists who call West Harlem home. "Art in Windows" displays artwork in vacant spaces and



storefronts on Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway, reversing the gallery concept by incorporating art into our daily lives. Unfortunately I couldn't find much about the actual artist but it's still interesting to know more backstory about why this piece of art is where it is.

In Harlem, where every corner whispers stories of endurance and creativity, street art is a powerful medium of expression and connection. The importance of initiatives like "Art in Windows" extends beyond their aesthetic appeal; they represent an effort to reclaim public spaces, bring vibrancy into everyday life, and provide a platform for local artists to showcase their work. These projects transform the streets into galleries

and make art a shared experience, enriching Harlem's cultural tapestry for both residents and visitors.

Next I want to talk about what this art is portraying and why it stands out. This art portrays two people falling out of the sky with one panicking and the enjoyer who seems to find it fun. At least that's my interpretation of it. There's something captivating about how expressive and overly exaggerated this piece of art is. This piece of art seems to have been done on a large sheet that feels and looks very plastic-like. It's hard to distinguish by just looking at it but it could have been done by markers or even possibly a type of paint. The thick smears and strong perspective on the art give it an original personality. The background is done incredibly as well with the clouds and ground having incredible detail. This artist also demonstrates great anatomy skills as drawing 2 people in such a strong perspective is not an easy task. Overall everything in this comes together to create a piece of art that's filled to the brim with emotion.

Street art thrives as a dynamic form of expression on Harlem's vibrant streets, where culture and history intersect. Among the numerous artworks covering the neighborhood, one piece stands out for its simple yet captivating nature. Discovered on a summer day while exploring the area around CCNY, this artwork by Kayin Bann, curated by Durhiwe Rushemeza through the "Art in Windows" initiative, commands attention with its bold depiction of two figures appearing to fall from the sky. This piece stands out not only for its expressive quality, but also for its placement within the community, which demonstrates West Harlem's creativity and vitality.

