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blogger bio



Rob McMahon

Music aficionado and critic Rob McMahon is a Vancouver-based freelance writer who has covered music for the *Metro News* chain, and has contributed to the *Georgia Straight* and *Nuvo*, among others.

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Art Darts

written by Rob McMahon

ART DARTS: Vancouver Murals

Steve Hornung

(See his work on the side of Beaumont Studios at 316 West 5th Ave.)

Steve Hornung arrived at mural art from another perspective—while he respects the culture and loves the form, Hornung is "not a graffiti guy." A professional artist who also creates customized commercial murals as *The Creative Individual*, Hornung points to the freedom and community-oriented nature of public art.

"With fine art on canvas, I let loose and just start to paint, and the story unfolds. With my commercial murals, I consult with clients, create designs and do a lot more pre-planning. Mural painting blends these two techniques. I love painting big, I love working outside, I love the process," he said.

For his work *Growing New Wings*, Hornung painted in front of 200 or so people who attended the *Vancouver City Limits Music Festival* in September. The mural was done in collaboration with the City Of Vancouver's *Spread the Paint* program. Hornung loved interacting with his audience—a change from the at-times solitary life of an artist.

"Last year I felt relatively isolated, working on my own stuff and building my company, but in the last six months, I've felt more compelled to connect with people... I love Vancouver and think it's a beautiful city, but I think there's room to grow for public art and murals and really want to be part of that process." —Hornung

One of Hornung's muralist inspirations: Eric Grohe. "I'm not huge on the patriotic subject matter, but respect the work and his career."



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robcmahon January 21, 2009 at 17:02

This week's post on mural art at first may seem a bit of a stretch in terms of sustainability—but in many ways I think it promotes community, which is arguably a key component of broader definitions of sustainability.

I've always been curious about the artists who decorate our city walls, and their thoughts about the role of public art in connecting people to one another.

Artists often work in isolation and only meet their audiences occasionally, at galleries or special events. Art is also often experienced privately.

I think public art is interesting in that it invites people to appreciate and experience visual art while they go about their daily lives, rather than privately, in time specifically set aside for "artistic appreciation."

I also found it interesting learning that through the Internet (or in "real life," if the timing is right) the artists creating the work can connect to the audiences who "consume" it—something both Scott and Steve loved about mural painting.

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