



**SMELL IN DIALECT** is a mural project conceived by Italian artist Gabriella Ciancimino in collaboration with Residency Unlimited (RU) and commissioned by Kings County Hospital Center (KCHC) for its pediatric unit. The making of the mural took place during Ciancimino's 2 month residency at RU and KCHC in May and June 2019, with the goal of engaging communities from both the Hospital and the Flatbush region to take part in the development of the mural. The end result was a beautiful collaboration between the artist, the children from KCHC's pediatric unit, and students from W. Wingate High School and KAVI (Kings Against Violence Initiative).

***Smell in Dialect**, mural  
project at Kings County  
Hospital, Pediatric  
Unit, acrylic on wood,  
128 x 82,26 in*

**GABRIELLA CIANCIMINO**  
SMELL IN DIALECT



Ciancimino has researched extensively the dynamics of cohabitation among native versus immigrant plants in different parts of the world. She views these relationships as a metaphor for how different communities are able to coexist through sharing of knowledge and collaborating ecologically to overcome cultural differences.

*Work in progress, color palette  
for Smell in Dialect.*

For Smell in Dialect a similar investigation occurred. Preliminary research on the species in Flatbush was done at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden's Library. The artist then organized a series of workshops dedicated to the exploration of themes related to memory, scent, and landscape. Participants learned about how nature and art relate, the connections between migrating weeds and immigration, and more generally how plant dynamics relate to notions of mobility and adaptation.



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Topics included the notion of environmental violence and how generations of systemic racism have resulted in a lack of foliage and native plants within neighborhoods such as Flatbush. Participants were invited to share what kind of impact this has on them and ultimately the workshops incited participants to create visual proposals which were incorporated in the final design of the mural.

Ciancimino began by introducing the Smell in Dialect project to the students. The workshops were led by Ciancimino in conjunction with the local artists Anne Percoco and Ana Ratner.

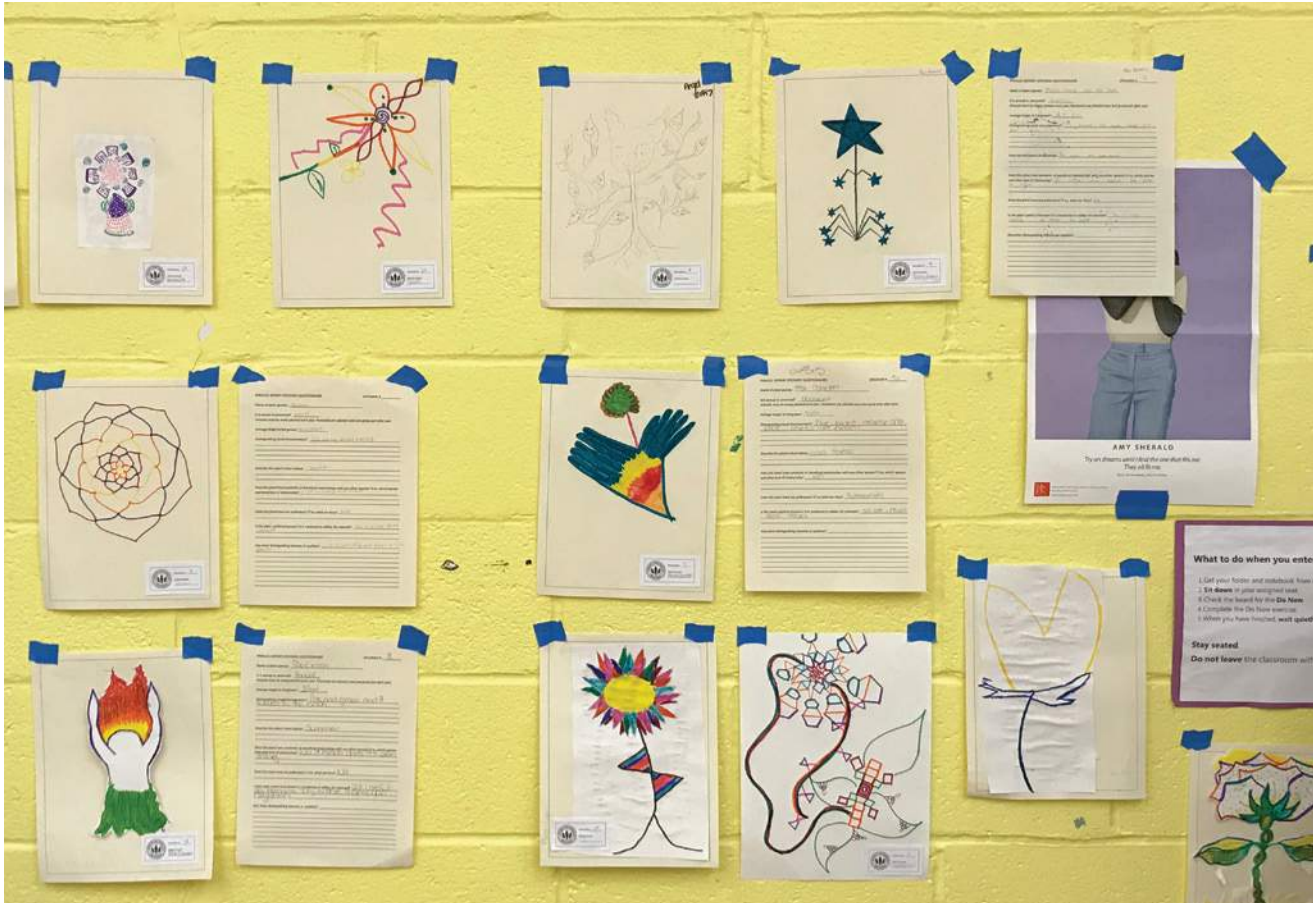
*Art Nouveau decoration at King County Hospital Center's historical old entrance.*



*Stamp created by the artist inspired by art nouveau decoration seen above.*

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## WORKSHOPS



*Drawings done by the students who participated in the workshop at Wingate High School.*

The first workshop took place in Wingate High School and was dedicated to the observation of landscape. The theme was: **WHAT ARE IMAGINARY PLANTS? HOW WE CAN CREATE THEM?** Anne Percoco presented her herbarium project Parallel Botany (The Study of Imaginary Plants) that contains over 90 imaginary plants. Students were then invited to design their own imaginary plants and collectively create visual elements for a new herbarium. Their proposals (drawings and texts) were then incorporated into the mural.

*Student working on a drawing during the workshop.*



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*Drawings done by students during the workshop using watercolors made from natural pigments.*

Led by Ana Ratner from Herban Cura the theme of the second workshop was: **HOW TO CREATE THE NATURAL COLORS FROM PLANTS AND PAINTING IMAGINARY PLANTS.** Herban Cura challenges urban disconnect by providing inclusive spaces of healing, learning, and collaboration. By starting from the assumption that in natural systems there is no waste, Herban Cura observes an inherent integrity present in Nature. The artists taught the students how to extract natural pigments from local and immigrant plants, and non-native ones. They then made watercolors with these natural pigments.



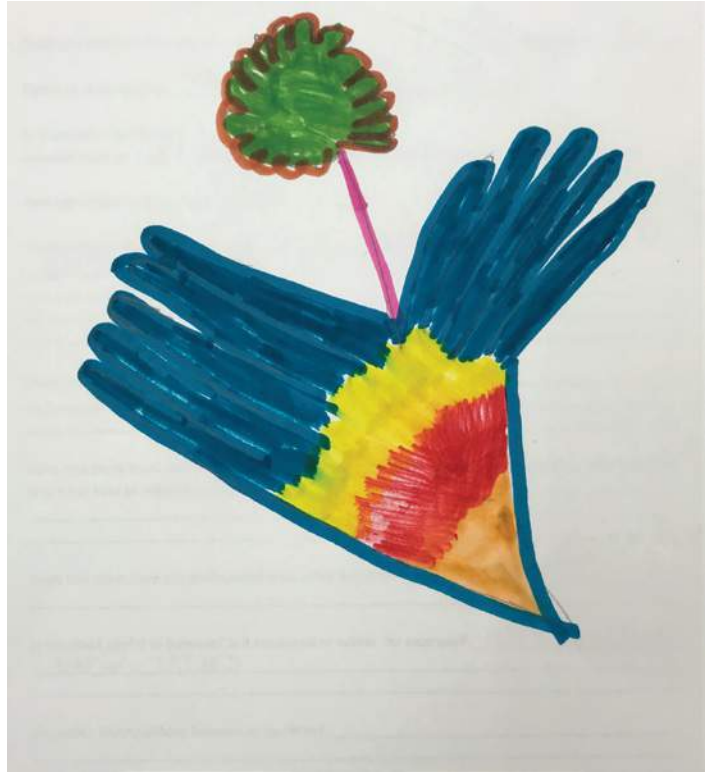
*Students participate in the extraction of natural pigments later used to make watercolors and silk dye.*

A video detailing this process can be found in the following link:

**[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/344127660](https://vimeo.com/344127660)**



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*Drawings made by students during workshops.*



*Workshop with hospitalized children at Kings County Hospital Center's pediatric unit.*

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*Some of the drawings done by students shown side by side with the final work.*



At the end of the workshops, Gabriella graphically incorporated the materials produced by the participants in her Mural for the Pediatric Unit of the KCH. The students were co-authors of the final artwork.

Ultimately Smell in Dialect strives to foster connections within the pediatric unit at KCHC between the staff and the community making the hospital setting more welcoming.



## MEET OVER LUNCH: GABRIELLA CIANCIMINO PRESENTS "SMELL IN DIALECT" AT RU



*Gabriella presents the final work to the public in conversation with the workshop participants at RU.*







***Smell in Dialect (detail), 2019***

*mural project at Kings County Hospital,  
Pediatric Unit, acrylic on wood  
128 x 82,26 in*



**Smell in Dialect, 2019**

mural project at Kings County Hospital,  
Pediatric Unit, acrylic on wood  
128 x 82,26 in





*Presentation of the mural at Kings County Hospital, June 25th 2019.*

Gabriella Ciancimino's residency is made possible with support from The Cultural Development Fund from NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC Health + Hospitals Arts in Medicine (AIM), the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund, Kings County Center Hospital, American Chai Trust Inc, and Villa Montallegro.



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