

AWESOME ART IN AUSTIN

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DOWNTOWN AUSTIN: LAMAR UNDERPASS

These particular qualities of street art are its primary staples in the culture of Austin, and are often involved in the creative processes of artists when about to create a new piece such as Niz describes her art process to be. As she became more versed in urban culture as a young artist, she decided to prioritize the experiences of

“I create each piece with the neighborhood and community in mind” Niz said. “For East Austin it’s important to acknowledge the generations of black and brown people that have been there.”

To be able to emphasize concepts like this that are important to street artists, they also have to plan out their technical process of creating street art. Each artist has their own way of doing things, which is shown by how Murphy and Niz prepare for the actual creation of their pieces.

“I’m really into photography too, and when I see something that I really like, I really want to draw it or paint it” Murphy said. “So I’ll usually I usually start with a reference picture and then go on from there. Sometimes I’ll just have like a burst of inspiration and it’ll inspire me to make something whether it be a drawing or a painting.”

Murphy’s way to create her street art includes a distinct amount of using inspiration found from her own ideas or things she sees around her. In comparison, Niz has a different and more hands-on approach.

“My process involves a mix of water painting and hand-cut stencil art” Niz said.

While street art is a beloved cultural norm in Austin, the community still faces pushback to its growth according to Walpole. Walpole also identified some issues that are known for popping up during the technical process of street art creation in Austin Texas.

“Street art is known for being political and bringing up social issues in communities” Walpole said. “When it comes to the more technical bits of painting murals and/or street art, you could find some community pushback. Nowadays, it is more often for street art to be viewed as gross and not good for business.”

Despite the distinct dislike of street art by some Austinites, it is still highly valued by many people for what it does for both the general community as Walpole, Niz, and Murphy described before. However, it also makes a lasting and significant impact on the artists themselves as well.

“I really enjoy starting my day or ending my day with art” Murphy said. “I think if you can find something like that, if anybody could find some kind of creative outlet for themselves, it would help them to just de-stress and find a great way to express themselves.”

DOWNTOWN AUSTIN: LAMAR UNDERPASS

When exploring almost any part of the City of Austin, Texas, many visitors and Austinites alike will often find street art splattered, painted, and drawn across many of the buildings surrounding them. It doesn’t matter whether they seen graffiti or a mural dedicated to someone the artist lost. Every piece is an example of the huge cultural impact street art has on Austin. Even more than that, every piece was created by someone who wanted to share part of their story with everyone who had the chance to see it.

Street artist Niz agrees with this interpretation of street art as a form of art many people use to express their personal experiences. As a creator of art in Austin for 14 years, she has a strong belief in the power of street art to help many different kinds of people in many different kinds of ways.

“Street art is a platform for diverse people to express themselves and voice what is important to them” Niz said. “It is a crucial element for free speech and equal representation.”

This idea of street art allowing for many different people to share their stories adds to LASA Junior Julia Walpole’s belief that street art has a big impact on the community of Austin in particular. Walpole is one of the Junior Lieutenants in the LASA Art Honor Society, and focuses on how street art is often used as a form of sharing the love artists have for their community.

“Street art, such as murals, brings the community [together] outside of the walls” Walpole said. “When I am involved in painting a mural, I like to imagine painting the heart of the community on its public walls. [It’s] almost like putting your heart on your sleeve. It shows character, personality, caring, and love.”

Junior Lucy Murphy’s interpretation of the effect of street art on the Austin community reinforces Walpole’s explanation as well. She additionally focused on specific ways that she’s observed artists incorporate community values into their street art.

“Especially in East Austin, I’ve seen that the murals are so rooted within the community and can connect to the members of the community is a really special way” Murphy said. “I think that’s really, really cool, and I’ve even seen some near LASA that are super in touch with the community. I think it’s really important for people to grow up and feel accepted by art pieces like these which have public figures, and a lot of other things that connect to people’s heritage.”



HYDE PARK

Graphic by Kayla Le

