

Artists, scholars, community members map history of the South Bronx.

By TANYANIKA SAMUELS
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A new grassroots effort is underway to explore the cultural history of the South Bronx.

“The South Bronx Culture Trail,” a joint project by Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education, and Dancing in the Streets, will combine an online map with actual trail markers to guide viewers through the histories of various neighborhoods.

“The ultimate goal is to celebrate the culture of the South Bronx,” said Sarah Calderon, executive director at Casita Maria.

An official kick-off celebration, which is free and open to the public, will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday at Casita Maria, 928 Simpson St.



This two-fold screen entitled Kovno-Kobe, 2010 is part of a new exhibit

The two-year project will first focus on Hunts Point and Longwood, then expand to other neighborhoods. Already, an advisory council of Casita Maria alumni and community members has been gathering the personal stories from such noted Bronxites as jazz musicians Dave Valentin and Benny Bonilla, as well as remembrances from everyday residents.

“People want to reminisce,” Calderon said. “Even though it was a difficult time to be in this community, people have seen it grow and change into a more vibrant community and really want to celebrate that.”

Several events are being planned leading up to the unveiling of the first phase of the project in the fall.

“It’s important to educate the younger generation and the public at large about the major and important cultural legacy of the South Bronx,” said Aviva Davidson, of Dancing in the Streets.

To learn more, visit casitamaria.org or call Elaine Delgado at (718) 589-2230 ext. 6190.
n An Afternoon of Art

The Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture is hosting an artist reception at 2 p.m. Sunday at 4450 Fieldston Road to celebrate the works of Elaine Eklof Drootin and Carol Frank. Drootin, who paints plein air (painting outdoors) landscapes, and Frank, an abstract painter, are part of the Riverdale Art Association.

Also on Sunday in Riverdale, the Derfner Judaica Museum at The Hebrew Home at Riverdale, 5901 Palisade Ave., will open two new exhibits of artist Jonathan Hammer’s work with a reception at 3:30 p.m. *Kovno-Kobe* was inspired by tragic and heroic events that happened in Lithuania during World War II. *Tarnish and Shine: Silverpoint Drawings* is a survey of Hammer’s work using precious metals.