

15 artists invited for "Color, Way of Love ART+" project



2017-05-25

The Nippon Paint Color, Way of Love project, which is one of the key CSR projects of Nippon Paint, has been dedicated to beautifying, renovating or improving the environment of schools in remote areas since 2009 in China.

In 2012, Nippon Paint founded the Color, Way of Love Fund together with China Youth Development Foundation and Shanghai United Foundation, with the sponsor of which, Nippon Paint established its Happy Art Classroom and initiated rural art teacher training program, art college student volunteering program and other activities.

By 2016, the Nippon Paint Color, Way of Love project has completed renovation for 263 elementary schools and established 249 Happy Art Classrooms. With the joint support from 37 enterprises, more than 80,000 school children from remote area benefited from the project.

In late 2015, Color, Way of Love ART+ was initiated. Global mural artists were invited to paint 18 walls of villages, schools and cities under the theme of Child Care. Through the murals, artists conveyed to the children their understanding and experience of the world.

This year, the Color, Way of Love ART+ project further launches the two actions of school wall painting and city space painting. The current city space painting event is held in Pudong Shanghai, with 15 artists invited from around the world.

The wall painting will go from April to July with the theme of Child Care and Animal Protection. While painting the city's unique humanistic and artistic image, the action is to awaken awareness among citizens on issues regarding schools in remote areas and endangered species, forming a city-countryside connection through art.

Meanwhile, the school wall painting initiative will be joined by over 25 designers and architects from iColor.com.cn as well as the popular TV program Dream Home Transforme to design or paint in over 10 elementary schools in mountain areas and schools for migrant children while inspiring children's imagination of the world.



Shanghai Daily has interviewed two of the artists who joined in 2017 Color, Way of Love ART+ project. Daas is an American modern visual artist. Bart Smates, born in 1978, is a Belgium street artist. The following are the interviews.

Daas

Q: How do you show the theme of "caring for kids and protecting animals" through your creation this time?

A: The theme is very attractive to me and it was exciting to turn the idea into a visual image. I chose to represent this by combining a young Chinese girl in traditional dress holding the planet earth in her hand while standing next to a tiger. The title of the work is "We Are Guardians". The Child guards the planet (future) and the Tiger (nature), while the Tiger is commonly associated with strength and protection, in this situation, it also a symbol of confidence for the child.

Q: Has everything been going smoothly so far? Did you encounter any difficulty?

A: Everything has been going great and the organizers did a wonderful job of getting all the materials, accommodations and travel arrangements together in advance of my arrival. Also, my assistant Frank has been indispensable and a wonderful pleasure to work with every day.

Q: The theme of this year's "Color, Way of Love"+ project is to link city and countryside through art. What aspects of wall painting do you find intriguing? Looking forward, what is your expectation of its evolvement?

A: Wall painting is an immediate exposure of art to the public. It's not behind the doors of a gallery or museum, it is directly in front of us and available to be seen and enjoyed at any moment. It is a powerful art form, which can inspire, educate and uplift people from all nations, age groups and social classes. My hope for the future is that more governments and cities around the world will embrace it and understand the potential it has for a positive influence on society.

Bart Smates



Q: Can you introduce your style, of your creation?

A: My style is mostly photorealistic, pretty realistic, always figurative, I don't work abstract. It's more like an illustration, and I create my own little world on the wall, with animals, with people. I like to paint animals and people, I do mostly animals and people, and I put them in this special dreamy world, so I is not just a person on the world, it's a whole little world I create, and that's what I'm focusing on for the moment.

Q: Have you been invited to such projects in other countries?

A: Yeah, I've done something in Russia - Moscow, Ukraine - Kiev, I have to go to Canada in June, and maybe New Zealand in September, so for the moment I'm doing lots of projects in other countries. Always murals, always painting on big walls. And this is a really focussed concept, it's about childcare, it's about animals, but I'm totally free to do what I want, and that's what I really like. Sometimes I do a commission job, and then I have to do something that the clients wants me to do, you have to do something like this, something like that, and I like this much better because I'm totally free...

Q: What do you think is the difference between mural work and canvas painting?

A: The difference is the size, definitely the size. It's much much bigger, and if you work on a canvas it's small, and you can do a lot of small details, and it has to be really clean, because a canvas people come really close, and they see. But if you do a wall painting, if you do the really small details, and then I go check from the street, you don't see it, so you have to paint a little bit rougher, and with bigger element in it. I like it because when I'm painting I'm close to the wall, I don't really see what I'm doing, and then when I go outside it's like "OK, OK, this working!", it's a really physical job. When you paint a canvas it's easy, but here you walk around, you're in the lift, you go up, you go down, after one day I'm really tired.

Q: Does what you are painting here have any relation with your childhood memories?

A: No, no. But I try to create, like I say, some kind of a dreamworld, so I also have sometimes some really strange and special dreams, but it's not really anything special from my childhood no.