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ROLLDOWN STEEL MURALS ON BOWERY STOREFRONTS

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Michael Craig-Martin, Art Production Fund
Security gates turn into canvases for “After Hours 2: Murals on the Bowery,” as in this rendering by Michael Craig-Martin.

The steel roller shutters found on the front of commercial supply shops along the Bowery were once a playground for graffiti artists. But now, for a few months anyway, they are going to be used as canvases for a more upscale group of painters. There’s a catch. The art will be visible only at the end of each day, when the stores have closed and the shutters have been pulled down.

The installation, “After Hours 2: Murals on the Bowery,” starting April 25, has been organized by the nonprofit Art Production Fund. Well-known figures like Mel Bochner, Michael Craig-Martin, Laura Owens, Adam Pendleton and Dana Schutz have created works for it.

“They’re all site-specific, and they all relate to the neighborhood,” said Yvonne Force Villareal, co-founder of the fund. The project, on view through Sept. 29, is part of this year’s Ideas City Festival, a series of arts and civic events that the New Museum and other downtown cultural institutions will conduct, May 1 to 4.

Thirteen of the 14 artists whose work makes up “After Hours 2” were invited by the Art Production Fund. One, however, was chosen from an open call for submissions that was posted last month on the Web sites of the New Museum and the Art Production Fund.

A jury of arts professionals whittled more than 100 entries down to 5. The final choice was made by a group of students aged 15 to 18 who are part of after-school programs like G: Class, at the New Museum; Groundswell, a community youth organization; and University Settlement, another youth group that works with the New Museum. They selected Nao Uda, a 29-year-old artist from Tokyo who has created a cartoonlike figure holding a string of paper-doll-like figures that echo its own shape.

Most of the murals are colorful and have strong graphic images or words or both. Mr. Bochner, for example, has a created a bright blue background with “BLAH” scribbled over the entire surface in white lettering.

Colossal Media, from Brooklyn, is working from the artists’ images to do the actual painting on the shutters. Next to each mural will be a telephone number that viewers can call to hear the artist talking about the project. “It’s a cellphone audio guide,” Ms. Villareal said.