

2019 CHROMA ZONE MURALS

WELCOME to Saint Paul's Creative Enterprise Zone and this tour of the 12 murals created for the inaugural **Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival** in 2019.

Don't forget to post selfies and photos of your mural tour on our Facebook and Instagram pages: @CEZMSP #CEZMSP #Chromazonefest @ChromaZone

And be sure to check out our local breweries, restaurants, shops and more as you navigate this historically industrial but growing residential neighborhood and city-recognized creative district of Saint Paul.

But before we begin, what is a **Creative Enterprise Zone**? And why a mural festival?

The Creative Enterprise Zone — or as it's known, the CEZ — is both a place and a nonprofit organization. It was formed over 10 years ago when construction of the light rail on University disrupted businesses and displaced creatives working here, something we hope to never repeat and a goal of our work with community-led real estate development. We also produce the Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival and lead greening efforts, which included the growing of trees in gravel beds for planting in the CEZ in fall 2021. Read more about our 100 Trees Initiative, and other CEZ programs and goals at creativeenterprisezone.org.

The CEZ is located mid-city between downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis, and is home to hundreds of studios, creative businesses and maker spaces. The CEZ district has a history as a center of transportation, an important watershed to the Mississippi, a center of manufacturing (second largest center of employment in the city of St. Paul), and the fastest growing and youngest neighborhood in Saint Paul. It is a center of creativity and entrepreneurship, and we want more people to #MakeItHere!

In 2019, we launched the first-of-its-kind mural festival in Minnesota with 15 artists from the Twin Cities, New York, California, Argentina and Norway. We created 12 large outdoor murals that year in just

eight days. There are now over 40+ murals in the CEZ and the list keeps growing!

Chroma Zone is about making the creative work that happens inside the buildings of the neighborhood more visible: celebrating the ideas and innovation of artists and entrepreneurial creatives. The CEZ believes that more public art in the community can create belonging and connection, and drive our broader goals:

1. To raise the profile of the CEZ as a destination — welcome to ALL people and ideas.
2. To support and connect creatives who work, live and play here.
3. To contribute to the long-term beauty, economic vitality, safety and walkability of the CEZ.

Murals are also a known graffiti deterrent, which can be an issue in larger industrial neighborhoods.

As producers of the Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival, we strive to find the right canvas (or in this case walls) for each muralist. We want our artists to be inspired, to make connections, and to reimagine and reinvent public spaces with their own unique voice.

Connections to culture, identity, people, and place are an important part of building community, healing the past, and fostering a greater sense of well-being and belonging.

Giving a wall to an unknown idea or design can be complicated. We are grateful to our property-owners, creative partners, sponsors and funders, who take this leap with us each year. We acknowledge their investment and we appreciate their belief in our artists and our organization.

Our heart-felt thanks to the muralists for sharing your talent and artistry with us. Each artist shows us the dedication and bravery it takes to put expression and stories on display in such a large and public way. We are honored to present your work and eternally grateful for taking this journey with us.

All of the 2019 Chroma Zone murals noted here are identified by number on the CEZ mural map.

#1

ARTIST: CEY ADAMS
Brooklyn, NY / @ceyadams
TITLE: Love
LOCATION: Hampden Park Co-op (north wall),
928 Raymond Ave.

Cey Adams' colorful LOVE mural graces the north wall of the Hampden Park Co-op, a popular destination for good food and fellowship in the CEZ on Raymond Ave.

Cey is a New York City native who emerged from the city's downtown graffiti movement to exhibit alongside fellow artists Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring. He appeared in the historic 1982 PBS documentary *Style Wars*, which tracks subway graffiti in New York.

Today his art practice consists of working with mixed media materials to create large collage paintings, works on paper, and bright colorful murals. Recent collaboration partners include the Smithsonian, Temple University, IDEO, Apple, Levi's, Converse, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Foot Locker, YouTube, and Google. You may recognize his design work, such as the signature logo of singer Mary Jane Blige.

As the creative director for hip hop mogul Russell Simmons' Def Jam Recordings, he co-founded the Drawing Board, the label's in-house visual design firm, where he created visual identities, album covers, logos, and advertising campaigns for Run DMC, Beastie Boys, LL Cool J, Public Enemy, Notorious B.I.G., Maroon 5, and Jay-Z.

He exhibits, lectures, and teaches art workshops at institutions including MoMA, Brooklyn Museum, New York University, MoCA Los Angeles, Pratt Institute, Stanford University, and Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, among many others.

Cey's work explores the relationship between transformation and discovery. His practice involves dismantling various imagery and paper elements to build multiple layers of color, texture, shadow, and light. He draws inspiration from '60s pop art, sign painting, comic books, and popular culture, with

themes including race and gender relations, cultural and community issues.

His LOVE mural is one of the many LOVE murals (and prints) he has created around the country, including Denver, Omaha, Boston, and Queens.

NOTE: Style Wars, the documentary in which Cey appeared in 1982, had a profound effect on local artist Peyton Scott Russell, a 2021 Chroma Zone muralist and graffiti arts educator. Read more in Peyton's bio at chromazone.net.

#2

ARTIST: MARIELA AJRAS
Buenos Aires, Argentina /
@marie_ajras
TITLE: Motherhood and Migration
LOCATION: Wycliff (southeast wall),
2327 Wycliff St.

Mariela Ajras (pronounced AH-RAS) is an internationally acclaimed muralist who traveled to St. Paul for the first time for the 2019 Chroma Zone festival.

Mariela mainly focuses on images of women and questions of femininity and collective memory. Her CEZ mural is a commentary on migration and immigration.

A psychologist as well as artist, her background greatly influences her work in terms of subject matter and also in the teaching of community-oriented workshops that use muralism as a social tool. She is a founding member of AMMURA (Association of Female Muralists of Argentina), a platform that showcases women muralists' work and calls out gender inequality in the public art scene in Argentina.

Mariela's mural was the tallest mural created during the 2019 festival. It looms high on the five-story southeast wall of the newly renovated Wycliff building, a large former factory that originally processed nuts for the Fisher Nut company.

The Wycliff is home to unique creative industrial spaces and boasts a growing list of small-scale manufacturers, including food entrepreneurs and a furniture maker, plus two gyms, and more.

Made up of several buildings of different ages and materials, The Wycliff's exterior features several

large-scale outdoor murals, three created for Chroma Zone (in 2019 and 2021), plus an additional three created through private commission. PAK Properties, the owner and developer, is known for their creative development of The Rossmor and Pioneer Endicott buildings in downtown Saint Paul, and has been a major sponsor of Chroma Zone since its inception.

NOTE: After working on his 2021 Chroma Zone mural “Spirit of Misi-zibi” on a south wall of the building, Rock “Cyfi” Martinez, a Mexican-American and Indigenous artist from Tucson, AZ, relocated his Minnesota studio to The Wycliff. Read more about the artist and his festival mural at chromazone.net/rock-cyfi-martinez.

#3

ARTIST: CLAUDIA VALENTINO + DANIELA BIANCHINI
Minneapolis / @valentinismo
TITLE: Empowering Generations
LOCATION: Precision Coatings, Inc. (east wall), 2313 Wycliff St.

This dynamic mural on the east wall of Precision Coatings is the work of a local collaborative team, **Claudia Valentino + Daniela Bianchini**.

Claudia (Clau) came from Argentina to Minneapolis in 2009 and learned the craft of painting and mosaics at Goodspace murals company. There she gained many techniques focused on over- and under-painting. Daniela Bianchini moved from Cordoba, Argentina, to Minnesota at the age of 19. The daughter of an artist mother who encouraged her exploration, she worked in several mediums before falling in love with mosaics.

“I am very enthusiastic about composing a work of art by bringing many pieces together,” says Daniela. “Sometimes it feels very much like life itself is composed by mosaic pieces of experiences, places, people, colors, etc. My goal now is to bring it to the community. I believe we can come together just like mosaics with community members to create something beautiful to inspire everyone.”

This mural uses three mural forms: paint, polytab, and tile mosaic. The polytab technique allows muralists to paint in a studio and later add the mural element to the wall.

The design is a tribute to the younger generation of women inspiring us to be better people, to understand that we need to take care of each other and the world. Clau and Daniela chose to include this specific color of green because it represents a collection of movements in Latin America aimed at defining, establishing, and achieving equal rights for women.

Precision Coatings Inc. is a family-owned CEZ business established in 1969. The brother-and-sister team invested in preparing and painting their building in anticipation of their new mural. Investing and expanding their capabilities with significant capital improvements has made Precision Coatings a leader in the coatings industry for over 50 years.

Over the years, they have seen many exciting new changes to their corner at Wycliff Street and Bradford Street, including the development of 2303 Wycliff (home of NewStudio Architecture and Gallery), The Wycliff, and two breweries — Urban Growler and Bang Brewing — making this formerly isolated area of the CEZ more vibrant, connected and beautiful, thanks to the murals.

NOTE: If you go to see Claudia and Daniela’s mural in person, don’t be surprised if you hear the sound (or are they screams?) of eagles, but cannot see any raptors flying overhead. Is there a nest on top of the building? Alas, no. It is recorded sound played on repeat by Precision Coating to fend off the destruction of expensive machinery by the area’s tenacious squirrel population.

#4

ARTIST: CHUCK U
Minneapolis / @chucku612
TITLE: Maritime Law
LOCATION: Spot Weld, Inc. (north wall), 2290 Wycliff St.

Chuck U is a local artist and illustrator living and working in Minneapolis. You may know his work from the beer cans of Indeed Brewing, sides of buildings in both downtowns and NE Minneapolis, album covers, and the walls of print collectors all over the world. Once his work even appeared on a Minnesota lottery ticket.

Chuck’s artistic abilities were fostered at an early age by his mother, who attended the Minneapolis College of Art and Design while he was growing up,

followed by a keen interest in comic books. “Later in high school I really got into graffiti,” says Chuck. “I got arrested a few times and ran from the police more times than I can count. I grew up in the Northeast Minneapolis/Columbia Heights area in the late ’90s and graffiti was everywhere, so it was only a matter of time before I started doing it myself.” (Growler magazine, Jan. 30, 2017)

While he mostly prefers working in pen and ink on smaller scale print work, Chuck has been branching out into larger paintings and murals including this one on Spot Weld, which features an underwater scene that shows a woman (Medusa?) feeding a guy to her fish. What do you see?

Chuck plans out every aspect of his mural. To begin installing it, he projects the image onto the wall, fills in the background with a painting team and follows up with his signature black lined details on his own to finish up this exciting look.

A print version of this mural is available online through Gamut Gallery.

Spot Weld’s owner has commented on the added vitality the mural has brought to the area, including people walking by with strollers and studying the mural. He sees the positive changes happening to the neighborhood, and has further supported the work of the CEZ by supplying the water for a 2021 gravel tree bed as part of the 100 Trees Initiative. Learn more at creativeenterprisezone.org.

#5

ARTIST: PRISCILA DE CARVALHO
Queens, NY / @prisciladecarvalhoxx
TITLE: Under the Same Sun
LOCATION: Budget Sign Shop (east side),
2474 Territorial Rd.

Priscila De Carvalho is a Brazilian-American contemporary artist based in New York. She is known for paintings, sculptures, murals, site-specific installations, and permanent public art.

Priscila’s work has been exhibited by the Brooklyn Bridge Park (New York), The Bronx Museum of the Arts (New York), Socrates Sculpture Park (New York), the Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain), Deutsche Bank (New

York), the Grand Palais (Paris, France), the Nepal Art Council in (Kathmandu, Nepal), The Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (New York), The Jersey City Museum (Jersey City, NJ). She was also a celebrated participant in El Museo’s Sixth Biennial in New York City, The First AIM Biennial at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, and The Kathmandu International Triennial in Nepal, where she represented her home nation of Brazil.

She has been commissioned for large-scale permanent public art projects by the MTA Arts & Design and the Department of Education in New York in collaboration with School Construction Authority. She is currently creating permanent public artwork for the SBS Woodhaven median stations, commissioned by New York City’s Department of Cultural Affairs’ Percent for Arts Program, as well as her largest and most ambitious sculptural work to date for the Valley Metro Rail System in Phoenix, Arizona. Priscila lives and works in Long Island City, NY.

Priscilla’s mural, located on the west wall of Budget Signs, touches upon concepts of past and present identity. You will see figurative and abstract elements of the architecture and nature of Saint Paul. Most of the images represented in the piece were taken from archival photos found through research.

Priscilla also combines images of plants from endangered nature of her native country of Brazil with native plants of Minnesota.

#6

ARTIST: FADLABI
Oslo, Norway / @fadlabihimself
TITLE: The Air at Night
LOCATION: Wycliff (north wall),
off Capp Rd. / 2327 Wycliff St.

This wall is by the international artist **Fadlabi**, who traveled here from Oslo, Norway, to paint for the festival. Originally from Sudan, Fadlabi lives and works in Oslo, but has worked around the world. He was educated at the Art Academy in Oslo and at Sudan University. He is a muralist but also works with painting, text, and performance.

His mural on a north wall at The Wycliff is titled “Air at Night” and is about his childhood growing up in Sudan. It conveys a story of a family traveling to a

new place. It illustrates migration.

Fadlabi was the last of our artists to arrive in 2019 for the Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival. He was detained in Norway because of the U.S. travel ban on countries, including Sudan, where Fadlabi visits regularly. We were able to work with Rep. Betty McCollum's office and with a person at the U.S. State Department to secure his travel visa. Once he arrived, he decided to use the available paint. You can see the colorful choices he made in the details of the family and what they carry with them on their journey.

#7

ARTIST: MR. KIJU
Brooklyn, NY / @mrkiji
TITLE: Allora
LOCATION: Dual Citizen Brewing Co.
(high south side), 725 Raymond Ave.

Mr. Kiji is a Japanese-born, New York City-based artist whose work encompasses animations, murals of scale, product and packaging design. He's recognized for playful and bold graphic and pattern work with a strong emphasis on color.

Kiji was raised in a Buddhist temple in Japan and learned to create Tibetan designs early in life.

He uses this same kind of grid to create this highly planned and mathematical works of art. He plays with proportions, shapes that refer back to each other, and color.

Check out his extensive portfolio at mrkiji.com.

#8

ARTIST: ARTCROP (Christina Vang +
Teeko Yang + Oskar Ly)
Saint Paul / @helloartcrop
TITLE: Ask Why
LOCATION: Oak Tree Arts (west wall),
809 Carleton St.

At the corner of Charles Ave. and Carleton St. is a woman-owned business, Oak Tree Arts, where two CEZ murals meet — **Art Crop's** "Ask Why," produced during the first Chroma Zone festival in 2019, and Xee Reiter's "Wonderland," created in 2020 following the postponement of the festival due to Covid-19. All of the artists are Hmong, women and/

or non-binary, and live in Saint Paul.

"Ask Why" was painted by the Hmong artist collective known as ArtCrop. The ArtCrop artists include Christina Vang, Ka Oskar Ly and Teeko Yang. (Together they have since formed Ua Si Creative, a proudly women & LGBTQ+ owned company, committed to "ditch comfort zones" to produce playful, inclusive arts and cultural experiences in Minnesota.)

ArtCrop is a collective that creates art about food and farming. Their work is guided by one question: what does cultural and economic sustainability look like for Hmong artists and farmers?

Representing a culture rooted in farming and textile art traditions, the branding reimagines the symbols, stories, and knowledge that have been passed on generation to generation.

The Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) farm was the site of several community art projects, including two murals that were developed following an artist residency and documentation of farmers' stories. Investigating economic and cultural sustainability models, ArtCrop commissioned Hmong artists to create special editions that were sold and packaged along with HAFA's seasonal produce subscription. The addition of art broadened the appeal and audience of subscribers, resulting in higher sales, awareness, and appreciation of Hmong makers.

ArtCrop has also created murals in downtown Saint Paul, leaving evidence to spark the next generation's own love stories of culture and identity. Their work pushes Hmong aesthetics and cultural innovation, influenced by their people across a global diaspora.

The "Ask Why" mural is painted with phosphorescent paint and will glow in the dark after really sunny days if charged with enough light. The glow feature is meant to illuminate symbols that speak to current events and issues the artists want to raise and questions about, including the Amazon forest fires, gender fluidity, preserving Mauna Kea in Hawaii, the southern border crisis, gun violence, areas struck by hurricanes, and liberation.

The symbols are in the form of state or regional flowers, gender symbols, and more. The plant styles feel outwardly almost alien. Some of the plants were inspired by the stylings seen in Super Mario video

games.

The Venus flytrap flower is a nod to the plant in Little Shop of Horrors named Audrey, which is a reference to the artists' friend Audrey, a local actor who lives in the CEZ. who they dedicate the mural to.

#9

ARTIST: BIAFRA, Inc.
Saint Paul / @biafrainc
TITLE: Crisis
LOCATION: Bro-TEX, Inc. (north wall),
800 N Hampden Ave.

The Bro-TEX building is home to a growing number of murals, and two of the CEZ's longest murals to date. The one on the north end of the building was created in 2019 by local artist **Biafra, Inc.**

Bro-TEX Inc. is a woman-owned manufacturing and supply company. Since 1923, Bro-TEX has manufactured and converted cloth and paper wiping products. That's almost 100 years! Bro-TEX offers a wide selection of wiping solutions including nonwoven dry wipers, microfiber and MicroSpun towels, cotton towels, wet wipes and absorbents. Bro-TEX is also home to their nonprofit division called Midwest Floating Islands, which turns recycled carpet into islands that purify water in wetlands around the globe.

Muralist Biafra Inc. (pronounced bahy-ah-fruh or bee-ah-fruh) is an artist residing in the Twin Cities who took his name in part from Jello Biafra from the band Dead Kennedys, the first band he got into that had content in their lyrics. His work is a visual retelling of stories that are a part of his life. A lot of his work is a critical look at "white" culture.

Biafra is a multifaceted artist who uses a variety of mediums including; spray paint, screen printing, stencils, stickers and posters. As his work is spreading further across North America, he continues to work tirelessly to get his imagery out to the public.

Biafra actually hadn't planned on being an artist. He thought he was going to be a teacher, but he started cutting stencils as a way to decorate his skateboard in 2003. That quickly turned into an obsession, and suddenly the stencils were on stickers and walls and that transitioned into an interest in graffiti and screen-printing.

He uses comic book characters because he thinks they're instantly relatable to every generation and represent an idealistic time. The text surrounding the characters gives clues as to what the character represents. The bold lines and bright colors associated with graffiti and street art still stick with him.

A few fun facts about this mural:

- He painted it in just 20 hours.
- It took 30 cans of black to do the line work.
- While Biafra paints murals on a regular basis around the region, this is his largest mural to date.
- He reports that on the first day of painting everyone thought it was a bullfrog.
- On the second day of painting, everyone thought it was a cat.

However, you can see that the piece shows a woman looking through her glasses into the distance. She is watching a boat sink, which the artist uses as his own critique on the current state of our country.

#10

ARTIST: EWOK
Orange County, CA / @ewokmskhm
TITLE: Untitled
LOCATION: Tech Dump (north wall),
860 Vandalia St.

This mural is at Tech Dump Electronics Recycling, an innovator in recycling. Tech Dump is an R2 (Responsible Recycling) Certified company, ensuring that all data destruction processes are effective and secure when it recycles for minimal environmental impact. They offer affordable, refurbished electronics backed with a one-year warranty at their Tech Discount location. Tech Discounts is a division of Jobs Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit providing job training and practical experience for adults facing barriers to employment.

EWOK is an artist who began writing graffiti in Minneapolis in the early 1990s. Since then, he has solidified his status as an internationally known graffiti artist, traveling extensively and painting in several countries, including exhibiting artwork and mural projects with the Seventh Letter artist collective in Los Angeles, as well as in Tokyo, Taiwan, Barcelona, and Seoul. More recently Ewok was one of several artists who completed the Guinness Book of World

Records' longest continuous graffiti scroll in Dubai, which was part of their UAE day celebration. His fine art has been exhibited at LA's Known gallery, and his solo exhibitions 'Revisionist History' and 'Pageantry' have been featured on Hypebeast and in Juxtapoz magazine.

His untitled Chroma Zone mural is probably the most improvisational of the murals created for the 2019 festival. This piece is based on abstract landscapes that EWOK doodles while at work. He's exploring converting these abstract pen and ink shapes into color. He usually starts out with a general idea or composition and improvises the rest.

#11

ARTIST: MARTZIA THOMETZ
Minneapolis / @prettyhard
TITLE: Working Together
LOCATION: Universe Building (west wall),
670 Vandalia St.

Martzia Thometz is a local artist who began painting the streets in 2008. With a foundation in graffiti, she learned to paint fast and efficiently, often traveling around to new and foreign environments.

Self-taught, she is continuously pushing herself to learn and grow as an artist. Over the years she's developed a distinct recognizable style, built around imagery of strong women often ready for the everyday battle of being feminine in a male-dominated society. Her goal is to make accessible art to empower young (and old) angry women to see the strength and beauty within themselves.

Martzia's mural on Vandalia St. references women's hands holding tools used for outdoor work. It is a reference to Landbridge Ecological, the woman-owned business that works from this building. It is also home to several nonprofit businesses and artists studios.

The mission of the Landbridge Ecological is to restore and support landscapes and ecological systems that foster healthy habitats.

#12

ARTIST: ERIC J. GARCIA
Twin Cities / @elmacheteillustrated
TITLE: Frontier Justice
LOCATION: E-Z Recycling (north wall),
875 North Prior Ave.

EZ Recycling has been on Prior Ave. for 30 years, recycling old soda and beer cans.

In keeping with the business's purpose, **Eric Garcia's** mural is inspired by an environmental design, incorporating Minnesota cartoon animals — a bird, a deer and a loon — who are cleaning up the environment. Adapting to the architecture of the wall, the characters have boxes of recyclables, which are the actual windows of the wall.

The deer is holding an ax and has just chopped down an oil rig (which is the gas meter on the building) hinting at the current issue of pipelines that threaten our environment such as the Line 3 here in Minnesota.

Known for mixing history with contemporary politics, Eric always tries to create art that is much more than just aesthetics. He has been creating murals for over a decade, from Albuquerque to Chicago. His murals have been commissioned by such institutions as The National Museum of Mexican Art, the Urban Institute Contemporary Art, and DePaul Art Museum.

Garcia received his BFA with a minor in Chicano studies from the University of New Mexico, and went on to complete his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. A versatile artist working not only with murals but in an assortment of media, from hand-printed posters, to sculptural installations, to his controversial political cartoon series El Machete Illustrated, they all have a common goal of educating and challenging.