

Monochronicle Property Report

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OVERVIEW

Case study - VR Mural Painting for Social Change

From \$15,000.00

DIGITAL MEDIA

MURAL

TEMPORARY INSTALLATION

Artwork timeline

Temporary installation

Virtual reality (VR) has been a groundbreaking tool in the art world, allowing artists to paint in three-dimensional space and create immersive environments. [Gaia](#), a Baltimore-based artist, used this technology in his VR mural painting in Gainesville, Florida. For this project, Gaia experimented with Google Tilt Brush as part of the [Changeville Festival](#), which aimed to combine social change with artistic innovation. He also extended this work into a physical mural for the Grove Street Neighborhood.

Project Requirements:

- **Theme:** To honor a local figure to represent Gainesville's African American history and the neighborhood values.
- **Mediums:** Traditional mural painting using acrylic and spray paint and VR art, demonstrating a fusion of art forms.
- **Public Engagement:** Engaging the community through an innovative mix of physical and virtual art creation.

Gaia's mural, titled "Poetics," combines portraits of beat poet [Jack Kerouac](#) and local civil rights leader Wilhelmina Johnson. Jack Kerouac and [Wilhelmina Johnson](#) were chosen as the focal characters for the mural based on their significant contributions to literature and civil rights. After visiting local history museums and engaging with the neighborhood, it became clear that Jack Kerouac's poetry held a special place in the Grove Street community, as it has been a key feature of the annual readings at Dreamers Garden since 2002. Wilhelmina Johnson, a revered African American educator and civil rights leader, was chosen for her dedication to advancing racial equality and education in Gainesville, making her an honorable figure to represent the local African American history and her lasting impact on the community. Her work has left a profound legacy in Gainesville through education and activism, reinforcing the importance of representation in the mural.

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aspect allowed Gaia to visualize the mural in an immersive environment, enhancing the creative process by enabling him to experiment with scale, colors, and composition in real time translating these elements into VR after painting them on the physical wall. [See the timelapse video here.](#) Using VR in public art is becoming increasingly popular, and artists like Gaia are not the only ones exploring this realm. Notable examples include the work of [artist Sutu](#) who is recognized for creating large-scale murals using **Tilt Brush**, a VR painting tool. Similarly, other artists, such as [Rachel Rossin](#), are combining painting and coding to blur the lines between reality and virtual spaces, creating virtual installations that offer new forms of engagement with viewers. These tools allow artists to previsualize their works in the context of their surroundings, ensuring that large-scale murals are harmoniously integrated into the environment. In the case of Gaia, the use of VR added a layer of interactivity to the mural, while the traditional painting maintained a connection to the community. This dual approach exemplifies how technology and traditional art forms can coexist and enhance each other, offering both artists and communities new ways to engage with public art. VR murals can also serve as a model for future urban projects, where public art becomes a dynamic part of the landscape, evolving with both the virtual and physical world. <https://youtu.be/xOOS2wWojB8> The mural became a pivotal piece in the Grove Street revitalization project, aiming to beautify and strengthen the community while connecting residents to significant historical figures. This allowed visitors to not only witness the mural's creation in real-time and learning about the mural characters but also experience the artwork in a virtual space, pushing the boundaries of public art by integrating emerging technology. Painting in the air with VR tools, Gaia presented a parallel performance that gave viewers a glimpse of how art might evolve in the digital age. The VR experience complemented the physical mural, enhancing the overall artistic experience.

Artist and Community Involvement:

- **Gaia:** Known for his social and historical murals, Gaia has built a reputation for addressing themes of urban blight, climate change, and cultural heritage. In Gainesville, he continued this tradition by connecting the community with important figures from their past.
- **Curator Iryna Kanishcheva:** Iryna Kanishcheva curated the project, emphasizing the need for art that both beautifies and builds a sense of community. Her vision and leadership were instrumental in bringing both the mural and VR elements together to offer a unique artistic experience.
- **Volunteer Support:** The project was supported by a group of local volunteers from the Grove Street Neighborhood. Their involvement ensured the mural was completed on time and helped deepen the community's connection to the artwork.

Gaia

Impact and Results:

- **Cultural Significance:** Gaia's mural has become a central piece in the Grove Street Neighborhood, honoring both the literary legacy of Jack Kerouac and the

contributions of Wilhelmina Johnson to civil rights in Gainesville. The mural's physical and virtual aspects also invite future conversations about the evolution of public art in the digital age.

- **Community Engagement:** The mural was unveiled during a community event, fostering an interactive and social atmosphere. The event featured local musicians, dance performances, and children engaging with the art, enhancing its role as a social gathering point.
- **Technological Innovation:** By integrating VR into a traditional mural project, Gaia pushed the boundaries of public art. This dual approach not only brought attention to the project but also positioned Gainesville as a hub for creative, tech-forward public art initiatives.

Conclusion: Gaia's mural in Gainesville stands as a powerful example of how public art can blend traditional techniques with modern technology, offering new ways for communities to engage with art. The fusion of painting and VR has allowed this project to resonate on multiple levels, encouraging deeper interaction and reflection among viewers. As part of the **Grove Street Neighborhood Mural Project**, this mural has contributed to the area's revitalization, helping establish it as a destination for both art and community gathering.

Publications:

1. **Street Art United States.** (2017). Gaia in Gainesville, Florida. Retrieved October 10, 2024, from <https://streetartunitedstates.com/gaia-in-gainesville-florida/>
2. **Brooklyn Street Art.** (2017). Grove Street Neighborhood Murals. Retrieved October 10, 2024, from <https://www.brooklynstreetart.com/tag/grove-street-neighborhood/>
3. **Artland. (n.d.).** Exploring New Realities: How VR and Tilt Brush are Revolutionizing Art. Retrieved October 10, 2024, from <https://magazine.artland.com/vr-artists-using-tilt-brush/>
4. Creative Review. (2016, December 5). Meet the Artists Creating Work in Virtual Reality with Google's Tilt Brush. Retrieved October 10, 2024, from <https://www.creativereview.co.uk/meet-artists-creating-work-virtual-reality-googles-tilt-brush/>
5. **The Verge.** (2017, August 22). Why VR Art Tools Like Tilt Brush and Quill Are Catching On With Artists. Retrieved October 10, 2024, from <https://www.theverge.com/2017/8/22/16181492/vr-art-tilt-brush-google-oculus-quill>

Additional Information

2 STORIES

Place

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City Gainesville

State FL

Zip 32607

Country US

Gallery



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Contact

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