

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Restorative Public Art Celebrates Chinatown's History and Resident Voices**

*The playful public art installation by artist Gianna Stewart and Asian Community Development Corporation will be on display until fall 2022.*

BOSTON, MA - [Asian Community Development Corporation](#) (ACDC), a nonprofit organization, partnered with artist [Gianna Stewart](#) to conceptualize and create a public art installation titled [Storytell & Sway](#) located at 66 – 88 Hudson Street in Chinatown. Visitors are welcome to sit on brightly-colored bench swings that evoke the playful spirit of Hudson Street in the 1950s. Previously a site where many immigrant families from China, Syria, and Lebanon lived, highway construction in the 1960s and ongoing gentrification have displaced thousands of families. ACDC developed affordable rentals and condos on Hudson Street between 2016 and 2018, bringing back over 140 working-class households. However, it would take more than building homes to revive a community.

*Storytell & Sway* is the inaugural installation at Hudson Street Stoop, a site-specific program developed by ACDC to create resident-centered public art every 18 months. Hudson Street Stoop rekindles neighborly stoop culture through public art that celebrates the history and voices of Chinatown and draws residents to the open green space.

“Hudson Street Stoop evolved from an ambitious vision into a dynamic collaboration between our residents and our artist partner, Gianna. We have seen that everyone who interacts with *Storytell & Sway* exudes joy, regardless of age or background,” said Jeena Hah, Director of Community Programs & Design at ACDC. “Public art can be healing and particularly impactful for communities like Chinatown, which has faced overwhelming hardship during the pandemic.”

Heartwarming memories of her childhood porch swing [inspired Gianna's design](#) for *Storytell & Sway*. Each bench features inscribed quotes of Chinatown memories spanning from the 1950s to the present in residents' native languages. Gianna and ACDC worked with writer Cynthia Yee, who grew up in Chinatown in the 1950s, to facilitate storytelling sessions for residents to share memories.

“I've always loved visiting Chinatown and the energy of it. After this project, I have a different sense of Chinatown now that I hope everyone can have,” said artist Gianna Stewart. “The best part has been getting to know the families, artists, and activists of Chinatown.”

ACDC youth have been organizing free community events at Hudson Street Stoop that feature art and lantern-making workshops and a movie night at the park. Upcoming events include an open mic storytelling event on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 PM and a collaborative event with [Chinatown Story Cart](#) held on Saturday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM.

### **About the artist**



[Gianna Stewart](#) is an artist with a passion for public art. Her recent work *Depth of Decision* is installed in the Underwater Museum of Art as part of an artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico. Previously, *Iceberg* floated in the Fort Point Channel in Boston. She has created site-specific temporary outdoor works for the Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, MA, 8Nights8Windows in downtown Boston, ReCreation on the Boston Harbor Islands, and “The Local” commission on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. She received her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston/ Tufts University.

### **About Asian Community Development Corporation**

Since 1987, [Asian Community Development Corporation](#) (ACDC) has been working in underserved and immigrant Asian American communities in Greater Boston, Malden, and Quincy, by building affordable homes and vibrant spaces, empowering families with asset-building tools, and strengthening communities through resident and youth leadership and civic engagement.

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