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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Public Art Project “Windows of Understanding”
Returns to Metuchen with a Focus on Climate Change**

Metuchen, N.J. (January 11, 2024) – The Metuchen Arts Council, once again, joins the New Brunswick Community Arts Council, Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers, the South Plainfield Arts Commission, the Highland Park Arts Commission and ASquared in Rahway in announcing the seventh annual “Windows of Understanding” public art project running January 15 through March 31, 2024.

Building a healthy community is the center of this year’s initiative that unites local artists, organizations, and businesses to promote awareness and engagement around social justice and environmental issues impacting local communities. This year, in five towns, 20 non-profit organizations and commissions dealing with climate change, food equity, human rights and violence prevention will be paired with artist facilitators to create original artwork illuminating local initiatives. The artwork will be displayed in windows in each town. Student art from local schools is also being curated for satellite exhibitions.

In Metuchen, the Metuchen Arts Council is focusing on climate change and is spotlighting the inter-connected work of the Metuchen Environmental Commission, the Peter Barnes Wildlife Preserve Commission, and the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership. The Metuchen Arts Council and Metuchen Friends of the Arts (FOMA), with a sponsorship from Berkshire Hathaway, have commissioned three artists to illuminate the services provided to the Metuchen Community by these special agencies.

The artists are **David LaMorte** representing the **Metuchen Environmental Commission**; **Joseph Castronova** representing the **Peter Barnes Wildlife Preservation Commission**; and **Jyrius Rosa** representing the **Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership**.

The artwork will be on display in the windows of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services – Fox & Roach Realtors and Properties and Merle Norman Cosmetics in adjacent windows at 564 and 556 Middlesex Avenue in Metuchen through the end of April. Student artwork dealing with climate change will also be on display inside the Metuchen offices of Berkshire Hathaway.

- An Open House Reception at Berkshire Hathaway (564 Middlesex Avenue in Metuchen) is planned for **Saturday, February 3 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.** at which time the public is invited to view the artwork and meet the artists and agency representatives and learn more about the agencies’ work in protecting the local environment.
- Also, a public walking tour of the Barnes Preserve will be conducted in **late April**, date to be announced.

Metuchen Mayor Jonathan Busch said, *“Using art to draw attention to solutions to social and environmental problems on a local level leads to discussion, civic involvement and progress. Here in Metuchen, we have welcomed that process year after year through the Windows of Understanding.”*

Leadership support for Windows of Understanding 2023 has been provided by New Brunswick Cultural Center, Inc; the Arts Institute of Middlesex County; New Brunswick City Center; Berkshire Hathaway Home Services – Fox & Roach Realtors; Hoboken Farms; Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts; Highland Park Arts Commission; the Metuchen Arts Council; the Rahway Chamber of Commerce; and the South Plainfield Cultural Arts Commission.

For more information on Windows of Understanding, including a complete list of featured organizations, artists, participating storefronts, and a full calendar of free events, please visit www.windowsofunderstanding.org. On Instagram at @windowsofunderstanding, #weseethroughhate.

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About the Metuchen Arts Council

The Metuchen Arts Council was established in 1967 to advocate and promote culturally enriching programs which foster an appreciation for the arts in the community. The Metuchen Arts Council accomplishes its mission by sponsoring exciting, innovative, and entertaining programs in all arts disciplines; supporting local artists and arts organizations through grants, sponsorships, and networking opportunities; working with others to create a welcoming community to attract artists and audiences of all ages, backgrounds and cultures; and by being an advocate for arts education at all levels.