

Video by New Departure Films:

CLEVELAND WALLS 2021

<https://vimeo.com/626071218>

The Cleveland Walls mural festival painted the city's Midtown neighborhood in the summer of 2021 with 23 national and local artists who installed 19 new murals.

The artists were selected with the help of Worldwide Walls, an international mural festival, and a local selection committee that selected 10 to 12 artists from nearly 200 applications.

“We were really intentional about making sure that our artists represented our community demographics,” said Vice President of Community Development, Joyce Huang.

The mural festival is a family-friendly and interactive week-long event. Those in attendance can participate in artist talks, workshops, pop-up shops, live performances and more.

According to Huang, the mural festival is just one of the ways the organization is helping to uplift and celebrate culture in the area.

“For us, we really believe that arts and culture is a way for neighborhoods to develop in a way that feels inclusive,” she explained.

Denver-based artist, Detour, who flew in to participate, believes that inclusion is important, but he says the interaction the community has with the artists is most valuable.

“Seeing artists create definitely impacts it even more because then you're seeing the actual process and it's not just a mystery of this piece of artwork just was thrown on the wall,” explained Detour.

Detour, who was born in Dayton, Ohio, specializes in vibrant art, featuring people that inspire him.

“The process is laying down a great color wash and then on top of that adding someone from the community that I'm inspired by,” he explained. “So for me a lot of my work centers around community and representation. And just really the people that I'm influenced by.”

On the backside of the ACLU building, located at 4506 Chester Avenue, Detour is worked on a mural of inventor and renowned Clevelander, Garret Morgan. Morgan's inventions include the stoplight and the modern-day gas mask.

“I'd heard of him before. He really spoke to me when it comes to that ingenuity, innovative spirit so I was like this is perfect,” said Detour.

Detour is collaborating on the piece with fellow artist, Heiro Vega who he's worked with in the past on projects. He says the more perspectives you bring to a piece, the better.

“Having his perspective with this interpretation of Garrett Morgan and how we want people to see him is going to be sort of amazing,” he explained. “It always comes out different because I trust him enough to just let him have at it, and we just go back and forth on the wall and something amazing comes out of it.”

“Midtown has been seen as a place that you just sort of pass through from between downtown to university circle... but we really want midtown to be a place where people will come and stay and stop to visit our businesses,” said Huang.

Also see <https://vimeo.com/powwowworldwide>