

BRONX PEOPLE

SPOTLIGHT ON BLANKA AMEZKUA

Artist's bedroom has views, not snooze

BY TANYANIKA SAMUELS

SO THERE'S the MoMA, the Guggenheim, the Bronx Museum of the Arts and . . . Blanka Amezkua's bedroom?

Amezkuia, 37, holds the key to perhaps the borough's most unique art space — her Mott Haven apartment's bedroom. She calls it the Bronx Blue Bedroom Project.

"Art is such a beautiful thing," she said. "I see it as a way to bring people together."

Amezkuia opened the doors to her blue-colored bedroom in March. The art space features the works of up-and-coming mixed media artists — sans her bed, which she shoves into the closet when the "gallery" is "open."

Each exhibition is on display for a month. This month features artist Jorge Rojas.

To foster a sense of community, artists are re-

quired to hold an arts workshop for the public and cook a meal for fellow artists.

The artsy idea was inspired by a family tragedy. After losing her nephew in a car accident last December, Amezkua took stock of her life and goals.

"It really brought me down to Earth and forced me to reevaluate everything," she said. "I didn't want to give in to the grief and sadness."

Amezkuia was born in Mexico City and moved to Los Angeles with her family at age 5. She later graduated from California State University-Fresno, where she studied painting.

She studied in Italy for a year and lived in Greece before moving to San Francisco in 2000. She has lived in the Bronx for three years.

Amezkuia teaches art at three Jesuit middle schools in the city while doing her own artwork. She focuses on contemporary embroidery — colorfully-

stitched imagery on large swaths of fabric.

The arts project has really been life-changing, she said.

"When you open up your space like this, it transforms you. You become more communal," she said.

"That's what it's really about, is creating a sense of community."

For more information, visit bronxbbp.com or call (347) 776-7504.

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Artist Blanka Amezkua runs the Bronx Blue Bedroom Project out of her Mott Haven bedroom.

Photo by Enid Alvarez

VITAL STATS

FAVORITE ARTIST(S): Xenobia Bailey, Beatriz Milhazes, Robert Irwin
— "There are too many to name."

FAVORITE ART SUBJECT:
"The female body. It's beautiful."

WHAT ARE YOU READING: "'On Death and Dying,' by Elisabeth Kübler-

Ross. Everybody should read it."

CAREER DREAM: "To have the liberty to devote all my time to creating my art."

FAVORITE PLACE IN THE BRONX: "I love to go running in St. Mary's Park in Mott Haven."

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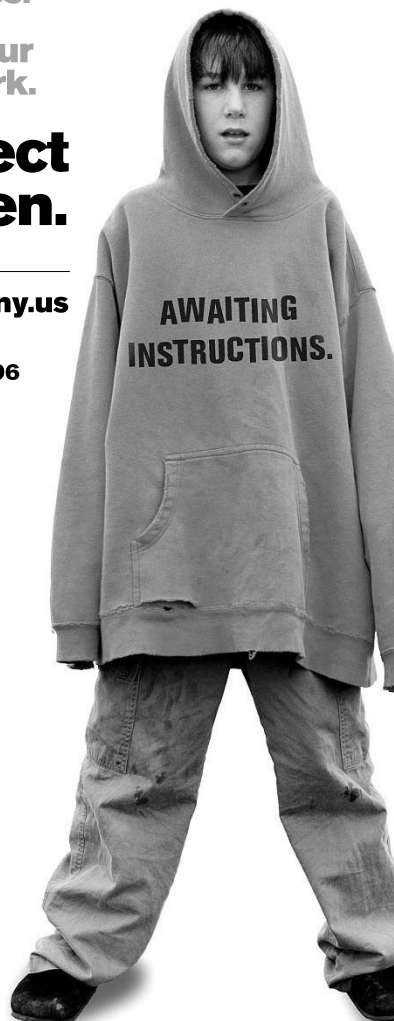
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