



Melting Metropolis: How We Do Summer in Queens

How hot is your summer? What do you do to cool down? Where do you go? What do you love (or hate) about summer in the city?

Queens Memory invites you to enjoy an exhibition of historic photographs from the Queens Public Library's archival collections and see how New Yorkers have always found a way to keep cool when temperatures rise. The photos are on display at Central Library in Jamaica through August 4. The exhibit's curators are working on a new project called *Melting Metropolis*. Over the next five years, the project's researchers will be working with community groups and artists in Queens, as well as in London and Paris, to explore how lived experiences of heat in cities have changed from 1945 to the present day.

You can meet members of the Melting Metropolis team at several upcoming events. Share your thoughts about heat and summertime in Queens and join our drawing, story sharing and craft activities.



On July 21 and 22, you can participate in a 90-minute creative drawing walk around Queens. Led by a visual artist, you will be guided through a series of simple, mindful drawing exercises that explore our sensory experience of summer heat. The tour will explore the local area, engaging breath, touch, sight and sound through experimental mark-making. At the end of the walk, you will have a collection of abstract

drawings reflecting our bodily experiences of summer in the city. No artistic background required; the exercises are designed to be relaxing, playful and intuitive. This walk, which runs from 10:30 am to 12 noon EDT, is suitable for participants over 15 years of age. All art materials will be provided.

The tour will be led by British artist Bryony Bengé-Abbott, who is the research artist for the Melting Metropolis project. Each walk is limited to 10 participants; registration is required. The walking tour will begin and end outside Queens Central Library; see the Upcoming Events box below for more details.

On August 3, join THE CITY's **Open Newsroom: Preparing for Climate Change and Extreme Weather in New York City** session for a conversation about how climate change is impacting cities and learn about resources in NYC to get individual and community-level support. THE CITY is a local, nonprofit news site for, by and about New Yorkers. This event will take place at Central Library from 6 to 7:30 pm EDT; see the Upcoming Events box below for more details.

For more on Melting Metropolis, see our full [blogpost](#) and follow the project on Instagram [@meltingmetropolis](#) and on Twitter [@MeltingMetrop](#).



Residents cool off on a hot summer's day in the LeFrak City pool, 1975. Photo courtesy of the Queens Public Library [Digital Archives](#).

Name Explorer Spotlight: Antoinette Jamilah Ali-Sanders Way

Antoinette Jamilah Ali-Sanders Way, a street in Far Rockaway, commemorates an accomplished architect who improved society as a designer, developer and organizer. One of the first women to work with the NYC Parks Department in 1981, Ali-Sanders oversaw the construction of parks, playgrounds and structures as well as the restoration of monuments. She founded a construction company called Metro Skyway Construction; a foundation for PEACE (Progressive Economics and Cultural Enrichment); and the Jersey City Monitoring Trade Association. She hosted a cable show advocating for the improvement of Black education and wellness in the Black community, and was a member of the Association of Black Educators of New York (ABENY) and the Committee for Independent Community Actions. She passed in 2019 at the age of 61, and was honored later that year with the street co-naming.



Top photo: The street sign honoring Ali-Sanders can be found in Far Rockaway.

Bottom photo: Antoinette Jamilah Ali-Sanders

See Antoinette Jamilah Ali-Sanders Way on our [Name Explorer map](#)! An upcoming spotlight blogpost will also honor Ali-Sanders, with more about her professional achievements and community action, along with anecdotes from her family and friends.

Upcoming Events

July 21 and 22 – Join us for **Drawing Heat in the City**, a 90-minute creative drawing walk around Queens. Led by British visual artist Bryony Bengé-Abbott, you will be guided through a series of simple, mindful drawing exercises that explore our sensory experience of heat. The tour will explore the local area, engaging breath, touch, sight and sound through experimental mark-making. At the end of the walk, you will have a collection of abstract drawings reflecting our bodily experience of the city. No artistic background required; the exercises are designed to be relaxing, playful and intuitive. This walk is suitable for participants over 15 years old, and all art materials will be provided. Limited to 10 participants, registration is required: <https://forms.office.com/r/HREtL73Vsy> The walking tour will begin and end outside Queens Central Library; more information will be sent via email to registered guests. See article above for more details about the **Melting Metropolis** series. (10:30 am - 12 pm EDT)

August 3 – Want to know more about how climate change is affecting NYC? Join THE CITY's **Open Newsroom: Preparing for Climate Change and Extreme Weather in New York City** session for a conversation about how climate change is impacting cities and learn about resources in NYC to get individual and community-level support. Share your own stories of how heat, flooding or other climate change issues have impacted your life. No registration required; see article above for more details about the **Melting Metropolis** series. (6 - 7:30 pm EDT)

August 8, September 12 – Join us online for **Learn More about the Queens Memory Project**, an opportunity to hear about the work we do with volunteers and community partners across the borough. The Queens Memory team will provide an overview of our programs and cover the many ways you can help as a volunteer and contribute to the Queens Library's archives. Hear about opportunities to record interviews with Queens residents, contribute photos and other materials, assist with transcription and audio editing, and help with our outreach and programming. Register [here](#); we will follow up with a confirmation and event link. (12 - 1 pm EDT)

August 15, September 19 – At our **oral history interviewing workshops**, you will learn how you can contribute to Queens Memory and help us record interviews with fellow Queens residents. Together we will review tips for oral history interviews, from initial outreach to recording to transcription. Register for either workshop [here](#); we will follow up with a confirmation and event link. (12 - 1 pm EDT)

September 9 – What does "home" mean to you? Join other Queens residents to create a community collaborative weaving project made from pieces of fabric and our own definition of home. You can participate in this program by attending **Interwoven Home: A Community Weaving Project**, an in-person workshop at Astoria's Socrates Sculpture Park facilitated by Queens artist Antonia Perez. Join us to share your memories and ideas of home and add your story to the project; feel free to bring any small token that reminds you of home. The final piece will be on display at Queens Public Library branches! This program is inspired by highly personal textiles and quilts on view at the [American Folk Art Museum](#), and in collaboration with Queens Memory Project and Socrates Sculpture Park. Register [here](#). While registration is not required, space is limited. Contact Claudia Maturell with questions at cmaturell@folkartmuseum.org. (1:30 - 3 pm EDT)

Queens Memory in the Professional Community

QM staff are frequently invited to discuss our innovative programs with our colleagues in the library and archives communities. On June 13, Queens Memory Community Coordinator **Meral Agish** gave a lightning talk, "The Queens Memory Cookbook: Building Community Through Personal Archiving and Story Sharing," at the virtual [New York Archives Conference](#). **Agish** will also be presenting a poster, "Archives as Partners in Civic Journalism," in person and virtually at the [Society of American Archivists' annual conference](#), July 26-29 in Washington, D.C. On July 25, Queens Memory Director **Natalie Milbrodt** will co-present the interactive workshop, "Your metadata guide for the multiverse: a process and tools for use in any oral history project," at the [International Oral History Association Annual Conference](#) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Queens Memory will also be represented in at least three sessions at the [Oral History Association Annual Meeting](#) in Baltimore (Oct. 18-21) -- more details to come!