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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON HEIGHTS ARTS FESTIVAL: RE-ENVISIONING SPACES THROUGH THE ARTS

Saturday, June 22nd 2013 (rain date: Sunday, June 23rd)
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Diversity Plaza / 37th Road Pedestrian Plaza (between 73rd Street & 74th Street)
Jackson Heights, Queens

The **Jackson Heights Arts Festival** is an all-day public event with free art workshops, music, outdoor exhibitions and beautification activities to celebrate the *Diversity Plaza* and the local art scene. The festival is an initiative to build on the local arts community, increase the visibility of artists that live and work in the neighborhood, promote community-based arts practices and open a dialogue for empowerment through the arts. This outdoor festival provides a space for local artists to engage residents and visitors in taking an active role to improve the neighborhood. Artists will reflect on the neighborhood's cultural diversity, lifestyles, faiths and history, as well as issues related to sexual orientation, immigration, gentrification, labor and discrimination, among others. This event is part of *Making {Art} Spaces*, a broader effort initiated by *Hibridos Collective* to create public art spaces through collaboration with other artists, neighbors, and local stakeholders.

The *Diversity Plaza* faced usage challenges in the early stages of implementation in September 2011. Some residents and merchants expressed concern and resistance to the idea of a pedestrian plaza because of the potential harm it could have on the economic and social vitality of the area. *Hibridos Collective* believes that the community can help change this perception and successfully implement arts and culture programming that will make this business corridor thrive in collaboration with *Sukhi*, a group of business owners serving as stewards of the pedestrian plaza.

The **Jackson Heights Arts Festival** will kick-off with beautification projects in the morning hours. Neighborhood volunteers will engage in clean-up, greening and painting activities to bring life and color to the pedestrian plaza. In the afternoon, local guest artists will be invited to perform, exhibit artwork and provide free art workshops.

Interested artists may submit proposals for art education activities and/or art exhibition opportunities addressing the topics suggested, but not limited to the description given above. Queens-based artists of all ages, skill level, and craft, especially from Jackson Heights, Corona and Elmhurst, are strongly encouraged to apply. Find more information about the festival at www.hibridos.co

ABOUT HIBRIDOS COLLECTIVE: *Hibridos Collective* (pronounced *e-bree-dos*) is an interdisciplinary collaborative working to re-envision spaces through community-based arts practices.

Hibridos Collective is organizing the *Jackson Heights Arts Festival* in partnership with the *Jackson Heights Beautification Group* (fiscal sponsor) and *Sukhi* (community partner) in celebration of *June in Jackson Heights* and the *Queens Art Express*. This event is made possible in part by the *Queens Council on the Arts* with public funds from the *New York City Department of Cultural Affairs* in partnership with the *City Council*. Additional funds generously provided by *Citizens Committee for New York City* and *Coro's Immigrant Civic Leadership Program*.

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