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**DOT UNVEILS FIRST CITY TEMPORARY ART PROGRAM IN DUMBO  
Collaborative effort with DUMBO Improvement District, local artists and  
schoolchildren launches program to enliven and beautify streets**

New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan and the DUMBO Improvement District unveiled today the colorful mural “Nature Matching Systems,” the first installation in the DOT’s Temporary Art Program, which will enliven neighborhoods by working with local artists in partnership with business improvement districts and local community organizations. The design for the mural was created by the renowned Malaysian-born artist Tattfoo Tan, who worked with 40 students aged 5-7 from nearby P.S. 307 along with 25 other neighborhood children. Together they painted hundreds of colorful panels using specialized paints matched to the colors of fruits and vegetables. The tapestry of color—8 feet high and 70 feet long—beautifies a corrugated metal fence alongside a DOT storage yard beneath the Manhattan Bridge at Front and Adams streets in DUMBO, reinforcing DOT’s commitment to bring art to public spaces.

“The streets are the living room of New York City, and starting here in DUMBO—and coming soon to other neighborhoods citywide—we are transforming these rooms into galleries,” said DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. “We are looking for new ways to beautify the streetscape through this new program and with our continued installation of sleek new newsstands and bus shelters, new public plazas, and Green Streets. With communities as our partners, we will capture the attention of passersby and help make hidden spaces like this one come alive.”

The Temporary Art Program will create temporary art installations for City spaces that are in the need of aesthetic enhancement. The program is also designed to promote community interaction and lasting partnerships to create designs. The DOT intends to add five such projects each year. The DUMBO mural, which will remain in place for 11 months, was prompted by the DUMBO Improvement District, which approached the DOT last year hoping to paint a mural to be installed on the fence. The idea of an art project was born and Tattfoo Tan was selected by a panel comprised of representatives from the DOT, the DUMBO Improvement District, and the DUMBO community.

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“It is vitally important to us that our neighborhood remains a home for the arts for years to come,” said DUMBO Improvement District Executive Director Tucker Reed. “We hope that this project is just the first and we hope that many more artists will bring their creations out of their studios and onto our streets. We’d like the neighborhood itself to become a virtual gallery for our community and its visitors, and we hope to continue to work with community groups to do this.”

Tan’s concept for “Nature Matching Systems” is designed to creatively educate children about eating their fruits and vegetables. The students attended workshops where Tan asked them to select a favorite fruit or vegetable, whose color the students then painted onto panels. Each of these panels was then incorporated into the mural, containing other panels painted by Tan.

“NMS hopes to re-educate our youngsters back to healthy eating habits, but not to deprive them of the fun and experience of eating colorful real food,” said Tan. “Color is such a captivating element of food, but too often it’s used to make highly processed junk food, which mimics nature’s intention of using color to nourish us. NMS is not only art for art’s sake but it also carries a deeper social and educational value that will carry on even after the mural is gone.”

“PS 307 has a strong commitment to the arts,” said Principal Roberta Davenport. “My school community is thrilled that our students had the opportunity to participate in this wonderful community arts project.”

Additional groups involved in the project include the DUMBO Neighborhood Association, the DUMBO Parents Organization and the d.u.m.b.o. Arts Center.