



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contemporary Artist Derrick Adams' First Large-Scale Work on Ceramic Tile to Permanently Welcome Residents at New HELP USA Affordable Supportive Housing Center



NEW YORK, NY– (January 19, 2024) HELP USA, the renowned national homeless services and supportive housing provider, yesterday unveiled, “We Make This City’s Grid,” (2023), a large-scale mural by artist Derrick Adams. Part of a slate of art initiatives with the artist aimed at raising awareness about the traumas experienced by homeless and formerly homeless people in New York City, the mural, a 25’ x 9’ ceramic tile mosaic which is the artist’s first time working in this medium, will permanently adorn HELP ONE Building A, part of a four building new affordable housing development in East New York, Brooklyn which offers a wide range of supportive services on-site for residents.

The reception was attended by the artist, representatives from Gagosian gallery, HELP USA Board member Eden Williams, HELP USA CEO Dan Lehman, RxArt President Diane Brown, and others, including contemporary artist Baseera Khan who is the HELP USA 2024 Art of Resilience Artist Host, succeeding Adams in this role.

Reflecting on the project, Derrick Adams said during his remarks, *“This is one of the highlights of my career.”* He added, *“Art is therapeutic, whether you are making it or interacting with it. This work represents community, family, and motion between those who will call this home and those from the neighborhood who will come as visitors, to participate in programs, and to work. I am honored to be a part of HELP USA’s efforts to share the healing power of art with those who are recovering from homelessness.”*

Adams’s paintings, sculptures, collages, performances, videos, and public projects celebrate and expand the dialogue around contemporary Black life and culture through scenes of normalcy and perseverance. He has developed a distinctive style of joy, leisure, and the celebration of life, which can clearly be seen in “We Make the City's Grid,” (2023).

Dan Lehman, President and CEO of HELP USA commented, *“Art transforms and strengthens both individuals and communities, encouraging us to see the world in new ways. This magnificent work by Derrick Adams brings this truth to life, conveying hope and possibility to everyone who comes through the door.”*



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HELP ONE is situated on the original site of HELP USA's first family shelter, which opened in 1989. When completed, HELP ONE will include four buildings, with upwards of 500 units of permanent, affordable housing. Residents, who began moving into the new units in late 2023, include young families, many headed by a single parent, and homeless individuals with mental health concerns, among others who will benefit from the trauma-informed design of the buildings. High-quality, on-site supportive services and programs will ensure individuals and families can remain stably housed and a stronger and safer community for all. Adam's works will be permanently on view to the public in the two-story foyer of HELP ONE's Building A.

In addition, HELP USA will bring its innovative art therapy program the Art of Resilience to HELP ONE - marrying the healing potential of art with individual social and emotional assessment to create pathways to lasting solutions for persons in crisis or with past trauma. The certified art therapists will host workshops, open studio events, and individual sessions where participants can express feelings, address trauma, and rebuild self-respect.

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About Derrick Adams

Derrick Adams was born in Baltimore in 1970 and lives and works in New York. In 2022, Adams established two initiatives to nurture the arts and culture in his native Baltimore. The Last Resort Artist Retreat is a residency program committed to the concept of leisure as therapy for the Black creative. The Black Baltimore Digital Database is a multipurpose physically and digitally accessible space dedicated to cataloging and archiving cultural contributions by Black Baltimoreans, both historical and ongoing. Permanent collections include the Baltimore Museum of Art; Birmingham Museum of Art, AL; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; and Whitney Museum of American Art, NY. Exhibitions include ON, Pioneer Works, NY (2016); Network, California African American Museum, Los Angeles (2017); Patrick Kelly, The Journey, Studio Museum in Harlem/Countee Cullen Library, NY (2017); Sanctuary, Museum of Arts and Design, NY (2018); Transmission, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver (2018); Where I'm From, Baltimore City Hall (2019); Buoyant, Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY (2020); Derrick Adams and Barbara Earl Thomas: Packaged Black, Henry Art Gallery, Seattle (2021); LOOKS, Cleveland Museum of Art (2021–22); and I Can Show You Better Than I Can Tell You, FLAG Foundation, NY (2023). Adams has received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award (2009), Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize from the Studio Museum in Harlem (2016), Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship (2018), and Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency (2019).

About HELP USA

HELP USA works to ensure that everyone has a place to call home. We provide shelter for people in crisis, ongoing support for individuals and families in need and work to strengthen vulnerable communities. Every day, we address the root causes of homelessness at over 40 transitional and housing locations and through more than a dozen prevention and support programs. For more information, visit www.helpusa.org.