

Events of 2023

Sound, Sun, Pleasure: Celebrating Juneteenth

On June 17, 2023, Abrons Arts Center and Henry Street Settlement's Department of Integration and Community Engagement presented the day-long, outdoor Sound, Sun, Pleasure event in commemoration of the Juneteenth holiday. Held at both Sol Lain Park and the Abrons Amphitheater, the free event featured arts and recreational activities for all ages. At Sol Lain Park, youth participated in a t-shirt painting workshop with the Black Painters Academy, a Double Dutch workshop with Ms. K's Swagga Jumpers, and a skateboard clinic and trick contest with the Howard Hunter Foundation. Visitors viewed a West African drumming and dance performance and magic show.

Abrons's outdoor amphitheater was the site of Sound, Sun, Pleasure LIVE!, a set of performances curated by Abrons collaborator and rapper MIKE, which included a diverse array of hip-hop artists who cross boundaries between the music and skateboarding scenes. Between the two venues, Black-owned vendors served free food to the community and sold a variety of goods on East Broadway. More than 2,000 guests attended the event.



The Harold Hunter Foundation presented a skateboard clinic and trick contest. Photo: Qwillyshots

Sleeping Beauty Captivates Lower East Siders

In December, Henry Street's Abrons Arts Center presented an irreverent take on *Sleeping Beauty*, to 2,000 audience members, including hundreds of Henry Street participants and community members who received free tickets. A production by ONEOFUS, the team that created the wildly successful Abrons productions *Dick Rivington & the Cat* and *Jack & the Beanstalk*, this larger-than-life, feel-good holiday spectacular had audiences dancing in the aisles, celebrating love and community, and cheering the defeat of Evil Queen Karen! Again, the show featured a chorus of Lower East Side neighborhood children. In case you're wondering what happened to *Sleeping Beauty*—she woke!



The Good Fairy rhymes her way through *Sleeping Beauty*. Photo: Brian Hatton



Hundreds of Henry Street participants and other community members attended *Sleeping Beauty* at no cost. Photo: Brian Hatton

Lillian Wald Symposium Addresses Mental Health Crisis

The Eighth Annual Lillian Wald Symposium, held April 12, 2023, brought together leading thinkers and practitioners to discuss the mental health challenges sweeping New York City and the nation. Panelists addressed a wide constellation of challenges and solutions in the effort to care for those experiencing mental illness, including stigma, community and hospital treatment capacity, transitional housing, health care

system staffing and training issues, funding, police involvement, and more. Panelists included Harvard University historian George Aumothé, Jose Cotto, of the Institute for Community Living, nurse practitioner Jo-Ann Abrams, Omar Fattal of New York Health + Hospitals, and Fountain House board member Arvind Sooknanan; our moderator was Andy Newman of *The New York Times*.



The Lillian Wald Symposium featured a robust discussion of mental health in New York City. From left: historian George Aumothé, supportive housing provider Jose Cotto, and nurse practitioner Jo-Ann Abrams.

Community Events Foster Connection and Joy

For the third year, our Department of Integration and Community Engagement (D.I.C.E.) wowed the Lower East Side on four **Summer Saturdays** in July and August at Sol Lain and Dry Dock Parks. More than 2,000 neighbors joined as the Bindlestiff Family Cirkus amazed with their dazzling tricks and circus workshops, and Skaterobics threw it back "Old Skool" to celebrate hip-hop's 50th anniversary with free skate rentals. Abrons Arts Center showcased student performers and led hands-on art activities for kids. Our community partners from Thrive Collective, Betances Health Center, Ryan Health | NENA, and the New York Public Library provided special activities and resources ranging from free dental checks to a book mobile.

Henry Street closed out the summer on September 9 with our annual Community Day. With more than 1,000 neighbors taking over Sol Lain Park and Henry Street, the day featured fabulous live performances curated by LES Creative People

in Action, free lunch and ice cream, and a plethora of activities from screen printing to bingo.

And who could forget the **Superheroes Trunk-or-Treat** in Sol Lain Park on October 22? It was a day in which local families, volunteers, and community partners came together for pumpkin decorating, carnival games, and, of course, candy. But the true superheroes of the day were our incredible team members who made it all possible.



Community Day ended in a concert on Henry Street.