

the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program
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For Immediate Release

ART EXHIBITION

Urban Soul

DISPLAY DATES:

VENUE:

ADDRESS:

CONTACT:

TEL:



Harvey Nichol, *Minotaur*, Acrylic on canvas, 2021
Image courtesy of the artist

About the Exhibition

Street art, urban art, graffiti – there have been many attempts over the years to categorize “the writing on the wall” and other creative interventions in urban spaces. Academics often write about this kind of art as if it is a relatively new phenomenon in the art world, with graffiti and street art by artists such as Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat showing up in the late sixties and the seventies on the East Coast of the United States.¹ While these artists are certainly notable and have contributed a great deal to popular culture and art movements, it is also important not to overlook the fact that cultures around the globe have made their mark on the surfaces that surround their living spaces for millennia. “Street art” as we know it today is certainly alive, as Armstrong says, and it has been living for a very, very long time.

One can look at the Indigenous paintings found on the sheer stone cliffs of Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park right here in Alberta, the ancient paintings and reliefs on the walls of Egyptian tombs and temples, or the markings on the walls of the Lascaux caves in France from as long ago as circa 15,000 BCE. With so many examples throughout history of civilizations making their mark on the environments they inhabit, we can reason that this practice is not new by any means. Of course, today's urban environments are vastly different from these ancient civilizations, and contemporary street art reflects this. In an incredibly globalized world, the street art of today speaks a multitude of languages and inscribes the values of varying cultures and identities onto the surfaces of our shared urban environments.

The exhibition *Urban Soul* invites viewers to contemplate the living creativity that pumps vibrancy and culture into the veins of a city, a park, or anywhere that humans share space. Seven artists contribute their voices and make their mark in this exhibition through various mediums – whether their art is on a skateboard, a T-shirt, a road sign, or a large mural-like panel, they are using a visual language to express their individual identities and contribute to a continually evolving cultural conversation. The artists featured in this exhibition are Rhys Farrell, Levin Ifko, Harvey Nichol, Sydonne Warren, Adrienne Williams, and Tyler Wong.

¹ Claude Crommelin, “Introduction,” in *New Street Art* (Woodbridge: ACC Art Books, 2016), 4

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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