



If These Walls Could Talk: Conservation Fundamentals for Creating and Preserving Murals

Presented by Samantha Emmanuel & Kiernan Graves

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Community engagement
- Choosing your surface
- Preparation & Materials
- Documentation
- Security & Maintenance



All images included in this presentation are
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Above: Artist Paul Botello working alongside conservators, 2019
La Pared Que Habla, Canta y Grita (2001)
East Los Angeles

Title slide image:
Richard Wyatt, *The Willowbrook Jr./Sr. Highschool Project*, 1979-80
Compton
© Bartolomeh, 1982

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

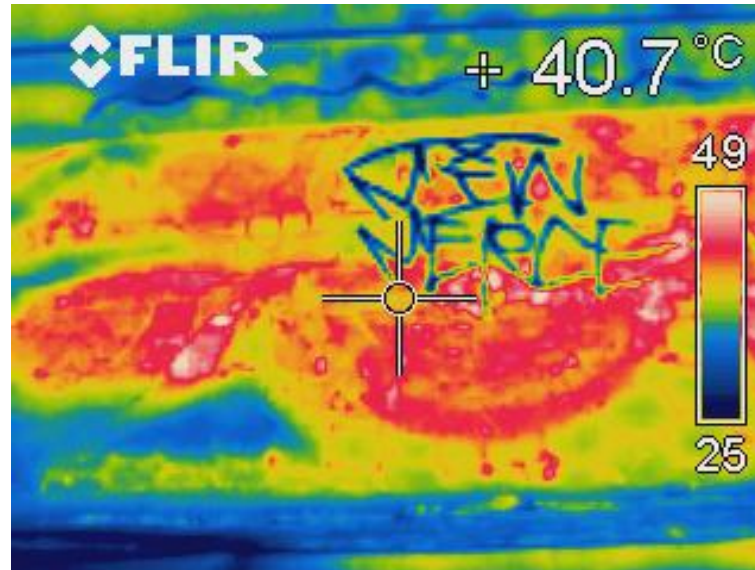
- Importance of local stakeholders
- Creatively inspire content
- Assisting with artist's process

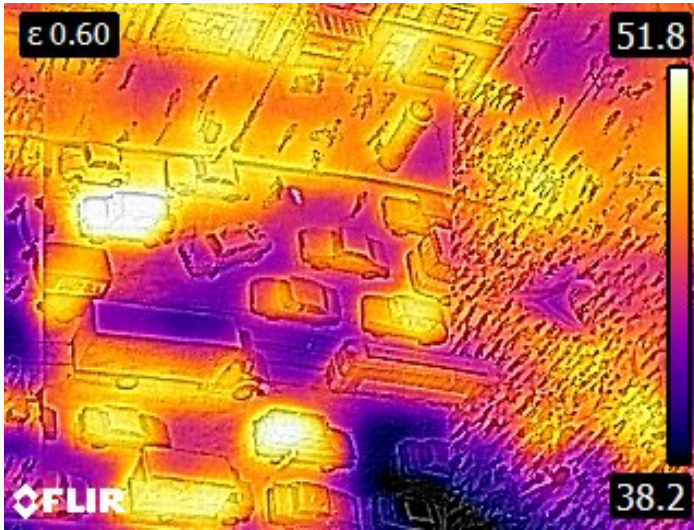


Michael Rauner

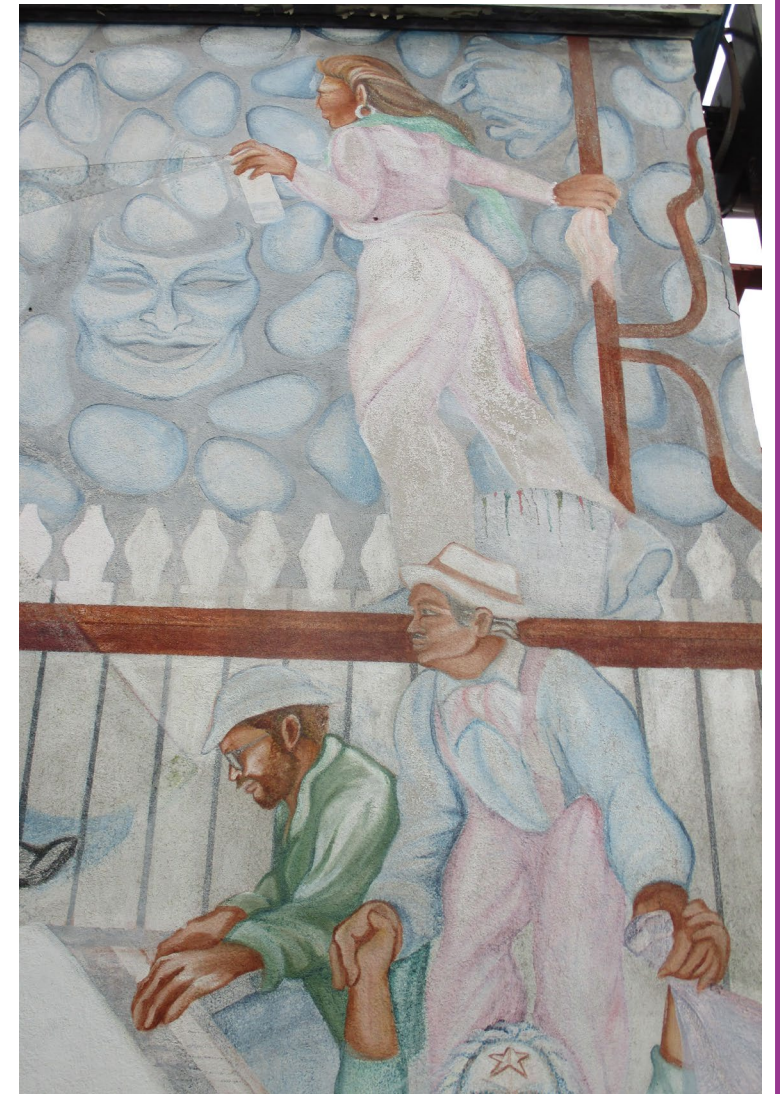
CHOOSING YOUR SURFACE

- Physical history: structure function, drainage, use over time
- Environmental factors: water, UV/sunlight, heat
- Access: ease of maintenance, graffiti prevention systems





Juana Alicia, *Para Las Rosas* (1985)
San Francisco Mime Troupe Building, Mission District



Mona Caron, *Market Street Railroad Mural* (2004)
San Francisco, CA

PREPARATION & MATERIALS

- Surface preparation "CLEAN & DRY"
 - Remove all materials on the surface
 - Sandblasting over power washing, if possible
 - Study surface for defects – **understand why**
 - Patch or fill cracks
 - Application of surface sealants
- To prime or not to prime – **understand desired permeability**
- Paint choices - **understand surface compatibility, environment & lightfastness rating**
 - Acrylics (NovaColor & Golden)
 - Silicates (Keim)
 - Sign painter's enamel (One Shot)
 - Aluminum panels
- Coating choices
 - UV protection
 - Anti-graffiti
- Carefully review manufacturer's data sheets and consult with their technical specialists with any questions!





Johnny T. Alvarez, *Untitled*, 1973
East Los Angeles



Terry Schoonhoven, *St. Charles Place Painting*, 1979
Venice



- **Anti-graffiti Coatings:**

- **Sacrificial vs Permanent Coatings**

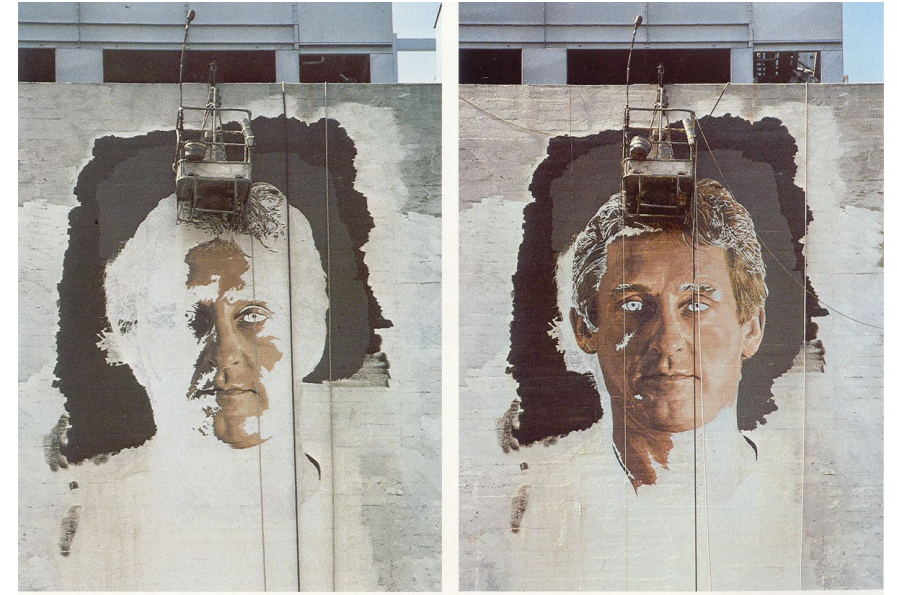
- Ideal: Compatible with paint materials, environmentally friendly
 - Avoid: polyurethane, any irreversible coating that inhibits water permeability

	Pros	Cons	
Permanent polymer-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy application • Low maintenance • UV inhibitor included • Lasts up to 10 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to remove coating from the original painting 	TSW Acryli-Master Genesis Coating GCP 1000
Sacrificial wax-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy application • Reversible • Graffiti removal easier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be reapplied every time graffiti is removed • UV inhibitor not included • Lasts up to 5 years 	Genesis Graffiti melt PSS 20

MacDonald-Korth, E., Rainer, L., and Learner, T. (2015). Research into Anti-Graffiti Coatings for Acrylic Murals: Preliminary Testing and Evaluation. *Conservation Issues in Modern and Contemporary Mural Paintings* [pp 238-255]

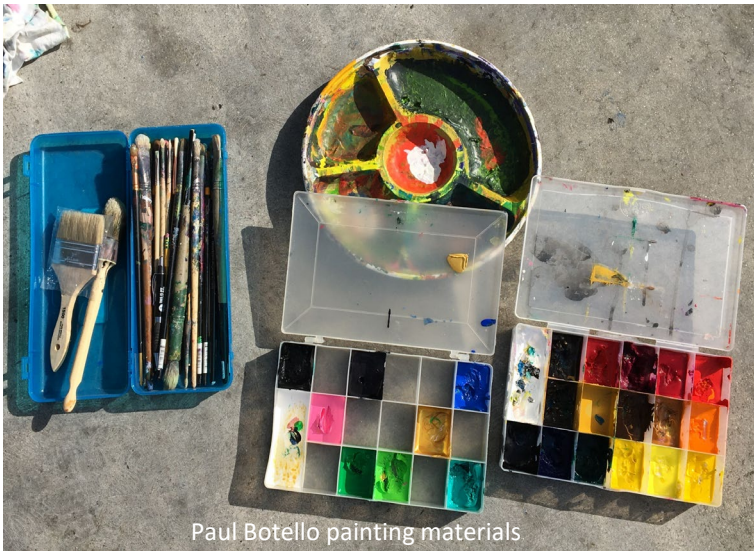
DOCUMENTATION

- Create a historic record of your work
 - Mural surface before painting, during preparation
 - Materials used: paints, varnish (MSDS)
 - anti-graffiti coating/ # of coats
 - Record of cleaning, graffiti removal, touch ups



Los Angeles, South Hill St. 1981. Ed Ruscha Monument. Kent Twitchell.

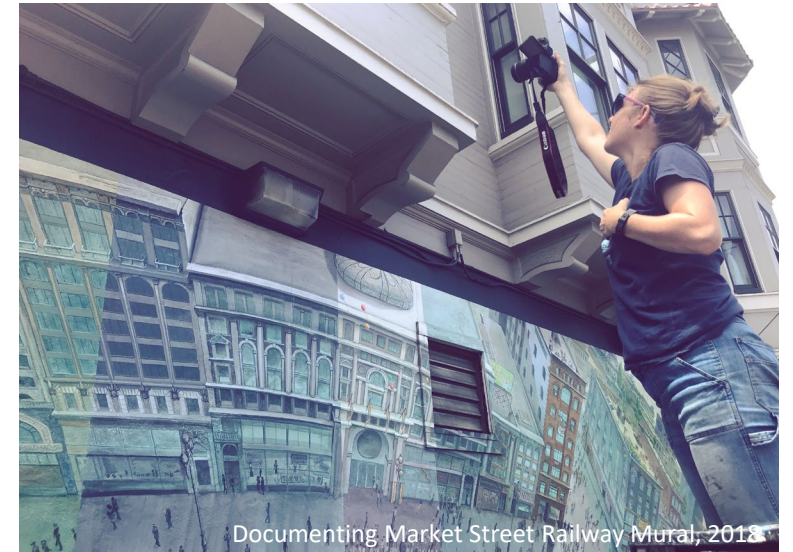
© Bartolomeh, 1982



Paul Botello painting materials



John Zender Estrada mural in progress, 2007



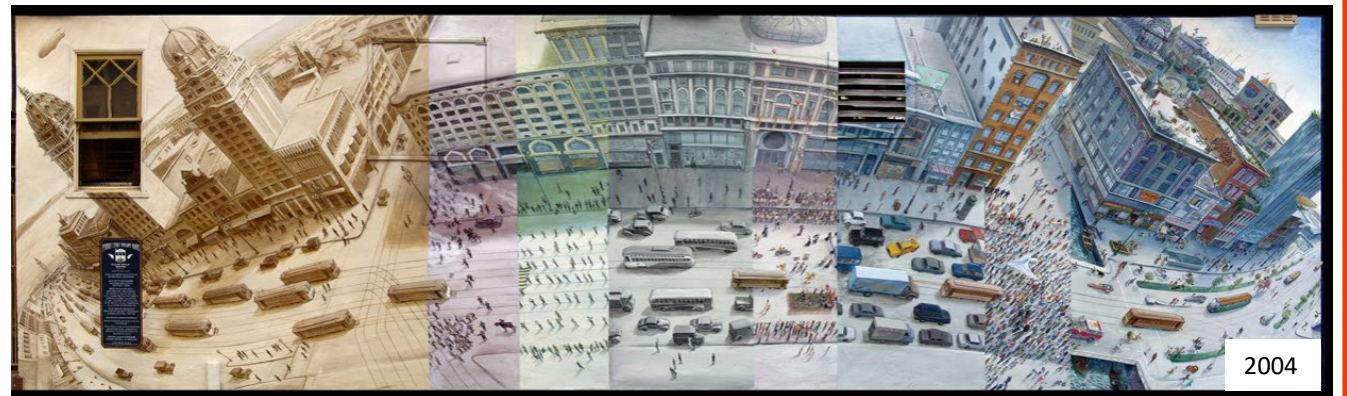
Documenting Market Street Railway Mural, 2018

- Photography

- Record changes over time



Mona Caron, *Market Street Railway Mural* (2004)
300 Church Street, Mission District, San Francisco
















Market Street Railway Mural
by Mona Caron
Before and after conservation



LEGEND - Condition

	- Flaking coating		- Substrate delamination
	- Powdering paint		- Graffiti/"ghosting"
	- Cracks (substrate/paint)		- Visible repainting prior to 2019
	- Bubbling paint		- Bird excrement
	- Lifting/Flaking paint		
	- Paint Loss		
	- Substrate loss		

La Pared que Habla, Canta y Grita (2001)
('The Wall that Speaks, Sings and Shouts')

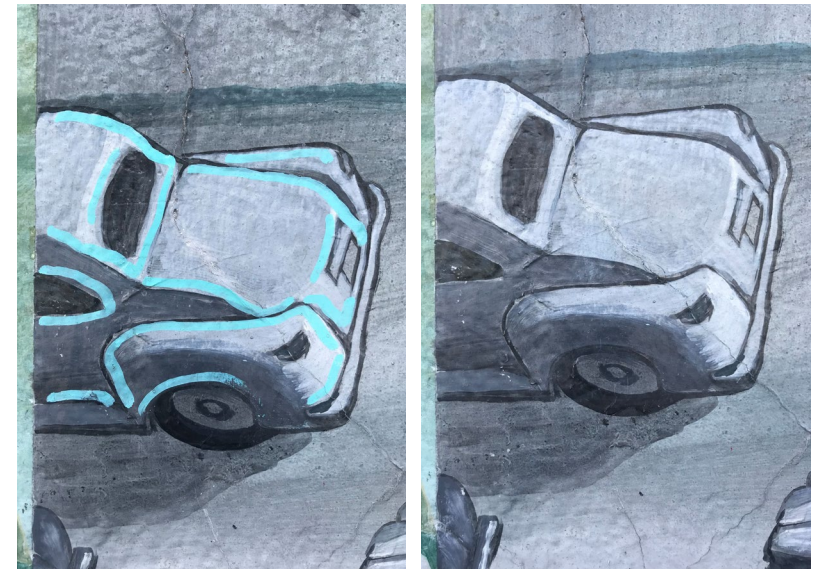
Paul Botello, Gerardo Herrera, Adalberto Ortiz, Gustave Sanchez
Ruben F. Salazar Park, Los Angeles County, California
Acrylic on cement, wood, and elastomeric crack filler
Dimensions: 25 ft x 73 ft (7.6 x 22.3 m)

Graphic Documentation
Condition
November 2019 - January 2020

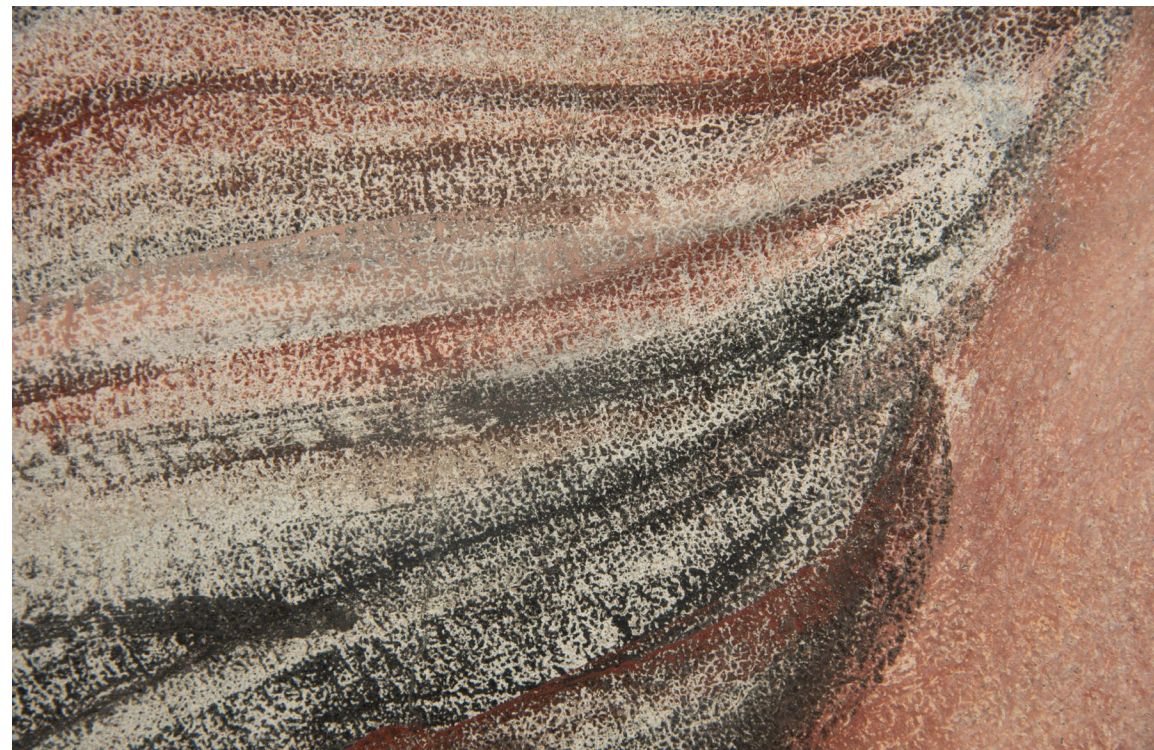
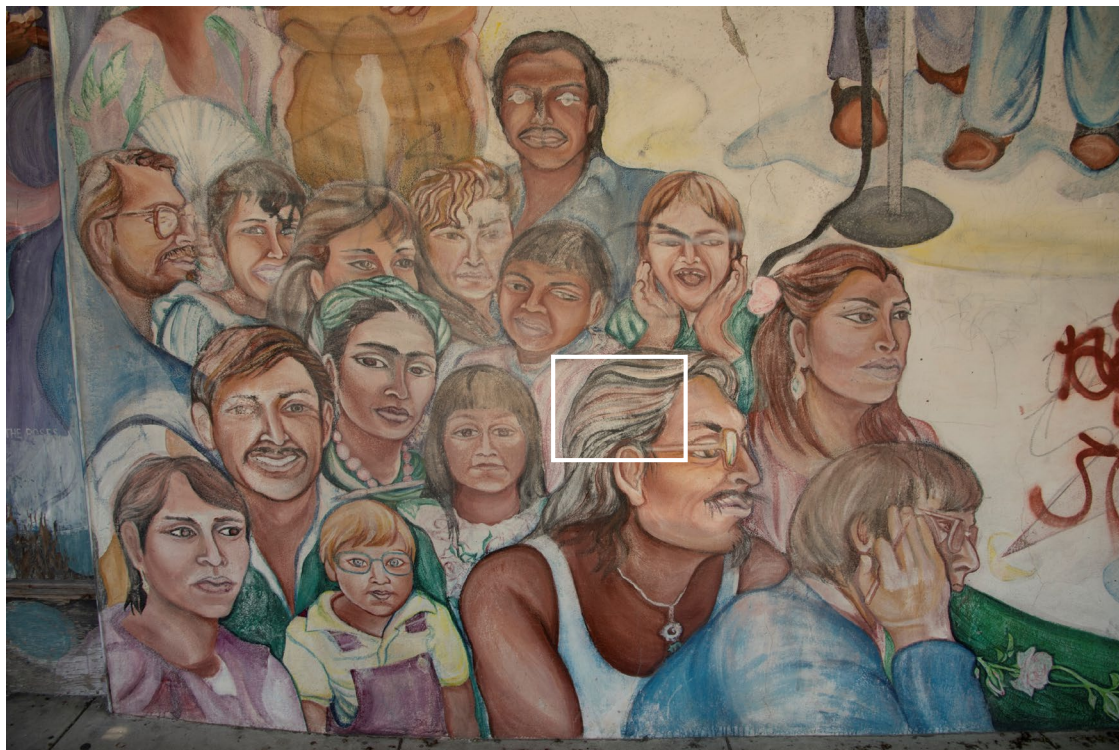
Completed by: Site & Studio Conservation, LLC

MAINTENANCE & SECURITY

- MAINTENANCE PLAN:
 - extends lifespan of mural
- ANTI-GRAFFITI MEASURES:
 - Creates protective barrier between mural surface and graffiti
 - Advocate for timely reapplication based on type of material used
 - All coatings will deteriorate over time when exposed to environmental conditions
- **GRAFFITI REMOVAL: Tagging often leads to more tagging, should be removed asap**
 - Ideal: Solvent gel based graffiti removers
 - AVOID: Pressure washing, proprietary graffiti removers



Beware proprietary graffiti removers!



Juana Alicia, *Para Las Rosas* (1985)
San Francisco Mime Troupe Building, Mission District

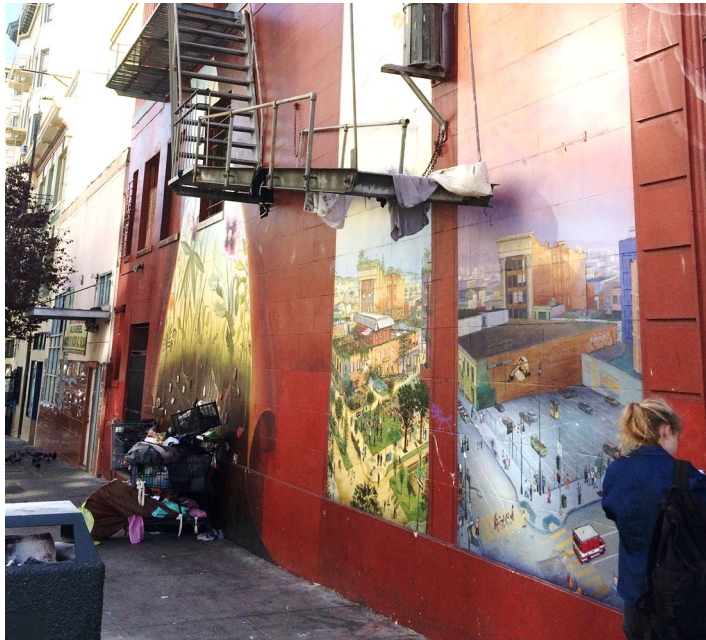
- **Cleaning**

- Maintain aesthetic quality
- Deter tagging/vandalism
- Dry cleaning is ideal; use water sparingly



- **Security measures:**

- Lighting
- Public thoroughfare
- Barriers
- Bird deterrents
- Security cameras




- Community engagement



CLOSED

Conserve the Market Street Railway Mural!

 Independent Arts and Media
11 Campaigns | San Francisco, United States

\$12,557 USD

173 backers

105% of \$11,950 Flexible Goal

 FOLLOW



[© Vanessa Ochavilla, *Penninsula Press*, 24 Oct, 2019]

Acknowledgments

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- John Zender Estrada, Mona Caron, Paul Botello, Victor Henderson & LA Fine Arts Squad, Juana Alicia
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