

## Key Questions for Mounting a Mural

You've seen them on Instagram or while on travel or just walking around in a community, and thought to yourself: maybe my organization should do a mural. Well, that's a fantastic notion because you're already thinking 'beyond the press release' as a way to reach people and convey a message differently, vividly, that could have long-lasting connection to a community and get global attention online at the same time. But, how exactly do you go about that?

Of course, we're inclined to say 'hire us,' but this document is designed to give you a number of things to think about and consider. And if you still want to chat with us, well, that's cool too.



Artwork by Mer Young and Chris Stain

### Location

- ⇒ Do you already have a particular wall in mind/selected/with a contact person attached?
- ⇒ Is there a particular part of town that has some symbolism or value for your message?
- ⇒ A particular demographic or proximity to a particular target/corporation/elected official office?
- ⇒ Do we need to do a scan of properties and engage a property owner for approval to use?

### Size

What size are you thinking for this mural? It could be as small as 10' x 12' (see examples we've mounted here) or it could balloon to 50' x 20' or more. Think about it. Square footage is often a cost factor for artist or artist collectives.

One client once said 'we want it to be big enough to get eyeballs.' Well, that could be some gigantic thing in the middle of downtown of a given city (with all of the costs that come with that), or it could be a small part of a wall, once, when photographed correctly, looms large in social media if the art is amazing.

### Art/Artist/Style

- ⇒ Is there a particular type or style of art you're thinking about? Rummage online for references.
- ⇒ Are there high profile artists you'd like to work with that may add to publicity around it? Are there visual references you have to share?
- ⇒ If done by an artist, do they absolutely need to be local? We often put together partnerships in which an artist renders a sketch or small painting (on paper/canvas or digitally on a tablet) and then a local installer or sign painter replicates the work on a large scale on a wall with that artist's permission.

We have other insights about fostering good working relationships with artists and operating in a way

that makes the best use of their talent and interests while also ensuring your messaging comes through.

## Demystifying the Finding of a Wall

Some folks think the location of a wall is where there is heavy foot traffic. Others think about car traffic. Or both. We actually think these aspects are less important than thinking about where the mural fits in an overall campaign, largely on social media. At any rate have figured out this piece of the puzzle in multiple ways. There is no 'sure shot' formula, but we'd batch these following sources together as first steps:

- ⇒ Commercial Real Estate owners or their property managers who would like to activate vacant space they own or will know of tenants who would take interest and see the win-win in partnering on a mural
- ⇒ Progressive small businesses (restaurant, flower shop, coffee, retail) that own or rent a building with an outside wall
- ⇒ Housing Trusts and nonprofit development corporations who often own property to be developed
- ⇒ The assistance of a film location scout in a given state who spends time looking at sites
- ⇒ A nonprofit organization that might be a willing ally based on social justice values



Artwork by Stephanie Mercado and Shepard Fairey

## Means of Production

There are many ways to do a mural. We're going to stick with four approaches for now. Tell us if there is a preference or it doesn't matter so much. 1) Painted by hand (by artist) 2) Painted by hand (reproduced by signage makers based on a file from an artist) 3) a giant wheat paste mural 4) the use of poly fab material (note: this is increasingly a preferred method).

## Length of Stay

Is this to be up for say a weekend or week? Or longer, like 30 days? Or 90 days? Or 2-3 years? Impacts the conversations with property owners and the means of production/material to use.

## Budget

- ⇒ What sort of budget have you set aside for your mural?
- ⇒ Sometimes people will say "I don't know" and that's fine, but we usually find there is a pain point of some type that can serve as a parameter for us to fashion a recommendation about size, location, type of material, means of production, the notoriety of artist/designer selected, etc.
- ⇒ At least think about a range if not a specific amount.

It may also be that a mural is not the ideal cultural organizing tactic for you. There's other forms to consider from pop-up art shows, poetry performances, outdoor public art, street theater, a music video, a photography exhibit, food-based events and more that are ways to reach people where they are at and move them into action. We're glad to talk with you about that as well.

Would you like a free ideation session about a mural project you're considering?

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