



Taking art to the streets

Cambridge festival makes its mark with international artists, community involvement

BY KATHRYN STORRING

PHOTOGRAPHY • CRESTINA MARTINS

Most of us bring home souvenirs from our vacations, but Brian Price and Linda Daniher brought home an idea. A big idea.

Part of the appeal of a holiday in Lake Worth, Fla., in February 2014 was the chance to catch a successful festival celebrating street art, and Price and Daniher came away impressed and inspired.

Price says they were already convinced Cambridge could benefit from a major summer event to match the blues, jazz and busker festivals in Kitchener and Waterloo. Could street art be the ticket? They talked to the founder of the Florida festival as well as some of the artists taking part.

Back home, they gained the support of the City of Cambridge, and began pounding the pavement, seeking sponsors, grants and in-kind donations to cover professional artists and other costs.



International artists turned the streets of Cambridge into colourful works of art, from bits of whimsy to classic scenes, in the inaugural Cambridge International Street Art Festival in 2016. For the 2017 festival, to be held June 24 and 25, organizers plan more chalk drawings on Main Street and they hope bare walls can be offered to graffiti artists as happened on the back of one building last year.



Meanwhile, they were reaching out to recognized chalk and graffiti creators around the world. A festival website caught the attention of others.

By August 2016, the Cambridge International Street Festival was ready to launch in downtown Galt.

For two days, bare streets were transformed into works of art as 24 professional artists from Europe, the U.S. and Canada went to work. Designated areas were also set off for community artists of all ages to test their skills.

And now Price and Daniher are looking forward to this year's festival, to be held June 24 and 25.

Price has already fielded calls from artists in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Israel. The majority of artists involved in last year's event are also interested in coming back, he says.

Some changes are in the works for 2017's colourful invasion. Not only will the dates be moved to June, but the festival will stretch along Main Street in Galt, and not include the flood walls of the Grand River as it did last year.

And unlike last year, where most graffiti artists worked on vinyl panels, Price is hoping actual walls will become canvases – with the owners' permission of course. In 2016, a merchant allowed artists to do a collaborative piece on the back of a building, creating a striking example of what can be done.

Other "out of the box" ideas for 2017 include a suggestion for a 150-foot piece of art to celebrate the nation's birthday. Local artists will be invited to contribute panels that depict the region's history.

As for the appeal of creating chalk art that will disappear in the first rainfall, Price says artists view it as form of street performance. "When it washes away, the performance is over." 

For more information:
cambridgestreetartfestival.com



It's everything we wanted!

WELL, THAT'S NO SURPRISE.

We make sure of it.

Whether it's a renovation project or a whole new home, we know it's a big investment, and more than just financially. So we make certain we understand just what you want, right from start. Then we see that you get nothing less with careful planning, consistently high standards of craftsmanship and great project management. With Slotegraaf, it's a sure thing.

519.620.2299 | slotegraafconstruction.com



Built right. On time. **Slotegraaf**