

The New York Times

© 2011 The New York Times

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2011

Artists to Transform Bowery's Roll-Down Gates

There probably won't be many New Yorkers mourning the death of the security roll-down gate, that unlovely after-hours face of the city's storefronts. In 2009 the City Council, citing high rates of graffiti, voted to begin slowly phasing out the gates in favor of rolling grilles.

But for at least a couple of months this summer, roll gates and paint will have a last hurrah together, courtesy of the New Museum and the Art Production Fund. As part of the Festival of Ideas for the New City — a series of arts and civic events that the New Museum and other downtown cultural institutions will conduct from May 4 through 8 — 17 artists have been recruited to create paintings that will soon start appearing on roll-down gates along the Bowery, from Houston Street to Canal Street.

The artists — among them **Mary Heilmann**, **Glenn Ligon** and **Ingrid Calame** — have created the images but will hand off the actual painting chores to Colossal Media, a Brooklyn-based company. "It removes itself from the practice of real graffiti, but it plays with the idea," said **Yvonne Force Villareal**, a co-founder of the Art Production Fund. She said that she and others involved with the project, to be called "After Hours: Murals on the Bowery," first combed the Bowery at night, then spent months talking to property owners. Next comes power washing and, within the next several weeks, she said, the murals will start to appear for anyone interested in nocturnal Bowery art appreciation. They will remain for two months.

RANDY KENNEDY