



**MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK PRESENTS
THE SECOND ANNUAL “GINGERBREAD NYC: THE GREAT BOROUGH BAKE-OFF”**

**Amateur and Professional Bakers From Around the City Take on “Iconic New York”
for latest MCNY Gingerbread Competition**

**Winter Holiday Installation On View:
November 10, 2023-January 15, 2024**

Press Preview: November 08, 10 am-12 pm

NEW YORK, NY (November 2023) – Back by popular demand, the **Museum of the City of New York** proudly presents ***Gingerbread NYC: The Great Borough Bake-Off*** – MCNY’s second annual gingerbread competition and celebration of communities and neighborhoods in each of the five boroughs. On **view to the public starting Friday, November 10, 2023, through Monday, January 15, 2024**, the ***Gingerbread NYC*** installation at the Museum gives New Yorkers and tourists a delicious opportunity to celebrate the city.

MCNY invited professional and independent bakers from across the city to create a gingerbread display representing their respective neighborhoods, inspired by the theme “Iconic New York.” Submissions represent all five boroughs, and a cohort of prominent New York City-based bakers, curators, and restaurant owners judged the final designs. Prizes will be awarded in a range of categories including “Best in Borough,” “Grandest,” and “Most Iconic.” There will also be an opportunity for visitors to scan a QR code to vote for their favorites.

“We are savoring MCNY’s centennial year and celebrating the holidays with our second annual Gingerbread NYC installation,” says Stephanie Wilchfort, Ronay Menschel Director and President of the Museum of the City of New York. “Last year’s installation was a joy to behold (not to mention to smell). Now, we again have the sweet opportunity to highlight the special ingredient that makes New York, New York, creative people -- professionals and amateurs alike -- who hail from around the city.”

Participants in *Gingerbread NYC 2023* include (bios and entry details at end of release):

BRONX

- **Camaxtli Gallegos** – Bronx Zoo
- **Egidio Pastry Shop** – Yankee Stadium
- **Patty Pops** – Hip-Hop
- **Valerie Carrington** – Yankee Stadium

BROOKLYN

- **A Cake Baked In Brooklyn** – Brooklyn Icons

- **Kathryn Irizarry & Kayla Wong** – Brooklyn Icons
- **Ida Kreutzer** – Water Street
- **L'Appartment 4F** – Brooklyn Bridge
- **Holly Longworth** – Circo's Pastry Shop
- **Leonard Marino** – Brooklyn Botanic Garden
- **SottoVoce & Something Sugared** – Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch (Grand Army Plaza)
- **Debbie Wee** – Brooklyn Museum

MANHATTAN

- **César Aldrete** – The Met Cloisters
- **Cray Cray for Cakes LLC** – Jefferson Market Library and Garden
- **Lorenzo Delgado** – Rockefeller Center
- **Loretta Bricchi Lee** – American Museum of Natural History
- **Ma Smith's Dessert Café** – The Apollo Theater
- **Sonia Değbek** – New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center

QUEENS

- **Karen Chin** – New York Hall of Science
- **Filiz Cihan Cemberci** – Engine 293 Firehouse
- **Sherry Kozlowski** – Louis Armstrong House Museum
- **Nishat Shahabuddin** – 74th Street, Jackson Heights

STATEN ISLAND

- **Chua Cookie** – Historic Richmond Town

Participating Judges include:

- **Bobbie Lloyd**, CEO and Chief Baking Officer, Magnolia Bakery
- **Jonah Nigh**, Senior Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement, The New School; Semi-finalist, NBC/Peacock's Baking It (Season 1)
- **Nadine Orenstein**, Drue Heinz Curator in Charge, Department of Drawings and Prints, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Former Judge, National Gingerbread House Competition in Asheville, NC
- **Amy Scherber**, Owner and Founder, Amy's Bread; Member, Bread Bakers Guild of America
- **Melba Wilson**, Owner, Melba's Restaurant; Author, Melba's American Comfort: 100 Recipes from My Heart to Your Kitchen (2016)

About The Museum of the City of New York

Celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2023, the Museum of the City of New York fosters understanding of the distinctive nature of urban life in the world's most influential metropolis. Winner of "Best Museum" in *Time Out New York's* "Best of the City 2021" and multiple American Alliance of Museums (AAM) awards, MCNY engages visitors by celebrating, documenting, and interpreting the city's past, present, and future. To connect with the Museum's award-winning digital content, visit www.mcny.org, or follow us on Instagram and Twitter at @MuseumofCityNY and on Facebook at [Facebook.com/MuseumofCityNY](https://www.facebook.com/MuseumofCityNY).

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ABOUT THE GINGERBREAD NYC BAKERS

A Cake Baked in Brooklyn (Brooklyn) / Creation: Brooklyn Icons

A Cake Baked in Brooklyn is an award-winning boutique dessert catering company founded in 2016 by Red Hook native **Luquana McGriff**, who brings new life to time-tested Southern family recipes through unique decorations and all-natural ingredients. As a first-generation entrepreneur with a background in social work, she is proud to serve the Brooklyn community where she was born and raised. [@bakedinbrooklyn](#)

Camaxtli Gallegos (Bronx) / Creation: Bronx Zoo

As an Indigenous pastry chef with Michelin Star training, Camaxtli Gallegos came to New York in 2019 seeking a creative outlet for their knowledge and skills. Their passion for making art out of pastry drives their work to create innovative confections that are meaningful for others to behold and enjoy. [@iammaxgallegos](#)

César Aldrete (Manhattan) / Creation: The Met Cloisters

When he's not working on photoshoots around the city, freelance food stylist and chef César Aldrete creates projects inspired by NYC street food. A Mexican American who entered his first gingerbread house competition while in culinary school in Puebla, Mexico, he credits his first job in NYC at the three-Michelin star restaurant, Daniel, with honing his skills in plating and decoration. [@beardedfoodie](#)

Chua Cookie (Staten Island) / Creation: Historic Richmond Town

Representing Staten Island, Arlene Chua is a cookie artist who juggles a full-time job as a Senior Analyst on Wall Street alongside her passion for midnight cookie decorating. The owner of Chua Cookie, Arlene turned to sugar artistry as a therapeutic outlet after losing her mother to cancer in 2016. She has since placed in several national cookie competitions. [@chua.cookie](#)

Cray Cray for Cakes (Manhattan) / Creation: Jefferson Market Library and Garden

A recent move from Morris County, New Jersey brought Maria Sieber and her online bakery, Cray Cray for Cakes, to NYC. Her dream to own a bakery started to take shape after her daughter was born, and a tradition of ever more elaborate birthday cakes began. [@craycrayforcakes](#)

Debbie Wee (Brooklyn) / Creation: Brooklyn Museum

Debbie Wee is no stranger to making all things sweet look good, whether from her experience decorating Gramercy Tavern's Christmas tree with cookie ornaments or her work as a food stylist and recipe developer. A Paris-trained pastry chef, her 10 years of calling Brooklyn "home" inspired her gingerbread display. [@weebitesny](#)

Egidio Pastry Shop (Bronx) / Creation: Yankee Stadium

Egidio Pastry Shop has sat on the same block of East 187th Street near Arthur Avenue for more than 100 years. As the oldest pastry shop in the Bronx, it was founded by Southern Italian immigrant Don Pasquale Egidio in 1912. Current owner Maria Carmela Lucciola still maintains the original recipes in a delicious nod to tradition. [@egidiopastryshop](#)

Filiz Cihan Cemberci (Queens) / Creation: Engine 293 Firehouse

Filiz Cihan Cemberci studied fashion design in Turkey and received many design awards before moving to the US. Now a Queens resident, Filiz graduated from the Hot Bread Kitchen culinary course last spring and dreams of opening a small patisserie selling healthy products that appeal to both the eye and the palate. [@fiyonafiliz](#)

Holly Longworth (Brooklyn) / Creation: Circo's Pastry Shop

An amateur baker who has always loved to bake, Holly Longworth's dedication to this "art form with rules" truly took off during the pandemic. Inspired by vintage cake decorating and encouraged to try new things by the baking community on social media, she now shares her works on Instagram from her Brooklyn home. [@odetoyum](#)

Ida Kreutzer (Brooklyn) / Creation: Water Street

Returning for a second year to the Great Borough Bake-Off, Brooklyn-based Ida Kreutzer learned to bake as a kid while watching and helping her grandma and mom—both "amazing" home bakers. Now, as an adult, Ida continues the tradition and finds baking for people she loves to be pure joy. [@madebyIda](#)

Karen Chin (Queens) / Creation: New York Hall of Science

A 50 lb. bag of flour—a surprise gift from her husband—was the spark that launched Karen Chin's serious foray into baking. She now runs a small baking business from her home in Queens, using her illustration and design background to add artistic flair to baked creations that bring joy to those who both see and eat them. [@justaddkare](#)

Kathryn Irizarry and Kayla Wong (Brooklyn) / Creation: Brooklyn Icon

Kathryn Irizarry and Kayla Wong share a love of baking and all things Brooklyn. They both made career changes—quitting jobs to attend pastry school—and now work together on the pastry team at Gage and Tollner, an oyster and chophouse whose first iteration opened on Fulton Street in 1879 and has since been reinvented for a new generation. [@kt_eye](#) / [@kaylajustbakes](#)

L'Appartement 4F (Brooklyn) / Creation: Brooklyn Bridge

L'Appartement 4F is a French bakery that was born during the pandemic in a small Brooklyn apartment, when co-owners Gautier and Ashley Coiffard started making small batches of slow-fermented, handcrafted sourdough bread to recreate the taste of Gautier's childhood in France. Now they sell bread, croissants, and more at their brick-and-mortar store in Brooklyn Heights. [@lappartement4f](#)

Leonard Marino (Brooklyn) / Creation: Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Leonard Marino is a social worker but is looking to become a professional baker. He works on an Intensive Mobile Treatment team serving houseless people and those with severe and persistent mental illnesses. Although he's based in Brooklyn, he has traveled all over the five boroughs helping patients. Leonard's goal is to open a bakery and hire the patients he has served. Leonard enjoys baking because it is a chance to give something of yourself to others.

Loretta Bricchi Lee (Manhattan) / Creation: American Museum of Natural History

Home baker Loretta Bricchi Lee has always loved to bake and cook and has enjoyed exploring the different cuisines of the city since moving from Italy many years ago. Loretta brings to this competition experience honed through annual family traditions of Christmas gingerbread house making, always a multi-day affair to plan, bake, and decorate. She draws her inspiration from her love for design and architecture and her work in Real Estate for Compass.

Lorenzo Delgado (Manhattan) / Creation: Rockefeller Center

A newcomer to the city but not to the world of pastry, Lorenzo Delgado's vibrant cakes and Instagram-worthy dessert displays showcase his talents—and his hope that everyone can add more smiles to their day. In 2022 he was featured on Amazon Prime's *Dr. Seuss Baking Challenge*. [@stressfree_artistry](#)

Ma Smith's Dessert Café (Manhattan) / Creation: The Apollo Theater

For entrepreneur JoAnn Baylor of Ma Smith's Dessert Café, Harlem is home. What started as a way for JoAnn to run a business while staying home to raise her four children has grown into a family-operated bakery that has been a fixture of the community for more than 25 years.

Nishat Shahabuddin (Queens) / Creation: 74th Street, Jackson Heights

Nishat Shahabuddin is an orthodontist who loves to bake and is dedicated to finding time to incorporate art into her life. She worked part-time at a bakery while she was a dental student and has continued baking since moving back to Queens, where she grew up. Shahabuddin recently competed on an episode of HBO's *Silos Baking Competition*. [@nishats](#)

Patty Pops (Bronx) / Creation: Hip-Hop

Bronx native Petroula (Patty) Lambrou-Kalognomas first conceived of the idea for Patty Pops when she was asked to create a hypothetical business for a high school economics course 15 years ago. After her initial career as a CPA, she is now a full-time baker and proud owner of her namesake cake pop specialty store. Patty and her team of Bronx-born female bakers look forward to representing their borough in this year's competition [@patty_pops](#)

Sherry Kozlowski (Queens) / Creation: Louis Armstrong House Museum

Sherry is an amateur baker who enjoys building and creating edible art. She has traveled the country competing in baking and food competitions, including the *PPG Gingerbread* contest in Pittsburgh, PA and the *World Food Championship* in Orange Beach, AL. Sherry has also appeared on Food Network's *Bakers vs. Fake* (2017) and *The Christmas Cookie Challenge* (2018). [@_1_sweetworld](#)

Sonia Dębek (Manhattan) / Creation: New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center

A molecular biologist, Dr. Sonia Dębek brings a scientific meticulousness to her passion for baking. Sonia recently moved from Warsaw, Poland to continue research on cancer at Weill Cornell Medicine and is thrilled to pay homage to the cutting-edge science taking place in NYC using the European tradition of gingerbread.

SottoVoce & Something Sugared (Brooklyn) / Creation: Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Arch (Grand Army Plaza)

Mario DiBiase, chef and owner of SottoVoce restaurant in Park Slope, and **Susanna Caliendo**, owner of Something Sugared, frequently combine their complementary talents to create oversized gingerbread exhibits. Mario brings a background in engineering and a talent for sculpting while Susanna, an award-winning cookie artist whose work has appeared on the Food Network, adds strong design talent and decorative detailing. [@something_sugared](#) [@mario.cookss](#)

Valerie Carrington (Bronx) / Creation: Yankee Stadium

Valerie Carrington's Yankees pride shines through in every element of her gingerbread scene, which combines Valerie's love of baking and making. Valerie's Etsy shop and stands at Bronx maker events feature hip-hop and sports-inspired pieces, with the Yankees naturally featured heavily as—in the eyes of this Bronx native—the greatest baseball team on the planet. [@valeriesviandinc](#)