

## Endless interview for Street Marta - Monitoring Art Archive

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### **1- How did this way of artistic communication by using the walls begin, and how did it turn into a commissioned production that we can define as collectible?**

I began using the streets of London to display my artwork, shortly after I graduated from art school. For me, this was a way to allow my work to connect to a wider audience, without seeking permission or making sure the work fits with a gallery's narrative – I liked the freedom it brought. People seemed to like the fact street-art is illegal, it catches attention and gives the work more power. My artworks comment on branding, advertising and fashion and I use the same methods as advertising billboards to display my work – people then see the street art, which leads them to purchase a product on canvas if they like the piece. I've always considered myself an artist, rather than a street-artist.

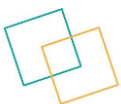
### **2- How much planning and technical research is there in your work, and how much control is planned over the construction of a wall that is going to be then "left" to the street?**

All of my work, whether street art, a painting or even a sculpture, works its way from my head as an initial idea, onto my computer in a digital format. This is where I really experiment with ideas and plan my pieces. A lot of the time, the idea and preparation takes just as long to execute as the physical artwork itself, if not longer. A technique that I use both on the streets and on canvas is hand-cut stencils. These take a long time to prepare, but they then save me time in the future, as I can use them multiple times. With street art, there are so many variables that affect the longevity of the piece. Sometimes, it is covered with graffiti after a few hours and sometimes it will stay untouched for years. This is just the way it is and I personally like to see the life-cycle of street art as it fades and evolves. There is however, a huge difference between illegal street art and commissioned murals. With a commissioned piece, it is usually a much larger scale, with plenty of time to prepare and these pieces are rarely vandalised, therefore have a longer life.

### **3- How difficult was it in London to find the right spaces to carry out your works, and nowadays how has the offer of work spaces changed since you started? Luxury brands such as Flannels, Liberty, Taylor Taylor are just some of the realities that have commissioned your prestigious works, how has these large clients' interest changed your approach?**

Initially, when I started putting up street art, I would try to reach a wider audience by going outside of the typical 'street art zones'. I felt that the demographic in central and west London could relate to my messaging in a different way, but it was more difficult in these areas to find appropriate spaces. Once you get to know where your work fits in, you start to see the space in a different way. I look for a central London wooden panels or disused buildings, or electricity boxes, as these often have more of an impact and offer more longevity than an actual wall. The location of the art, meant that these companies saw my work and then reached out to me. For me, a large commissioned mural has equal importance as a smaller 'un-official' piece of street art. But usually the commissioned pieces are bigger, meaning they are seen by more people, which is always valuable as an artist. It is always a privilege to have prestigious companies ask for a mural, but with so many artists seeking space, it is harder than many may think to have access to large walls.

### **4- In some other interviews, people told us that for street artists materials are not much important, in fact the main interest is in their affordability in terms of cost, do you agree? Can you please tell us more about your material choices, which brands and blends you prefer to use for your works? We have noticed a predilection for Montana sprays.**



When an artist from any genre is starting out, they have to think about costs, especially after coming from art school, where you have unlimited access to all the materials you could need. For me, after specialising in digital and screen printing at university, stencils and spray paint were the more affordable option when it came to creating my work, whilst maintaining a bold aesthetic. Brands like montana are used by many street artists and artists in general, as they provide great quality at an affordable price – they seem to understand the artists needs, in terms of colours and application.

**5- Are the pigments, materials and techniques chosen in the past still recurrent in your work, or do you keep experimenting with new products depending on the projects you work on?**

I am always interested in new products and experimenting, but I also like to keep some consistency throughout my works in terms of products, as the techniques I have developed throughout the years have derived from the products I have always used.

**6- How important is for you the size of your works, is there a maximum size or there is no limit? Do you have any story in your mind that you think should stay on a specific size area and have a particular visual impact? For example, we thought about the sculpture “The Crotch Grab”.**

As an artist, it is always a good feeling to see your work on a large scale. But there are always restrictions with size, such as studio space or wall space, meaning more difficulties you might face when creating to this scale. In general, a larger canvas excites me more than a smaller one and I would imagine that it has more of an impact on the viewer too.

**7- In general, would you like your works to be preserved or do you think that any attempt is against their nature? Have you ever had to face any conservation issues for your works, or did anyone try to preserve your mural without your approval or asking you some specific information?**

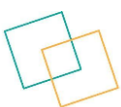
A lot of my street art doesn't last a great deal of time. People have taken work off the street and framed it and actually sent me a photo of it framed on instagram. I don't mind this, I take it as a compliment. If you choose to put your work on the street, you can't complain when it is taken or destroyed. It is a good lesson, to leave your work to the street, you can't control what people do or how they react. Artwork on canvas is made to be preserved, artwork on the street is free.

**8- How many of your walls all around the world - London, Venice, Florence - are preserved and still visible? Is this the result of specific choices made from you, such as a mix of durable materials, preparation and display of the wall?**

I don't keep count of the work, but the larger commissioned murals certainly last longer. Paste up's, which are paper artworks applied to the wall with wheat paste, rarely last as long as spray painted works. That said, I occasionally see photos of my smaller artworks that people have taken photos of in cities such as Barcelona or Amsterdam, which I put up years ago. I think it completely depends, but I don't go round checking to see what is still there.

**9- Conservation wise, photographs are a fundamental part of many street artists work, both as an archive and as a possible way to exhibit the works in the future and diffuse them again. In your case, do you usually document the work only once it is completed, or do you keep record of the different steps of realization? If so, do you take care of this process on your own?**

If it is a large, commissioned mural, I will make sure that the process is filmed and documented, as they usually make quite interesting videos and people like to see the process. If it is the middle of the night and I



am out on my own doing street art, I don't have time to think about setting up cameras, I sometimes go for a walk the following day and take photos of the finished result in daylight. People also take photos themselves and put them on social media, so much of my work is documented this way too.

**10- In regards of works realised for collectors, made with different materials, techniques and supports, can you please tell me more about your experiments, such as timing and specific materials you choose to use? In particular, can you please tell me a bit more about techniques and materials chosen for "E x G&G", the work gifted to Uffizi?**

With my mixed-media artworks, such as the recent Uffizi donation, I usually coat the painting with a resin sealant. This creates a shiny surface and keeps all the layers in place. With this artwork in particular, I incorporated photography, spray painting and collage on the magazine which I am holding in the self portrait. Although it has a nice effect, working with resin is not easy and it took a lot of practice over the years to get the right technique. For example, you need to learn how to eliminate bubbles, make the room the right temperature, make sure that no dust or particles settle in the wet resin and each one needs to be left to dry for at least 8 hours untouched.

Endless's reference gallery is **Cris Contini Contemporary** ([www.criscontinicontemporary.com](http://www.criscontinicontemporary.com)) based in London

