



American Repertory Theater
64 brattle street, cambridge, massachusetts 02138
617.495.2668 TEL
617.495.1705 FAX
617.547.8300 TICKETS
www.americanrepertorytheater.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

CONTACT:

Rebecca Curtiss, Public Relations Director | rebecca_curtiss@harvard.edu

IMAGES FOR DOWNLOAD

**AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES
IT HAS COMMISSIONED ACCLAIMED MURALIST
DR. ROB “PROBLAK” GIBBS
TO CREATE A MURAL FOR ITS NEW HOME IN BOSTON**

COMMUNITY MURAL WORKSHOP DATES AND NEIGHBORHOODS ANNOUNCED

CAMBRIDGE, MA — American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University announced today it has commissioned nationally acclaimed Boston-based muralist Dr. Rob “Problak” Gibbs to partner with the theater and lead the creation of a 200-foot-long mural for its new home. It will be the prolific Boston artist’s first work in Boston’s Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

The new piece of public art is conceived to reflect Boston’s residents and a collective vision for the future. It will display on the north-facing exterior wall of the David E. and Stacey L. Goel Center for Creativity & Performance, A.R.T.’s new headquarters located at 175 N. Harvard Street in Boston’s Allston neighborhood.

The mural design will be inspired by conversations facilitated at free public workshop experiences beginning in late August and continuing through fall 2025 that will be held throughout Boston’s neighborhoods and beyond, and within the Harvard community. Designed to engage participants of all ages, the workshops will be co-led by Problak, local artists with connections to the respective neighborhoods, and members of A.R.T.’s Engagement team. Workshop experience

dates in Allston-Brighton, Cambridge, Dorchester, East Boston, and Malden were announced today; additional workshops in Roxbury, Back Bay, and more will be announced in the coming weeks.

“We are truly honored to be working with Dr. Rob ‘Problak’ Gibbs at this exciting moment at A.R.T.,” said Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus. “Whether on stage or in the community, A.R.T. programming brings people together to spark dialogue and build empathy. These values are at the very heart of the collaborative process Rob will lead to create this mural.”

“We envision the new mural will reflect Boston’s past and celebrate its future promise, telling a vibrant visual story that resonates across generations, cultures, and experiences,” said Associate Artistic Director Dayron J. Miles. “We aspire for this process to connect our community while embracing its complexities. To reflect the energetic diversity of Boston’s residents. And to be a joyful invitation for all to feel seen, celebrated, and inspired at the A.R.T.”

Problak is a visual artist, organizer, and community builder who has transformed the cultural landscape of Boston through his vision to beautify its predominantly Black and Brown communities. He describes his murals as “mirrors in which residents can see themselves.” Problak’s seven-part *Breathe Life* mural series, each mural a verse in a love song to the city, has received national acclaim, most recently as the first local and Black artist to paint the coveted Dewey Square Mural on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including being named one of Boston's 100 Most Influential People in 2022; Best of Boston, Artist; and Best of Boston, Muralist.

“I’m thrilled to embark on this collaboration with A.R.T. to create my first mural in Allston,” said Problak. “Both A.R.T. and I believe community members are vital partners in our artmaking. Art is typically categorized as two- or three-dimensional—for me, there is a fourth dimension: the shared story. That is what makes the mural or theatrical experience live on, long after it’s created.”

Guided by a core design principle of **universal access**, A.R.T. and [its architects](#) explored how the David E. and Stacey L. Goel Center for Creativity & Performance could extend the theater’s impact beyond its audiences and into its broader community. Drawing on Allston’s rich tradition as a hub for music, performance, and art—especially murals—they designed the building’s north wall to present a mural for A.R.T. to offer as a gift to the city it will call home. It will be one of the largest pieces of public art on Harvard’s campus.

Learn more at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/Mural.

WORKSHOP EXPERIENCES INFORMATION

THE MURAL: PUBLIC ART CREATED IN COMMUNITY

You're invited to join Roxbury muralist Problak, local artists, and A.R.T. in the collaborative process to create a new mural!

A.R.T.'s new home in Boston will feature a new piece of public art: a mural that reflects Boston's residents and the future we envision together. The design process begins this summer at free workshop experiences co-led by Problak, celebrated local muralists, and members of A.R.T.'s Engagement team. No experience necessary to participate—just come ready to share stories about your past, present, and hopes for the future. The imagery and ideas sparked will help shape the mural's design and help create something truly meaningful for everyone.

The two-hour workshops are free and designed for all ages. Supplies and hospitality will be provided. All workshops are open to the public, but RSVPs are recommended.

Learn more and RSVP at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/Mural.

Dates, workshop locations, and participating artists for workshops in Roxbury, Back Bay, and more will be announced in the coming weeks.

- **DORCHESTER | MONDAY, AUG 30**
2PM – 4PM | Grove Hall Branch Library, 41 Geneva Ave.
 - Artist: Problak

- **CAMBRIDGE | SATURDAY, SEP 6**
2PM – 4PM | Cambridge Public Library, 499 Broadway
 - Artists: Gina Latham and Problak

- **MALDEN | MONDAY, SEP 8**
6PM – 8PM | Malden Public Library, 36 Salem St.
 - Artist: Massiel Grullón and Problak

- **EAST BOSTON | THURSDAY, SEP 11**
5:30PM – 7:30PM | East Boston Branch Library, 365 Bremen St.
 - Artist: Silvia Lopez-Chavez and Problak Gibbs

- **ALLSTON-BRIGHTON | THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**
5PM - 7PM | Harvard Ed Portal, 224 Western Ave.

- Artist: Phoebe Warner and Problak

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DR/ ROB “PROBLAK” GIBBS is a visual artist, organizer, and community builder who has transformed the cultural landscape of Boston through his powerful art and commitment to youth education. Born and raised in Roxbury, Massachusetts during the Hip-Hop Golden Era, Gibbs saw the power of graffiti as a form of self-expression. As a teen, graffiti became a tool for him, and others in his community, to chronicle and immortalize their culture and history. Problak’s vision to beautify the predominantly Black and Brown communities of Boston is a driving force behind his artistic practice.

Gibbs has a strong focus on arts education. As co-founder of Artists for Humanity (AFH), an arts non-profit that hires and teaches creative skills to youth, Gibbs served in numerous leadership roles for 32 years. He has been an adjunct educator for Boston Public Schools, conducting countless workshops and panels at numerous colleges and high schools in Greater Boston. Gibbs also partners with Madison Park Technical Vocational High School’s Art Program to curate a rotating public art campus, offering emerging graffiti writers and muralists real-time opportunities to experience a guided practice.

Gibbs’ recent 7-part *Breathe Life* mural series has received national acclaim, most recently as the first local and Black artist to paint the coveted Dewey Square Mural on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including being named one of Boston's 100 Most Influential People in 2022, Best of Boston, Artist and Best of Boston, Muralist. Additionally, he has been recognized with the Boston Celtics’ Hero Among Us Award, the Nubian Foundation Visionary Award, the MLK Drum Major Award, the Newell Flather Award for Leadership in Public Art, the Brother Thomas Fellowship, the Graffiti Artist of the Year award from the Mass Industry Committee, and the Goodnight Initiative’s Civic Artist Award. In 2021, Rob was deeply honored when the city of Boston proclaimed February 1 to be Rob “Problak” Gibbs day.

Gibbs’ work has transformed Boston’s art industry. In 2023, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Massachusetts College of Art and Design. He served as the inaugural artist-in-residence with Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts, and was named a Tyrone Maurice Adderly artist-in-residence by MassArt in 2022. He curated the BAMS Fest’s “Rep Your City” exhibition and participated in the first Black Out Walls Mural festival in Detroit. Gibbs’ work has been covered in publications and media outlets like WBUR- the ARTery, WGBH, the Boston Art Review, Boston Magazine, Best of Boston, Forbes, PBS NewsHour, The Boston Globe and many others.

Gibbs' continuing practice is expansive and prolific. He envisions graffiti and hip-hop as ways to educate young people. It is Gibbs' role as father to his daughter, and mentor to future generations, that drives his passion for creating images of beauty and resilience through murals and contemporary fine art. Problak.com

MASSIEL GRULLÓN is a Boston-based Dominican muralist and designer. Her work specializes in retro-nostalgic murals for diverse spaces. She uses harmonious gradients to create inviting environments that encourage viewer engagement. Grullón's mission is to evoke nostalgia, foster connection, and celebrate shared experiences through bold, transformative visuals that inspire reflection and a sense of belonging. MassielGrullon.com

JEREMY 'SOBEK' HARRISON (he/him) is Boston born and raised. Mattapan, Dorchester has always been home, and Sobek accredits Mattapan Square for teaching him everything Hip Hop, especially Graffiti. Already a young illustrator, Sobek started learning aerosol and his love for arts enhanced becoming his passion. His first Graffiti piece was painted in '98 although he has been tagging since '97, now merging his illustrations and Graffiti into large scale murals of aerosol abstract realism. Sobek's passion for the arts, specifically Graffiti, and its positive representation has led him to start Back Against the Wall. The initiative helps the inner-city community make their words and self-portraits visible on a larger scale encouraging the positive power of words and familiar faces. Graffiti is an important part of this mission because it was birthed through rebellious strength motivating a culture to recognize their power. NowAndThere.org/Jeremy-Sobek-Harrison

GINA LATHAM, also known as FlowrBomb, is a self-taught Boston based artist whose work reflects a deep intuitive connection to the creative process. She believes that everything we do is art in one form or another, and her practice is a reflection of the spiritual element of creation. For Gina, art is not just about making something visually striking—it's about channeling energy and emotion into every piece she creates.

SILVIA LOPEZ-CHAVEZ is a Dominican-American visual artist whose community-centered murals form connections across disciplines and cultural boundaries. She uses joy as an act of resistance and celebration through her vibrant work worldwide. In 2023 Silvia received a Common Good Awards from MassArt, The Boston Foundation's Brother Thomas Fellowship award and Amplify Latinx 100 award. Silvia is a Salon Luminary at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and honored with a Leadership in Public Art Award by New England for the Arts in 2021. She recently completed art residencies at Mass MoCa, Mexico City, Oaxaca, Haystack and Vermont Studio Center. Commissions include the U.S. Chinese Embassy in Beijing, Google HQ in California, Peabody Essex Museum, City of Boston, SeaWalls Boston, MIT, Harvard, and Northeastern Universities. Silvia is a graduate of Massachusetts College of Art & Design and Altos de Chavon in

the Dominican Republic. Silvia continues her studio practice close to the ocean between Boston and DR. SilviaLopezChavez.com

PHOEBE WARNER (they/she, PHEEBZ) is a Boston-based interdisciplinary and community-engaged artist focused on the word “cultivate.” They believe art is meant to feed the communities we live in- to stimulate our minds, to tell our stories, to send messages, to celebrate, and to commemorate. PHEEBZ shares a collaborative space at Humphreys Street Studios as a member of the muralist duo- Girly Pop. They are also a contributor to many Boston-based organizations and non-profits. [@pheebzcpa on Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pheebzcpa)

— ABOUT AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER —

THE AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER (A.R.T.) AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking theatrical experiences that catalyze dialogue and transformation. Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus, who began her tenure in 2008, leads the theater.

A.R.T. is a creative hub, launching productions seen on Broadway, across the US, and around the world and receiving dozens of Tony, Drama Desk, Olivier and other nominations and awards throughout its 45-year history. As the professional theater on campus, A.R.T. plays a central role at Harvard University, catalyzing discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange, and sharing University resources with the broader community. Driven by its value to lead with inquiry, A.R.T. builds community with audiences, artists, students, staff, and neighbors across Greater Boston, embracing theater’s power to cultivate the full breadth and beauty of our shared humanity.

In 2026, A.R.T. will relocate from Harvard Square to its new home in Boston, the David E. and Stacey L. Goel Center for Creativity and Performance. Currently under construction, this new, inspiring center will include flexible adaptive spaces to rehearse, create, teach, and convene in community, fueling A.R.T.’s vision and creative work for years to come.

###