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PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION 'NEW SPACE SPHERES' MERGES CREATIVE EXPRESSION WITH SAFETY MESSAGING ON DOWNTOWN STREETS AND WINDOWS

- The 'New Space Spheres' are large circular graphics that merge original art and safety messages
 - Artist, Janel Young, will be continuing to install unique artworks and that of her artistic collaborators on Downtown streets, windows, and bus shelters for display until the end of the year
- Artworks are currently displayed in 15 windows of the Granite Building at 313 6th Street, Downtown
 - This is the second of several Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership commissioned artworks being implemented as part of their '**REFORGE Downtown**' Initiative

DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH, PA – Public art continues to provide opportunities to showcase and engage the work of Pittsburgh artists with 'New Space Spheres' starting to crop up all over Downtown. The work is that of Janel Young, who curated the project, and four of her artistic peers who sought to bring vibrant color combined with poignant safety messages to Downtown Pittsburgh. The installation is the latest art commission under the PDP's '**REFORGE**' initiative that invites the community to safely revisit and reengage with Downtown through unique events, activations, and programs.

'**New Space Spheres**,' features 10 unique spherical art pieces of varying size that are being installed on business windows and floors, street pavements, and bus shelters throughout the Golden Triangle. Installation is expected to be ongoing through the Fall, with Downtown businesses being offered the free art opportunity while supplies last.

"I strongly believe that beyond beautification, art is a communication tool, especially in a time where we are redefining and reshaping how we interact with the people around us," stated Janel Young, curator of the project, and a contributing artist. "Combining informative public health messaging with colorful inspiring designs from local artists felt like a great way to drive the safety messages for Downtown Pittsburghers."

Janel Young, aka 'JY Originals', is a Pittsburgh native, painter, muralist, and community advocate with a mission to inspire through her creativity and play. Recognized locally and internationally, from New York City to Sydney, Australia, her work integrates a vibrant visual style with digital communications messaging that has resonated with communities through a wide range of impactful initiatives. Having relocated from Pittsburgh to NYC in 2013 to work as a digital content strategist for a variety of industries, including healthcare, tech and non-profits, a position she would draw inspiration from for the New Space Spheres project, it was a visual arts project that drew her back to Pittsburgh in 2019. Pittsburgh's first art basketball court, 'The Home Court Advantage Project' showcased Janel's unique abilities to bring impactful color to the community, a project for which she was recognized with a proclamation from the City of Pittsburgh that made October 23, 2019 "Janel Young Day". She currently serves as the Community Artist in Residence at UrbanKind Institute in Pittsburgh.

“The ‘**New Space Spheres**’ project has created a way to merge our legacy of supporting public art with an evolving need for safety messaging that speaks to the community in new ways” said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the PDP, “Janel and her fellow artists really understood that balance, and were able to create vibrant works of artistic expression that encourage discussion and response. It’s been amazing to see the stylistic range of the artists who participated, and how they responded to the call.”

“This was my first curation project”, noted Young, “so I was very intentional about curating a group of artists who hold unique perspectives, with varying artistic styles and experience levels,” Janel said regarding the multi-talented roster of artists. “These artists are great storytellers in their own right, and this group is highly representative of people on the front lines of the pandemic, or severely impacted by the pandemic. I’m proud to be delivering something that is so expressive of our individual talents and that still creates a cohesive collection of artwork.”

Featured artists included in the New Space Spheres project include; international artist and Pittsburgh resident Ebtehal Badawi; mixed media artist and creator Juliandra Jones; illustrator, cartoonist and author of *Yinz City Higu* Rose; and established painter Kamara Townes, in addition to Janel Young herself. The project was initially inspired by a similar project developed by the Mural Arts program in Philadelphia.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT THIS PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION CAN BE FOUND HERE:

<https://downtownpittsburgh.com/publicart/newspacespheres/>

About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership

Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations, and residents who provide energy, vision, and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP’s strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, and economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit www.DowntownPittsburgh.com, follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/downtownpitt> and “like” us on Facebook.

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