



## Mural Arts Practices Survey - October 2010

Mural Routes invited the mural community to participate in an online survey to research current practices in the field. The survey was posted online at [surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com) from July - October 2010. Participants were solicited in group emails and a link to the survey was posted at [muralroutes.com](http://muralroutes.com). Thank you to all who participated!

<b>Results:</b>	Total completed surveys:	51
	Total started surveys:	85

### 1. Are you a:

Experienced mural artist	54.4%
Emerging mural artist	14.7%
Mural project manager	30.9%

### Others:

Public Service	3
Arts Organization	2
Public Art Coordinator	2
Mural Fan	2
Visual Artist	2

### One (1):

Mural committee office, Teacher, Community Activist, Mural Restorer, Sign maker, Mosaic Artist/supplier, International coach on mural projects.

### 2. What is your preferred wall primer?

Replies: 44

Zinsser Bulls Eye 123	8
Benjamin Moore	7
Nova Gesso	7
Para Paints	4
Sherwin Williams	2
Acrylic gesso	2

### Others:

Poly Prep Primer, Generic adhesive acrylic, Behr (product #436), Glidden Gripper, Concrete/weathershield, Keim, B72, Kilz (O'Leary), Stevenson's, Does not use.

### Selected comments:

- For large interior canvas prepped works I prefer high grade wall primers...i.e. Para Paints. For prepared walls and exterior mural Zinsser Bullseye 123
- Depends on substrate, generally any 100% acrylic latex. I personally find no difference.
- Any high quality primer that "whitens" and has an excellent adhesive factor.
- Primed with smooth concrete then 50/50 weathershield & water
- glass tiles

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### 3. What is your preferred paint?

Replies: 45

Nova Color	8
Golden Acrylic	6
Benjamin Moore Exterior Latex	4
Stevenson's Artists Acrylics	4
Para Exterior Latex	2

**Others:** Pre-Mixed Color (acrylic), Pittsburgh Sun Proof - Exterior Latex, Wallacks Acrylic pigments, Glidden Dulux Exterior Latex, Tri-Art, Dulux weather shield (for longevity), Dulux Water based Masonry, Sign Painters One Shot Enamel, Sherwin Williams, Createx Wicked Airbrush, Keim, Kroma Acrylic, Solver Brite-Glo Gloss Acrylic, SICO exterior paint.

#### Selected comments:

- Golden. I have used Tri Art brands and museum, both are made by the same company, This paint cannot withstand any moisture during the mural painting time, and needs months to cure...this paint never dries properly and peels even after clearcoat
- Modern Masters Theme Paint (Star Scenic). The same paint they use at Disney World, et al., specially made to stand up under the hot and humid Florida weather.
- Usually any leftover latex, or Liquitex from the tube.
- Outside earth tone in acrylic house paint. Fugitive color in Golden paints.
- Dulux weathershield has given the longest lasting intensity of colour

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### 4. Do you top coat your murals?

Replies: 50

Yes	42.0%
No	30.0%
Maybe	28.0%

If yes, what do you use and why? (Please supply name and brand of product).

Varathane Diamond Polyurethane	6
Nova Colour Acrylic Mat Varnish	5
Golden (GEL Soft Gloss, MSA Varnish with UVLS, GAC- 500 acrylic polymer)	5
Benjamin Moore Stays Clear (polyurethane)	2
Behr (Premium Plus Ultra, Deep Base Clear)	2
Stone sealer	2

**Others:** One Shot Clear Coat UV, Ronan Vinyl Cote UV Absorber Gloss, Stevenson's varnish, Aquarius Coatings Armaglaze 6000, Liquitex, Graffitex, Semigloss, B72, PPG's Deltron DC3000 (with DCU2060), Aquacoat, Auto top coat, Adicolor DFV.

#### Selected comments:

- We changed to a Behr product two years ago. Behr Premium Plus Ultra, exterior satin enamel, Deep Base # 9853. It needs to be significantly thinned. Two thin coats allowing for drying in between works well. We also use it to coat storyboards and sponsors plaques with vinyl lettering.
- Behr's deep base clear, diluted 10%. It is the clear base for paint and primer. Satin finish. Protects against UV rays and can be painted over if restoration is needed.
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- 2 coats of Ronan Vinyl Cote Water Based Clear Ultra-Violet Absorber Gloss. Every two years the murals are cleaned and recoated with this clear coat. The Florida weather is such that all precautions are taken to protect the murals from the weather.
- My philosophy - less is more.
- Unless you coat a mural the elements and rain over ten years will literally wash the pigments off.
- I have used Golden's GAC- 500 acrylic polymer first as a UV protection over acrylic paints
- Then a mix of PPG's Deltron DC3000(high Velocity Clearcoat) with Deltron's DCU2060 Flexed "N" Flat Clear (It is an elastomeric coating which is flat the Dc3000 is a fast dry gloss clear I mix to get a satin finish) I have used this when my base substrate is Diamond
- or Nudo's Polymetal. I spray krylon paint on the finish and it came off with Lacquer thinner.
- Not sure what the long-long term will bring.
- Only if specified by owner
- For interior canvas prepped and painted works I use Golden matt varnish. For exterior or prepared walls it may vary depending on location and requirements

**5. Do you work on the following substrates? (Choose all applicable)      Replies: 46**

Brick or other masonry	91.3%
MDO plywood (sign board)	76.1%
Marine grade plywood	39.1%
Non-woven material	23.9%
Aluminum composite material	34.8%
EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finishing System, Synthetic Stucco)	21.7%
Street furniture	17.4%
Utility boxes	21.7%
Ceramic/tile/mosaic	26.1%

**Other:**

- Canvas
- Linen
- Banners (plastic) attached to a metal frame
- Crezone
- Drywall
- Trucks
- I've also worked on a metal water tower. In that case, marine enamel was used as the paint
- canvas for indoor and vinyl for outdoor using inkjet as medium.
- The marine plywood was used 20 years ago. We no longer use it for obvious reasons. Now we work to maintain the murals that are on it.

**6. Do you have a maintenance plan for your murals?      Replies: 48**

Yes	41.7%
No	27.1%
Sometimes	31.3%

**Selected comments:**

- As required
- Interior murals painted on prepared canvas no maintenance is required other than cleaning sometimes.
- We are just now starting to annually assess the state of our murals (38) and determine whether or not maintenance is necessary. The mural program was started in 1998.
- We try to secure funding to maintain mural which are oten tag.
- Suggested maintenance to customer by adding a coat of Diamond Urethane later and keeping the mural clean of bird deposit.
- They are cleaned and clear-coated every two years.

- All murals are observed and restored when necessary
- Additional time must be paid
- No curator, wash them ourselves. Our plan may be to return them to bare walls at the end of 10 years
- It is always recommended that my murals are washed with a gentle soap, once a year, that they are recoated with latex urethane with UV at least every 2 years, inspected every 6 months for chipping etc. When I do a restoration I give a report to the Town -
- We rarely put this in writing...unless a funder requests it. It is very difficult to know how a wall will perform over time. Often a good way of determining whether a wall is going to be problematic is to observe it in a rain storm to see whether any water is streaming down it...but being at a wall site during a downpour sometimes isn't easy to predict.
- We use the best techniques we can find because it is usually hard to get maintenance money into place.
- If the mural is a City of Ottawa public art commission, otherwise Community centres or community associations dealing with murals on City property do a maintenance agreement, either with the City's Parks and Rec maintenance branch or if a community association, an agreement for maintenance may be made with the artist
- Only if they peel
- I suggest the maintenance plan to the mural committee or BIA, and hope they follow up.
- We budget each year for any maintenance required - none has been required since 2004.
- Visit, clean, touch-up & re-coat
- I just have a loose agreement that they can contact me to do repair work (within a set time frame). No one else is allowed to touch it unless I give permission
- When funding is available
- I have been paid to go back and "freshen" up some of my murals

7. If you are an artist, how do you secure mural work? If you are a project administrator, how do you find artists? (Please choose one answer for each selection).

	Often	Sometimes	Never	Count
Competitions	29.3%	43.9%	26.8%	41
Commissions	56.1%	41.5%	2.4%	41
Artist Registry	14.3%	45.7%	40.0%	35
Internet	32.4%	37.8%	29.7%	37
Referral	55.8%	41.9%	2.3%	43
Networking	58.3%	38.9%	2.8%	36
Self-promotion	38.2%	58.8%	2.9%	34

Selected comments:

- Past experience
- Some artists are chosen by property owners based on previous work.
- Hustle in the name of Art
- It is difficult as our funders expect us to adopt a rigorous equal opportunities policy so every post is advertised broadly and short listed by the community
- I have entered competitions but have not been successful in securing a new mural
- By asking the owners of buildings and painting for free
- Calls are put out on artists e-networks/bulletin such as Ottawa/E. Ontario's Artengine's 'artist' ([www.artengine.ca](http://www.artengine.ca))
- We found an artist in 2004 and he has done all of our murals.
- My great long-running relationship with the lovely people at Mural Routes
- It is usually a few key people that pass my name along and get me jobs.

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8. How do you determine an artist fee? Choose all applicable factors.

Replies: 43

Research hours	60.5%
Design complexity	<b>81.4%</b>
Surface square footage	79.1%
Working hours	72.1%
Job location	58.1%
Consulting time	20.9%
Substrate	39.5%
Materials / Equipment	76.7%
Sub-contracted labour	39.5%
Project management hours	23.3%

Selected comments:

- Subject to funding agreement
- Our committee conducts all the research and determines the dominant factors for each mural.
- Who is it for
- Often determined by the funds available also
- I try to break the mural down into puzzle pieces and assign the number of days or 1/2 day, plus materials, equipment, that overrides square footage and complexity for me
- A daily rate adjusted to fit the budget of the client that shows a fair wage
- The leadership experience the artist brings to the project.
- Everything is rolled in to the artist fee of a City of Ottawa Public Art
- Program official art commission. The City has also developed a Mural Program, managed by its Public Works and Services for non Public
- Art Program commissions, - see:  
[http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/environment/community/graffiti/mural/index\\_en.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/environment/community/graffiti/mural/index_en.html)
- I don't determine an "artist's fee", just as a plumber doesn't determine a "plumbing fee". I work as a contractor. Design complexity (time) + Material costs X size of project + all other expenses = quote. Whatever is left over is my take.
- Price per square foot depends on detail.
- I recommend that the ARTIST should be doing what they do best CREATE. Contracting should be handle by contractors. I suggest the Owners supply scaffolding and paint.
- I estimate a time and materials budget, including commuting expenses. The time spent painting is generally 95% of the costs. Paint and equipment make up a small percentage, except when a lift must be rented.

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9. What kind of insurance do you carry during project work?

Replies: 41

Personal accident insurance	24.4%
Comprehensive liability insurance	<b>75.6%</b>
Workers Compensation	22.0%
None	12.2%

- The artist is responsible for his or her own insurance
- For City Public Art Program official commissions (that may be a mural), we expect the artist all of the above, and these items are stipulated in the City's contract with the artist.
- Artist provides his own WCB
- I have a health plan
- I piggy back
- I primarily work for non profits and use their insurance. Other times I subcontract with a sign maker and use his insurance
- 99% of the time I work alone and do not require workman's comp. In fact, most mural work does not require insurance, only when working with municipalities.

10. What kind of workshops would you be interested in attending if they were available? (choose one answer for each selection).

Replies: 46

	Interested	Not interested	Already trained
Contracts/agreements	53.7%	7.3%	39.0%
Workplace health and safety	15.2%	36.4%	48.5%
Applying for job competitions	47.4%	31.6%	21.1%
Grants/fundraising	79.1%	11.6%	9.3%
Copyrights	71.1%	13.2%	15.8%
Financial/project budgeting	43.6%	23.1%	33.3%
Client relations	34.4%	25.0%	40.6%
Marketing	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%
Mural art techniques	78.0%	9.8%	12.2%

**Selected comments:**

- We have tremendous support in the community i.e. lawyer's advice if we need it, and an architects, specialty contractors etc. all at no cost. A good relationship with local and area media, local businesses and professional offices.
- Mural conservation and maintenance
- How to strengthen the global mural organization
- I like to learn about all aspects, you can never know everything
- Alternative outdoor medium and top coatings
- I am very much interested in client relations as this area seems to be the most complicated not only for myself, but many other artists I know
- New materials and methods