

"We see locals who feel a deeper connection to their city and tourists who are truly shocked at the beauty around every corner. SHINE murals have inspired people to explore neighborhoods they may not have otherwise, building connections and a sense of pride in our public spaces."

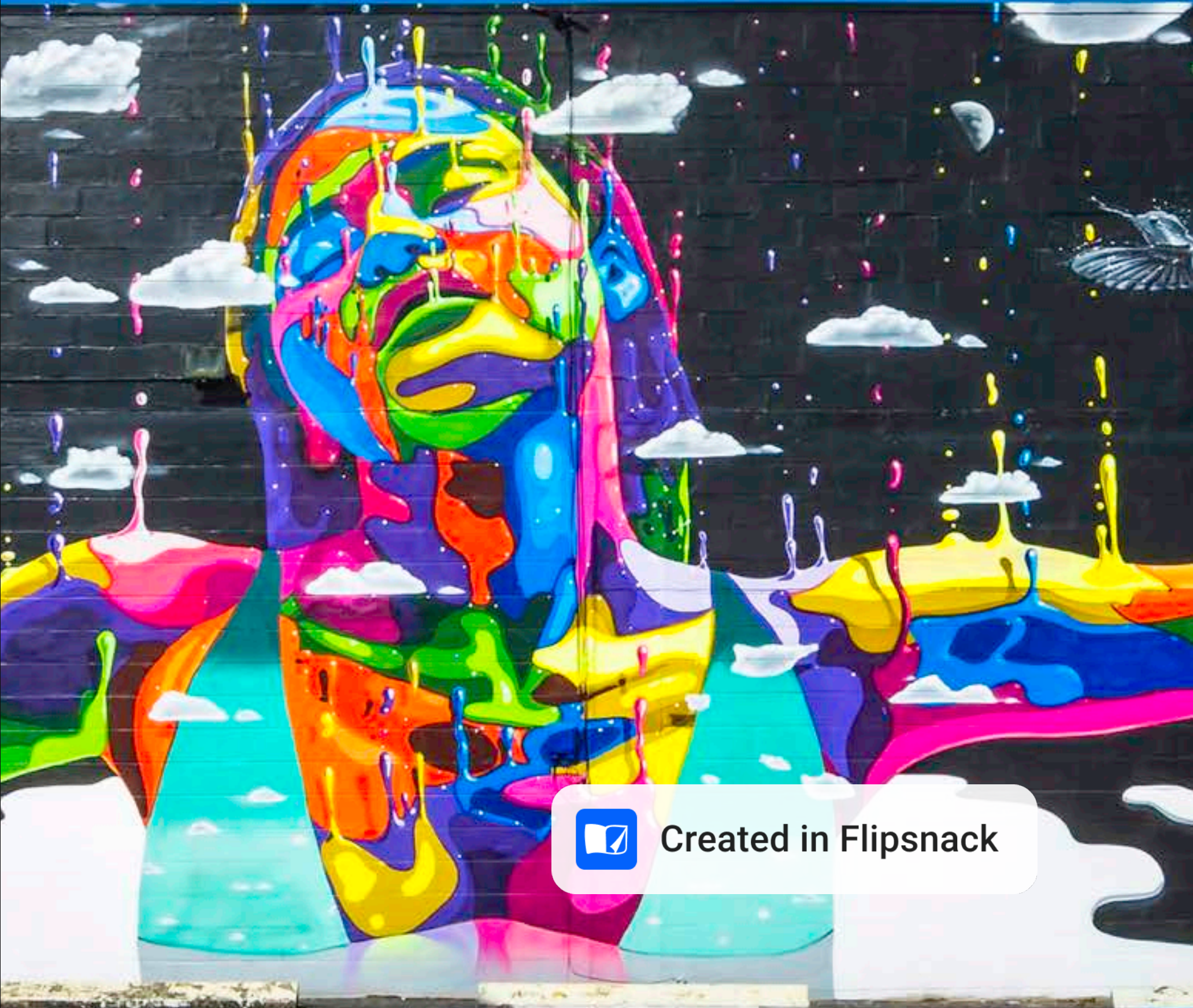
CELESTE DAVIS
Director of Arts, Culture and Tourism
City of St. Petersburg

SHINE[®] ST. PETERSBURG
MURAL FESTIVAL

ST. PETERSBURG
ARTS
ALLIANCE



SHINE
ST. PETERSBURG MURAL FESTIVAL



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THE RISE OF SHINE

As with many complex artistic endeavors, the seeds of the SHINE Mural Festival were planted several years before its official launch in 2015. As early as 2009, local artists Leon (Tes One) Bedore, Ales (BASK) Hostomsky, and Johnny and Paul Vitale began to talk about the possibility of creating a mural movement in St. Petersburg.

In 2012, Bedore, the Vitales, and Chris (Palehorse) Parks painted a mural on the back of the State Theatre on Central Avenue in St. Pete. Spawning the contagion that Bedore hoped would happen, other artists began to add murals to buildings on the 600 block. The energy and intention were positive, but over the next several years, a few issues arose that prompted Bedore to move forward with the concept of a weeklong, high-profile mural festival that would feature regional and world-renowned artists.

He reached out to John Collins, Executive Director of the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance, who invited him and others to a meeting with Wayne Atherholt, director of the city's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, and other arts leaders. "I was a bit skeptical at the beginning," says Collins, "but the group was very professional, and they had great business sense. I was so blown away by their artful presentation that I agreed for the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance to serve as their fiscal agent, provide production support, and do additional fundraising for SHINE that would supplement a seed grant from the city."

The planning meetings continued, and the inaugural SHINE committee ultimately grew to include Michelle Tannu, Chad Mize, Casey Paquet, Diane Shelly, Stacia Schrader, Kathryn Howd, Darden Rice, Kristina Alspaw, Paul Johannesson,

Anna Serena, Aldo Fonticella, Nick Kekllas, Amanda Cooper and Mitzi Gordon. "I was lucky enough to be there at the very beginning in those meetings, and I was kind of overwhelmed at truly what an uphill battle this was," says Hostomsky. "There were so many voices in the room, and it was an educational thing that we had to explain — what this should look like, the kind of curatorship that needed to be applied — to get people behind the idea."

Although the prospect of the first-time effort was daunting, the group's commitment to the project kept them on the path to achieving their dream.

"We kind of didn't know what we were doing or what we were getting into, knowing it was going to be such a big undertaking," says Parks. "We believed in the power of murals, seeing how they can really transform not only an area but also the spirit of an area. It was something we all really wanted to see come to life."

The 2015 SHINE Mural Festival took place in September, with residents gathering to watch and experience an eclectic group of artists transform blank walls throughout St. Petersburg into varied and vibrant works of art. "That first year was a really powerful experience for me," says Parks. "It's amazing to see a vision manifest and happen."

The successful result changed the minds of people who didn't quite grasp the concept at the beginning, according to Tannu. "SHINE wasn't always an easy sell. Many still regarded 'street art' as vandalism that invites more unwanted activity. Some had just never witnessed the transformative power that paint can have on a community, especially when in the hands of some of the most well-regarded muralists in the world."

The enthusiastic response to SHINE throughout the city set the stage for the next year and beyond. In 2018, Jenee Priebe, who volunteered during the second and third years, joined the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance staff to manage the committee and run the festival. Throughout her seven-year tenure as the Director of SHINE, she says, "The most important thing for me has been to maintain the integrity of what the artists created originally, and the quality of the art and artists involved."

Inspired to create more community engagement in SHINE, Priebe expanded Bright Spots — opportunities for local nonprofits and individuals to become involved in special mural projects. Bright Spots partners included the Shirley Proctor Fuller Foundation; Big Brothers, Big Sisters; Creative Clay and many others.

The initial decision to invite mural artists from across the globe has reaped benefits all around. "I saw it as elevating and uplifting the city," says Mize. "And it was good for the local artists. I was really inspired by seeing so many

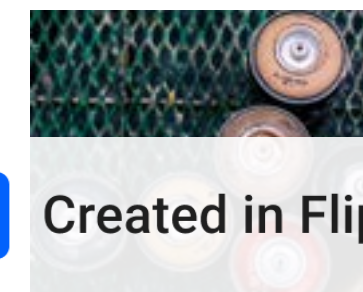
different styles and techniques." Priebe adds that the networking opportunities have been invaluable, as some St. Pete artists are now working with those they've met through SHINE.

The SHINE Mural Festival became an eagerly anticipated event, developing a reputation as one of Tampa Bay's creative highlights. Artists, staff and volunteers brought the original vision to life every year, working through the pandemic and many instances of challenging weather, including back-to-back hurricanes that could have — but didn't — derail the successful celebration of SHINE's 10th anniversary in 2024.

In the space of a decade, artists from 21 countries have put their colorful stamp on the walls of St. Petersburg — creating a revolving and inspiring art exhibition that is immediately apparent to anyone entering the city.

"It is amazing and humbling to see SHINE reach 10 years," says Bedore. "To me, it proves that pride in the arts in St. Pete is genuine. The entire concept of SHINE from the beginning has been simple, yet very powerful, to be a gift of public art to St. Petersburg. We now have an unbelievable collection of work, unique to the City, by some of the greatest artists of our time."

MARY ELLEN COLLINS
Contributing writer



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EVOCAl

Miami, Florida

This sprawling three-story work by Dominican-born Evoca1 is on a wall roughly 150 feet wide, facing east. Its subject relaxes with casual confidence in a powerful scenario. As a figurative painter and designer strongly influenced by his Latin-American culture, Evoca1 (aka Elio Mercado) uses art to share messages and raise awareness about local and world issues he is passionate about. His murals can be found on walls from Mexico to Peru to England. evoca1.com



HITNES

Rome, Italy

Hitnes grew up in Rome among a family of scientists. His street art reflects their influence with fluid and illustrative depictions of wildlife. This mural was part of his project retracing the 1830s steps of biologist John James Audubon, documenting and painting native birds in different U.S. states. Before beginning to paint, Hitnes spent time in the Everglades observing roseate spoonbills in the wild to inform this work. The resulting mural captures the essence of an Audubon guide illustration. hitnes.com



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SHINE LIVE EVENT

September 2016

1246 Central Avenue



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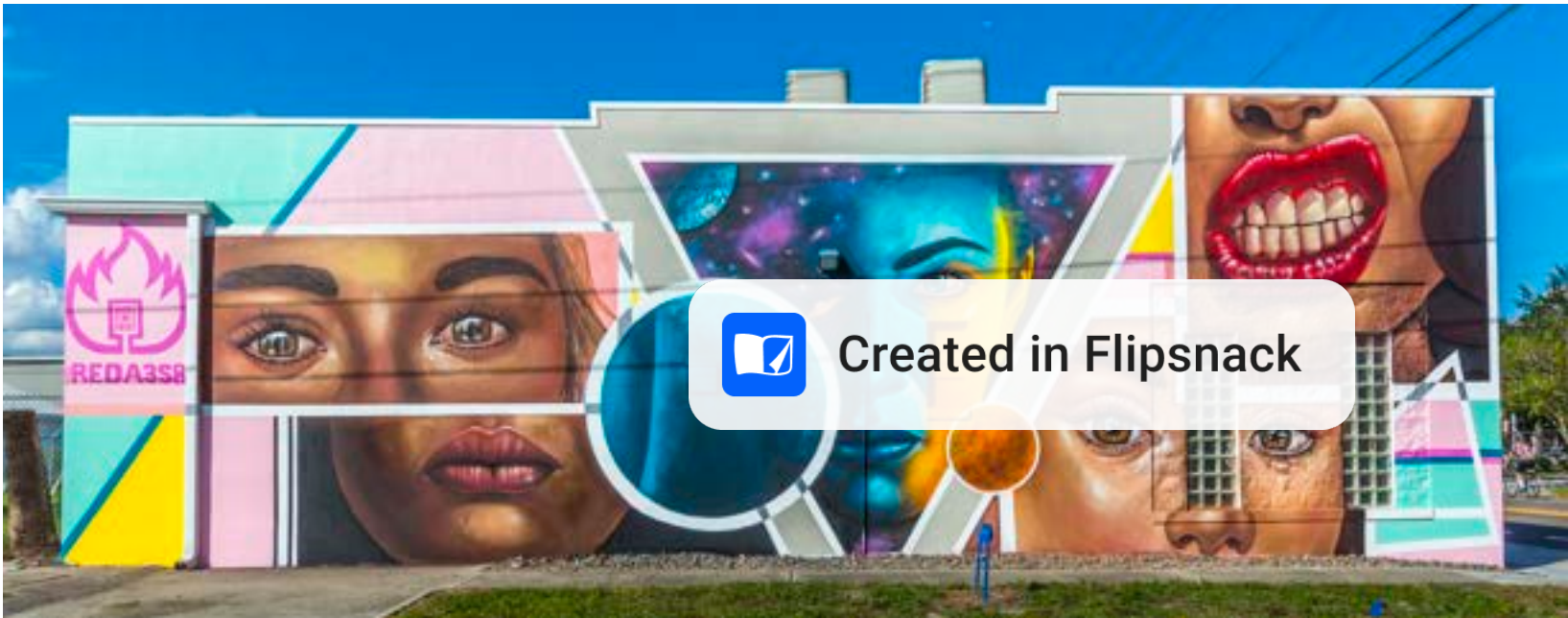
REDA3SB
Tampa, Florida

A Mexican artist based in the Tampa Bay region, Reda3sb (aka Ricardo Delgado) has more than a decade of design, illustration and street art experience. With roots as a self-taught graffiti artist, Reda’s work reflects his urban history while incorporating a penchant for fine art. He participated in international mural projects in Mexico and at the inaugural Tampa Bay Fresh Fest and was introduced to SHINE by the Spanish artist Belin. Reda’s mural expresses the concept that regardless of skin color, socioeconomic status or country of origin, we all experience the same universal feelings. “We laugh, we cry, we get angry ... we are all the same,” the artist said.
[instagram.com/reda3sb](https://www.instagram.com/reda3sb)



TAJ TENFOLD
Kingston, Jamaica

The subject sews with a thread of water, symbolically repairing damage to the ocean, in this jewel-toned mural by Jamaican artist Taj Francis (aka Taj Tenfold). Inspired by a mix of reggae, Japanese manga, baroque paintings and hip-hop music, Tenfold’s portrait of this regal female stretches across the wall in rich crimson, orange and purple tones. Focused on illustration, Tenfold explores subtle nuances of human behavior and identity through the lens of African ancestry.
[tajtenfold.com](https://www.tajtenfold.com)



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THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

PALEHORSE St. Petersburg, Florida

Chris Parks believes in miracles. Better known as Palehorse, the multidisciplinary artist has witnessed firsthand the power of focused positivity. “You just make up your mind to do something, whatever it takes,” he said. “I’ve seen what happens.”

One extraordinary experience occurred when Palehorse painted his first large-scale SHINE mural in 2019. On a day forecast to deliver Florida’s signature wall of wetness — with

a 100 percent chance of rain — Palehorse and his brother Matt Parks made up their minds to keep a busy painting schedule. Eager to add detail to an intricate mural, the pair spent time visualizing their process. “We just kept this total positive mindset that we were going to paint all day that day,” Palehorse said. “It did start raining on us, but we didn’t pack up. And the wind started blowing so hard that it was blowing the rain overtop of us. It blew the clouds away ... so we just kept painting.”

Creating art that draws influence from Southeast Asian and Latin culture, mythology and spirituality, Palehorse is

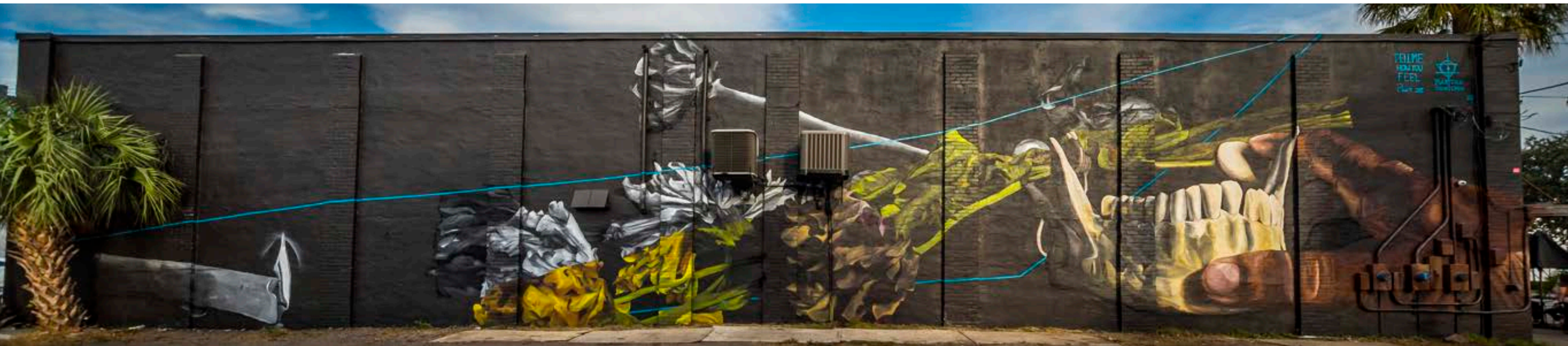
now exploring new tools and technologies, expanding his practice to include teaching and guided meditation groups. Making intentional artwork that conveys deep feeling, he aims to uplift the sensitive viewer and express positive vibrations. “Everything is in a rapid flux right now,” he said. “For me, my art and my spiritual practice are merging into one thing. This world is full of a lot of division and negativity. I want to reach in and be connected with the light side of the force.”

Together with his wife Michelle Tannu, Palehorse served as a founding organizer and co-curator of SHINE during the festival’s genesis and early years. Inspired by St. Pete’s longtime bohemian energy, they set out to make the city a world stage for muralists. “When you’re in an area that has murals, you feel like it’s a place that is for the people,” Palehorse said. “Putting art on walls makes it accessible for all people to enjoy and uplifts the spirits.”

The couple were frequent visitors to Miami’s Art Basel showcase, where the Wynwood neighborhood comes alive with mural artists each December. There they connected with talent from around the world, gaining insights that helped plant the seeds for SHINE.

Starting from a relatively unknown location with a shoestring budget, they began to email artists. Within a few days, everyone invited said yes. “We kind of didn’t know what we were getting into, or how big it would get,” Palehorse said. “We really believed in the power of murals, seeing how they can transform not only an area, but also the spirit of that area.”

“It was a really powerful experience for me,” he said. “It brought me to a new level of imagination. It’s amazing to see a vision manifested.”
palehorsesdesign.com



"It kind of reaffirmed that how I think about things is not wrong, it's just different."

BAKPAK DURDEN



THE POWER OF REPRESENTATION

BAKPAK DURDEN
Detroit, Michigan

It's fitting that Bakpak Durden's mural depicts a sort of stylized altar. As the piece neared completion in 2021, the artist was invited to participate in a sacred ceremony involving intense, hallucinogenic revelations.

"Your life is changed forever," Durden said. "It kind of reaffirmed that how I think about things is not wrong, it's just different. I needed to figure out how to communicate it better and with more confidence."

The self-taught, interdisciplinary fine artist's ofrenda mural expresses a reverence for spirituality with its composition of mandible, zinnia, and dried marigolds. "It's a mural talking about death — not the darkness of it, but the celebration and the remembrance of people who have passed," Durden said.

While waiting for their wall to be ready, Durden was taken

to the Dalí Museum. They said the scale of the art and architecture there made a strong impression. "I feel it's important to make large statements that aren't strictly advertisements," they said. Murals can offer a space to address narratives of oppression and injustice, allowing for "deeper emotional exploration" beyond the topical, Durden said.

Hailing from Detroit, the artist studies films, plays and poetry by Afro-Surrealists, taking "scientific deep dives" into ancient civilizations while considering attempts to extinguish some histories. Often placing subjects in transitional states, they create hyperrealistic and conceptual artwork in conversation with their surroundings.

"As a person that exists within many complicated and beautiful communities ... I get to make public art and be out there, and it's appreciated," they said. "Maybe it inspires other people to do the same."



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TASKO
St. Petersburg, Florida

Renowned for his intricate wildstyle lettering and skilled compositions, Tasko returned for a second time as a featured SHINE artist. True to his roots, this mural showcased his dynamic lettering abilities in what is his largest wildstyle piece to date. Beyond creating art, Tasko is known for supporting graffiti culture through events like Letter Headz, which exhibits the work of dozens of graffiti writers worldwide. Tasko's work serves as homage to the roots of contemporary street art.
[instagram.com/the_one_of_many_](https://www.instagram.com/the_one_of_many_)



REGINALD O'NEAL
Miami, Florida

Soft gray tones complement this striking mural by artist Reginald O'Neal, painted on the Living Heritage Institute building at the University of South Florida's St. Petersburg campus. A portrait of historian John Henrik Clark, a pioneer in the creation of Africana studies, dominates the composition, framed by a gestural depiction of the cattle-herding Mundari tribe of South Sudan. O'Neal said he hopes the work inspires people to learn more about these figures, and the world. Represented by Miami contemporary art program Spinello Projects, O'Neal is classically trained and has painted murals in Austria, Norway and Spain.
[instagram.com/_reginaldoneal_](https://www.instagram.com/_reginaldoneal_)



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THE POWER OF PUBLIC ART

MICHAEL VASQUEZ St. Petersburg, Florida

In Michael Vasquez's mural, "The Mangrove Refuge (The Vorasane Family and Friends; Gandy Beach circa 1980)," a displaced Lao family and friends find a moment of reflection amid the mangroves of Tampa Bay's Gandy Beach. A 1978 Datsun 280Z serves as their centerpiece, fusing references to car culture and masculine pride. Aspects of their clothing signal emulation, but the subjects' solitary gazes set them apart and allude to deeper personal reflections.

Born in St Petersburg, Florida, in 1983, Vasquez attended New World School of the Arts in Miami,

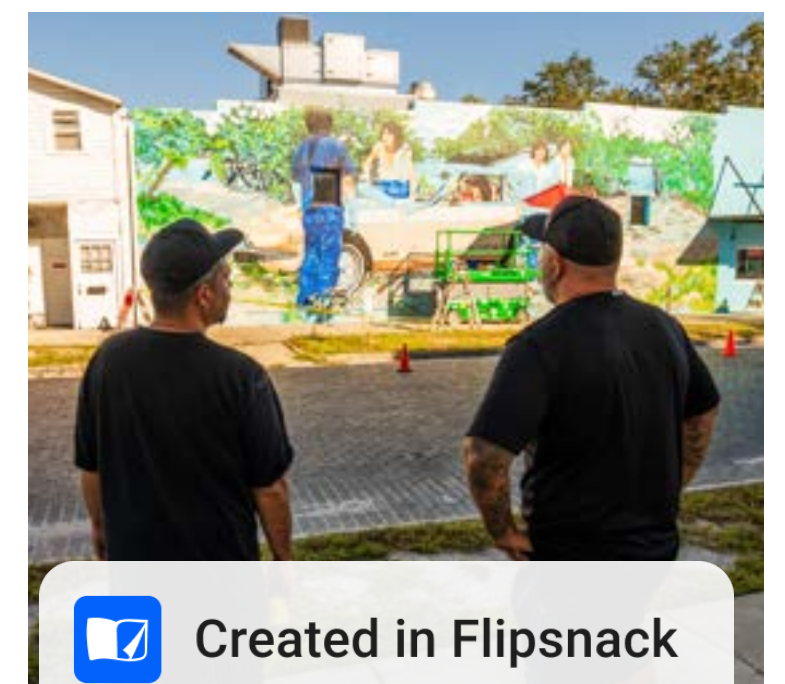
where he graduated with a bachelor of fine arts degree in 2005. He is recognized for his figurative paintings that explore the cultivation of community amid what Vasquez describes as "an inherent social disposition of broken homes and marginalized neighborhoods." Vasquez cites his experience growing up without a father figure, and without siblings, as a source of inspiration for the work, and what attracted him to notions of an extended family where a sense (or illusion) of identity may exist.

Using his own photographs of friends and familiar environments as source material, Vasquez configures subjects into powerful, often larger-than-life compositions. He includes visual cues that inform identity, such as color, hand signs, symbols and



tattoos, while maps, neighborhood landmarks and native foliage establish location. The resulting works illuminate a pivotal moment in his subjects' lives.

Through his art, Vasquez legitimizes a complex social landscape, narrating neighborhood events, mischief and the trials that come with the territory as his subjects navigate the expectations and pressures of their peers and society at large.
michaelvasquez.info



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A REFLECTION OF LIFE

EMMANUEL JARUS Toronto, Canada

Navigating the side of a 14-story building, Canadian artist Emmanuel Jarus was laying out his sketch for SHINE's tallest mural to date when the unthinkable happened.

Hurricane Milton, one of the most intense Atlantic hurricanes ever recorded over the Gulf of Mexico, came barreling toward the Tampa Bay area. Jarus was forced to join others in evacuating, and the entire 2024 festival was rescheduled as St. Petersburg waited out the storm.

"I had a unique experience with the hurricane, and with such a large-scale wall," Jarus said. "It was a challenge that we overcame together."

Milton caused widespread flooding and tornado damage, but the Walker Whitney Plaza remained unharmed, as did Jarus' sketch on the building. When the storm subsided, the artist was able to complete his mural, draping a wall approximately 180 feet tall and 60 feet wide with an enigmatic female portrait rendered in storm-tinged, blue-gray hues. "It was a long process, but I am glad we made it shine," Jarus said.

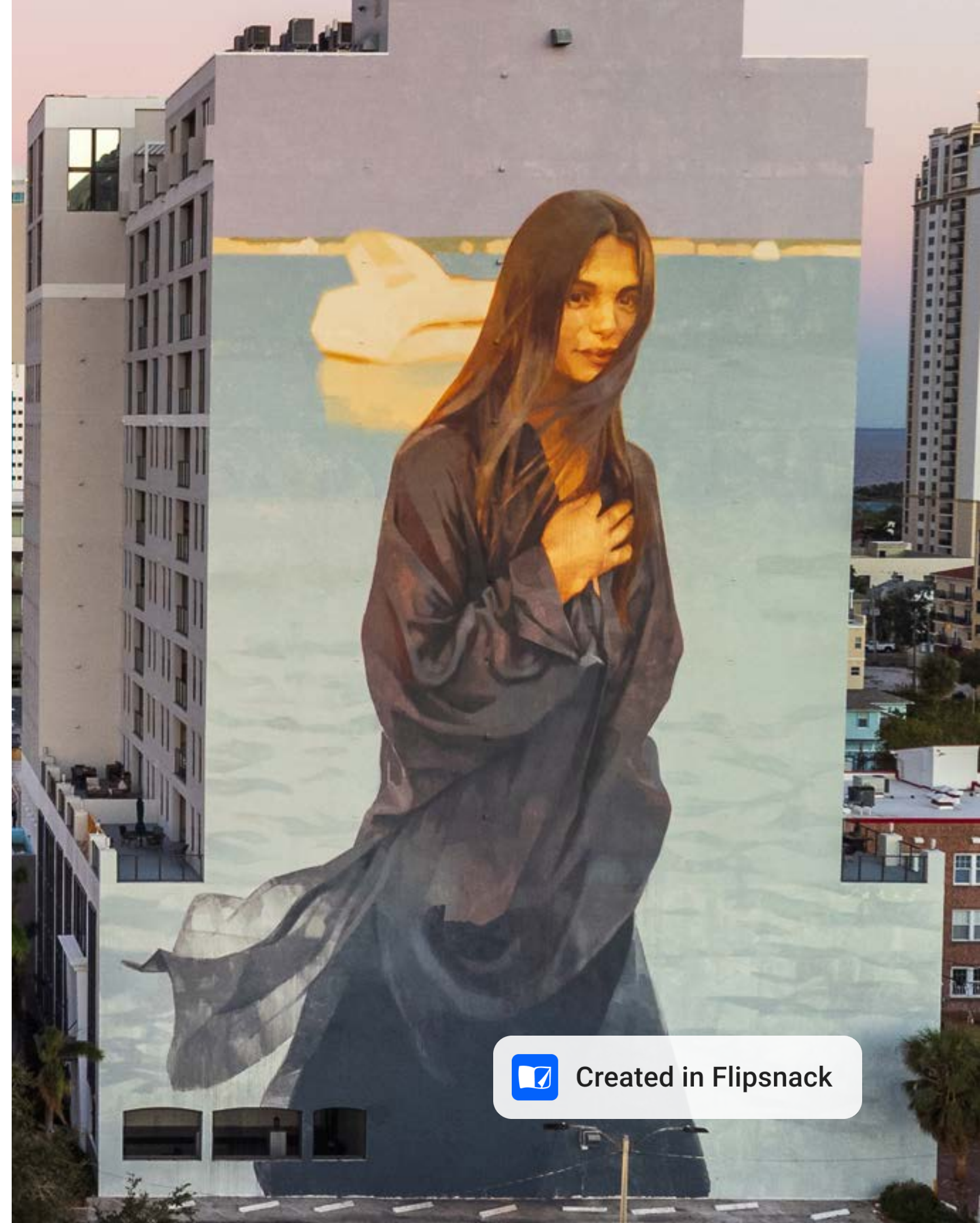
Known for his creative approach to reimagining public spaces, Jarus was discovered at age 19 after creating graffiti art on the side of a train. Since then, he has worked throughout Canada and around the world creating vast representational art on buildings, rooftops, trains and even boats.

Drawing inspiration from his singular observations of the world, Jarus often paints large, expressive figures, representing people he's met during travels. Each piece is further colored by its surroundings — in this case, the bay area's landscape and climate.

With a commitment to sustainability, the artist makes innovative use of common hardware-shop supplies in his process.

Deeply influenced by the work of post-impressionist figurative painters, Jarus' style has earned him international acclaim.

"I think [murals] can add a sense of reflection of life to public spaces," he said. "It can remind people that there is energy and thought around every corner."
[instagram.com/youngjarus](https://www.instagram.com/youngjarus)



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NESPOON

Warsaw, Poland

NeSpoon creates from the intersection of urban art and traditional ceramics, with designs inspired by the craft of lace-making. Weaving mesmerizing textile patterns into a signature style, NeSpoon searches for “the simplest codes of beauty and harmony.” Her warm and decorative art has appeared in more than 100 cities, in 40 countries, on five continents. Associated with home, childhood and security, lace-making continues to be cultivated largely by women and identified with femininity. The artist views these intertwining threads as a symbol of connection between people and cultures, and “an excellent metaphor for social relations.”

nespoon.art

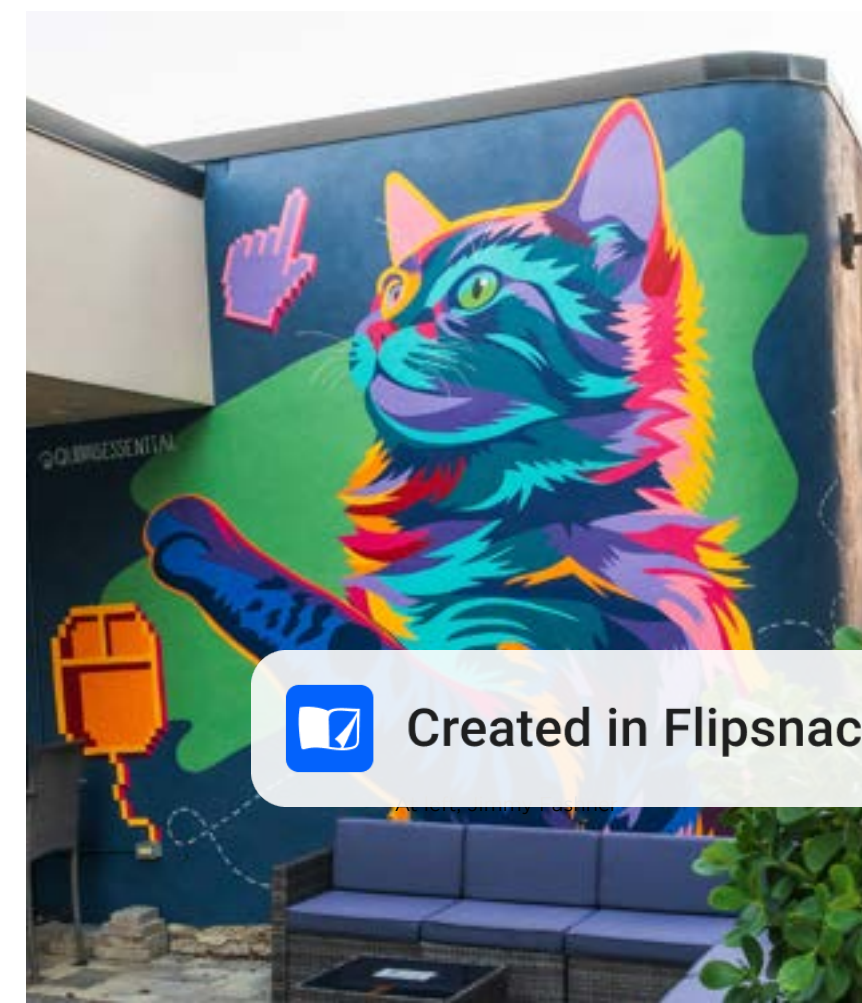
“I love the concept of murals. I think they help create an individual voice for the city.”

QUINN CALE

QUINN CALE

Tampa, Florida

Painting multicolored canvases populated by quirky characters, Quinn Cale pays homage to her childhood in the early 2000s. Capturing the essence of that era, Cale infuses her art with a palpable nostalgic joy. “Life with art is affluent, profound, and passionate,” she said. “Once you have it, you won’t be able to live without it.” A native of Middletown, Delaware, the artist is now based in Tampa, where she exhibited at the Museum of Science and Industry and the Straz Center for the Performing Arts. quinncale.com



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CRISTI LÓPEZ
St. Petersburg, Florida

The work of Cristi López illustrates “the often invisible journeys” people take through mental health, femininity and faith. Creating art with intensely personal imagery, López hopes others will recognize themselves. “To be portrayed is to be seen,” she said. An artist and mental health advocate splitting time between the Tampa Bay region and Chicago, López graduated from Ringling College of Art and Design in 2016 with a bachelor of fine arts degree in illustration. She is a first-generation American of Dominican, Spanish and Cuban descent.
cristilopezart.com



“To be portrayed is to be seen.”
CRISTI LÓPEZ



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FRANKIE G.
Tampa, Florida

Frankie Gonzalez is a Miami-born, Florida-based artist specializing in emotive storytelling, juxtaposing traditional realism with comic-influenced styles to “illuminate the human condition in a fresh, relatable way.” Drawing on bold color palettes and a passion for urban art, Gonzalez creates paintings on canvas, murals and custom apparel for private collectors and high-profile companies. frankieart.com



GEORGE F. BAKER III
Atlanta, Georgia

Nebraska-born, Detroit-grown and Atlanta-raised artist George F. Baker III is best known under the moniker GFB3. Leveraging his skills in design, illustration and production, Baker brings a playful, childlike spirit to all he creates. His vibrant murals and fine art prints frequently bear positive messages in cheerful bubble letters. Armed with creative curiosity and a goal “to engage the inner child,” Baker seeks to inspire people to become their best selves. He currently serves as the creative director of Foster, a studio collective “striving to make people unafraid to play.” gfbthree.com



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SHINE 10 CELEBRATION

November 2024

FloridaRAMA



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COMMUNITY MURAL PROJECTS

SHINE Mural Festival Bright Spots are community projects that educate, engage and inspire. Alongside the featured artist lineup each year, a series of community-inspired mural projects is curated and facilitated to increase engagement, promote placemaking, educate participants and inspire a new generation of artists. Bright Spots shine a light on talented local artists in partnership with Tampa Bay-based nonprofit organizations and youth organizations.

Since 2015, the SHINE Mural Festival has produced 34 unique Bright Spots murals. Included in this chapter are a small sample of Bright Spots projects from various years.



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BRIGHT
SPOTS