



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Robyne Walker Murphy is Groundswell's New Executive Director**

### **Community to Welcome Director at Art Auction Benefit on October 25.**

Event Date: Tuesday, October 25 at 7:00 pm

Location: Metropolitan Pavilion, 123 West 18th Street, New York, New York

**NEW YORK, NY** –Groundswell, New York City's leading community arts organization, is pleased to announce that, following a national search, its Board of Directors has appointed Robyne Walker Murphy as Groundswell's Executive Director. Robyne is a seasoned professional with ample experience working at the intersections of art, youth development, cultural equity and social justice.

Walker Murphy currently serves as Citywide Program Director for Cultural Access at Cool Culture in New York City. Before assuming this position, she held roles at several important organizations in Groundswell's field, including seven years as Director of DreamYard Arts Center in the Bronx where she helped lead the organization through the development of arts and social justice programming and community engagement initiatives.

"We are confident that Robyne's background and compelling vision will lead Groundswell to further excellence as we begin our third decade of transforming communities through public art," said **Nazli Parvizi, Groundswell Board President**. "I extend my thanks to my colleagues on Groundswell's Search Committee for leading us through the challenging and exciting process of identifying a successor to Founding Executive Director, Amy Sananman. Robyne stood out in a field of extremely qualified candidates and we look forward to seeing her advance our strong legacy."

"I am honored and excited to take the helm of a nationally recognized organization that I have long respected for its commitment to using art as a tool for social change. This position gives me the opportunity to engage with all of my passions: youth, community, artists, artistry, and social justice," said **Robyne Walker Murphy**.

Walker Murphy will begin work at Groundswell in late November. The Groundswell community will officially welcome her at the organization's **2016 Annual Art Auction Benefit**, in support of the organization's public art-making programs, on October 25.

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**The Benefit will honor Guerrilla Girls, Settlement Housing Fund & President Alexa Sewell, and Blick Art Materials.** The event will feature a silent auction of over **90 artworks generously donated by emerging and internationally-renowned artists and leading galleries.** Artists in the auction include: John Baldessari, CERN, Ricardo Cortés, Molly Crabapple, Jane Dickson, Cheryl Dunn, Shepard Fairey, Andrea Geyer, Guerrilla Girls, Keith Haring, Eric Haze, Icy and Sot, KET, Louise Nevelson, Richard Renaldi, and Ricky Powell.

Presented by the 2016 Benefit Committee, led by Chairs Ricardo Cortés, Christine Haney, and Karen Jenson, **the Annual Art Auction Benefit will take place on Tuesday, October 25 at 7:00 pm at Metropolitan Pavilion.** A Benefactor Preview begins at 6:00 pm.

Each of the 2016 honorees has made a unique contribution to Groundswell over the organization's 20-year history, furthering its work to bring together artists, youth, and community organizations to create public art, toward a more just and equitable world.

**Guerrilla Girls** – The Guerrilla Girls are feminist activist artists. Since the group's inception in 1985, there have been over 55 members, some for weeks, some for decades. Their anonymity keeps the focus on the issues, and away from who they might be. Members wear gorilla masks in public and use facts, humor, and outrageous visuals to expose gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture. The Guerrilla Girls undermine the idea of a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair. They believe in an intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders. The Guerrilla Girls' work, which includes over 100 street projects, posters and stickers, also encompasses exhibitions at museums, where they examine and call out unjust and discriminatory practices within the art world.

**Settlement Housing Fund & President Alexa Sewell** – Settlement Housing Fund creates and sustains high quality affordable housing and programs, building strong and economically diverse neighborhoods throughout New York City. Settlement Housing Fund works closely with community partners to provide low- and moderate-income New Yorkers with pathways to long-term affordable housing, education, employment and wellness. Since 1969, Settlement Housing Fund has developed 57 projects with over 8,700 apartments—rentals, cooperatives, and two-family houses—that are home to more than 25,000 low- and moderate-income residents, including formerly homeless New Yorkers. Alexa Sewell, President, became Settlement Housing Fund's chief executive on February 1, 2014. Sewell previously served in various government posts, most recently as Chief of Staff and Deputy Commissioner at the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

**Blick Art Materials** – Blick Art Materials and its family owners and dedicated staff support the Visual Art Community by providing the widest selection of art supplies at the lowest prices. With extraordinary service and integrity, Blick strives to provide artists, educators, students, and its employees with the tools, assistance, and training they need to grow, innovate, and reach their creative potential. Blick believes that art education develops the human creativity necessary to solve the world's complex problems, enrich its culture and provide fulfillment for its inhabitants. Blick's entire organization supports awareness in the creative community at both the local and national level through a wide variety of initiatives.

This year's Groundswell Art Auction Benefit is proudly supported by 2016 Benefactor Sponsor Sweet'N Low; Distinguished sponsors Bloomberg Philanthropies, Davis Polk, Goldman Properties, and Hayward Industries; and Lead sponsors Blick Art Materials, Goldstein Hall, LLC, Con Edison, and Food Bazaar Supermarket. Additional sponsors include Ackler Wealth Management, Astoria Bank, Heineken, Industry City, Metropolitan Valuation Services, and Tito's Handmade Vodka.

#### **Groundswell's Annual Art Auction Benefit**

**Date** Tuesday, October 25, 2016 at 7:00 pm, Benefactor Preview at 6:00 pm

**Location** Metropolitan Pavilion

123 West 18th Street

New York, New York 10011

**Cost** Tickets start at \$75, sponsorships from \$2,500

**More information** at [www.groundswell.nyc](http://www.groundswell.nyc)

**Online Auction** at [www.paddle8.com/auction/groundswell](http://www.paddle8.com/auction/groundswell)

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**About Groundswell**

Groundswell, New York City's leading organization dedicated to community public art, brings together youth, artists, and community partners, to make public art that advances social change, for a more just and equitable world. Our projects beautify neighborhoods, engage youth in societal and personal transformation, and give expression to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented in the public dialogue. [www.groundswell.nyc](http://www.groundswell.nyc)