Inspicio

The author up on the ladder helping Hec One Love. Photo by author: © Alfredo Garcia.

Detail of wall by Herakut, Wynwood. Photo by author: © Alfredo Garcia.

events, food, and other purchases, a substantial number of people per car, that means there are approximately 100,000

Although a lot of the visitors come into the neighborhood for journeys through the neighborhood's massive array of art, bou-

ings that bear Tony's namesake company, Goldman Proper - his Obama campaign poster) added after Tony's death. Walk

have been coming into the neighborhood for decades. Years

property acquisitions. And then there are the long-time street

chances are you will get a variety of answers, depending on

Ask where the idea for street art in Wynwood came from and

bring in a tremendous amount of revenue to the neighborhood,

Art District, I can attest that the massive painted walls, which

After more than 100 interviews with street artists, business own-

paid for their work while the businesses would benefit from

walls were all commissioned pieces that were paid for by the

most of these walls, surprisingly enough, are painted for free.

paid for "likes" don't get them into galleries. In the end, buying a build-

But as several artists have emphasized, "exposure" does not

the pictures pop up in magazines worldwide. And yes, there are

neighborhood, and the lack of housing options. But the neigh-

It may have been obvious to him, but it was not so obvious

He laughed, glanced at the woman sitting next to him, and said,

"Do you pay the wall artists?" I asked.

was, even though he may not have known me.

I recognized him as a gallery owner. His business, near Gramps,

you from, what are you doing, what's your story, etc. But when

central gathering place featuring excellent, store-roasted cof-

Another reason artists work for free is that Wynwood is an in-

Another "hookup" is when the artist creates a piece for free as a promotional tool for a business.

Some artists do get paid. There are sponsored walls like those

street art legitimacy (think of the millions of dollars that are

writing. Although the past two decades has seen a surge of

These sorts of "hookups" are why Wynwood is so popular among artists. The neighborhood is known for its

If the business or property owner wants a particular image or

these sorts of "hookups." Time and again the message is the

In front of the sprayed walls. Most of these people are buying

Walls went unpaid. "Mr. Goldman," reported The New York

Even the famous artists who originally painted the Wynwood

things at some point during their Wynwood journey.

in one of the two hotels he owns in South Beach, and provided

Artists actively seek to get a piece of the neighborhood. With

Artists who work for free are prioritizing the visibility and exposure they gain from their work, which

versus the "business" of wall art. Many Wynwood artists operate on the belief that the art they create

The Wynwood Art District has become a lucrative property for both business owners and artists. A

To me, the Wynwood Art District is like a different kind of Central Park, with the graffiti artists

The studio I visited was small and cluttered, with various art supplies and tools scattered around. The

Still, for many Wynwood artists, life here is a balancing act between the desire to make a living from their

If you are an artist looking to get a piece of the Wynwood Art District, you must be prepared to

The answer to this question varies depending on who you ask. Some artists who work for free do so

"You gonna buy me food? You gonna hook me up in

But when you actually walk up to the walls and see how uneven

observation I made many times during my research on wall art

The walls were all commissioned pieces that were paid for by the

It felt like a Spiderman move: nothing bad happened to the car,

der. I fell more slowly as a result, and landed softly on the car.

I grabbed the ladder and gave a little yell. I was balancing in the

air with all my weight on the two outer legs. The ladder swayed

I was amazed by Hec's attention to details. It was a whole

There is a sense of urgency in Wynwood, as if the neighborhood is constantly in motion. In my

wall art is a part of the business of the

ers. Some property developers, on the other hand, argue that

Imagine — this is not easel art. Getting the proportions right means

Hec One Love, Love Harder. Photo by author: © Alfredo Garcia.

I was up at the top of the ladder risking your body for the sake of the wall. "You got

I was up at the top of the ladder, stepping way back for a look, and then climbing

But when you actually walk up to the walls and see how uneven

You wanna buy me a beer? You wanna buy me a stack of supplies? You gonna buy me food? You gonna hook me up in

Hec One Love at work on his Love Harder wall in Wynwood. Photo by author: © Alfredo Garcia.

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