



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Mural Unveiling in Bushwick**

**Young Men of Color Navigate  
Tense Police-Civilian Relations through Mural**

**Mural Dedication:** Thursday, August 27 at 1 pm  
21 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn

**BUSHWICK, NY** – “I Just Want To Come Home” declares a new mural in Bushwick on a Food Bazaar Supermarket, painted by a team of young men of color considering the complex relationship between police and young men of color. Each summer Groundswell, New York’s leading organization dedicated to community public art, brings together a team of young men through the Making His’tory program to create a mural exploring a topic concerning young men in New York City. This year’s 18 x 100 ft mural, “I Just Want To Come Home,” will be unveiled at a dedication on Thursday, August 27 at 1 pm.

As proven by recently publicized deaths and the #BlackLivesMatter activist movement, police-civilian relations do not come with the promise of youth coming home after an altercation. The youth did not forget that nearly 50,000 16- and 17-year-olds arrested in New York face the possibility of prosecution as adults in criminal court each year, over 70% of which are Black or Latino. The artist team researched this topic through interviews with activists, Brooklyn council members and legislators, lifelong residents and newcomers to the Bushwick community, and police officers from the 90th Precinct. They read articles, watched videos, listened to podcasts, and discussed issues around police aggression, the war on drugs, mass incarceration, protests in Ferguson and Baltimore, the militarization of police in contemporary America, and discussed with police officers how they view this conversation.

The mural utilizes the phrase “I Just Want To Come Home” as its rallying call to action, inspired by their interview with police from the 90th Precinct. The youth asked “What do you think about when getting ready for work?” to which one officer responded, “I just want to come home at the end of the day.” Resonating beyond its origin from the officers’ reply, this sentiment echoes a larger call from everyday civilians to prevent the recurrence of such cases as Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, and Kalief Browder, who spent three years on Rikers Island without being convicted of a crime before committing suicide. The mural brings together these various narratives on common ground to address the tense conflict. Within the words are faces of the artists and local community members, which bring a focus to Bushwick as an important site for reflection, debate, and activism.

The team was directed by Lead Artist Chris Soria and Assistant Artist DonChristian Jones. About the blue, purple, and black-heavy design, Soria said, “The mural is a contemporary blues piece, not just in

palette. The mural echoes the simple narrative ballads expressed in the Blues and the tone in which it cries for emancipation.”

“Mobilized by the national conversation about police and community relations, the Making His’tory team brought the energy of millions across the country together in a single wall,” said Groundswell Executive Director Rob Krulak. “They have created a mural that truly considers the changing nature of the neighborhood, the charged histories at play, and positive solutions that can advance justice and equity through changed hearts.”

Nathaniel James, one of the youth artists with Making His’tory, said about the mural, “We bring together the perspectives of both citizens of New York City and civil workers in police work to understand the human nature underneath our jobs and lives. At first people do not think they correlate, but we are trying to bring them together in one place because, at the end of the day, we all just want to come home.”

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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)

#### **About Food Bazaar Supermarket**

Bogopa Service Corp. is a privately owned company that operates 18 full-service supermarkets in the Tri-State metropolitan area (NY, NJ, CT) under the name "Food Bazaar." For more than 25 years it has been providing its communities with the flavors they love and recall from 'back home,' exotic and unique foods as well as basic essentials. It devotes aisles of space to international grocery and dairy/frozen items as well as a full-service fish market, a huge selection of local and international produce, a full service deli, bakery and custom butcher. With thousands of products waiting to be explored, Food Bazaar always provides a true culinary adventure. For more information visit the Food Bazaar website at <http://www.MyFoodBazaar.com>.