



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **FutureSSM and the Downtown Association kick off Community Mural Project**

**Sault Ste. Marie** - A partnership between FutureSSM and the Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Association, the 2019 Downtown Community Mural Project consists of 5 large-scale murals in the downtown core. For the months of June and July, artists will be working to revitalize our downtown through public art, while also mentoring local youth in the process.

This initiative is part of FutureSSM's larger Community Art Project (CAP), which aims to revitalize neighborhoods, provide mentorship opportunities for youth, celebrate local history, promote arts & culture, and create economic opportunities.

The first of five Community Mural Block Parties to unveil the murals and celebrate our downtown will take place June 6<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 3pm in the Paul Mall Alley.

People can check out the finished mural art work, as well as enjoy bands, jumbo games and other programming by Fringe North and the Arts Council of Algoma. Food and beverage will be available by J. Caroline's, LopLops and Outspoken Brewing.

People are welcome to explore the mural projects throughout the different stages of progress. Below is a full schedule of events with artists and locations:

1. **Dates:** June 1 – 8, 2019  
**Artist:** Alexander Bacon (Instagram: @vizsla\_bacon)  
**Location:** Paul Mall Alley, 644 Queen Street E  
**Community Mural Block Party Round 1 & Official Kick-Off:** June 6, 2019 from 10am - 3pm  
(official unveiling will take place at 10:30am).
2. **Dates:** June 9 – 15  
**Artists:** Rihkee Strapp ([www.rihkeestrapp.ca](http://www.rihkeestrapp.ca)) Instagram: @rihkee) and Mishiikenh Kwe (Instagram: @mishiikenhkweart)  
**Location:** Soo Blasters, 345 Queen St. E  
**Community Mural Block Party Round 2:** June 12 from 3pm – 7pm
3. **Dates:** June 16 – 22  
**Artist:** Darren Emond ([www.deviantart.com/darrenemond](http://www.deviantart.com/darrenemond))  
**Location:** Outspoken Brewing, 350 Queen St. E  
**Community Mural Block Party Round 3:** June 19 from 3-7pm
4. **Dates:** June 23 – 29  
**Artist:** Patrick Hunter ([www.patrickhunter.ca](http://www.patrickhunter.ca)) Instagram: @patrickhunter\_art)  
**Location:** Village Media, 298 Queen St. E  
**Community Mural Block Party Round 4:** June 26 from 3-7pm
5. **Dates:** July 4 – 11  
**Artist:** Jerry 'birdO' Rugg (Instagram: @jerryrugg)

**Location:** Rolling Pictures/Jorie's Clothing, 498 Queen St.

**Community Mural Block Party Round 5 and Project Finale:** July 11 from 5-10pm

The purpose of the mural project is three-fold:

1. Murals will increase Sault Ste. Marie's cultural vitality by introducing more art into the public sphere; public art initiatives allow for creative expression without cost barriers and promote a sense of identity and community. By connecting artists, businesses, government agencies and non-profit organizations in this collaborative, creative project, the development of murals themselves can advance the arts & culture sector in our community.

2. Murals create destinations resulting in increased foot traffic, while adding colour, vibrancy and character to an urban environment. A more vibrant downtown will attract more locals and tourists alike, who shop at local stores and eat at local restaurants, thereby supporting economic development in Sault Ste. Marie.

3. Finally, through the development of youth-oriented curriculum, the mural project will provide students in our community with opportunities for experiential learning and mentorship. FutureSSM is working with Batchewana First Nation, Algoma District School Board, Global Friends, Sault College, Algoma University, and others to involve youth in this process. The process will also provide the opportunity for local artists to connect with youth in a mentorship roll, connecting emerging and established arts practitioners.

**FutureSSM and The Downtown Association and would like to thank our generous sponsors. Without their support, this project would not be possible.**

Artist Sponsor (2) – Kiwanis Club of Lakeshore Foundation

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Materials & Supplies Sponsor – Color Your World and Cloverdale Paint

Artist Sponsor – Village Media

Artist Sponsor – Batchewana First Nation

Accommodation Sponsor – Holiday Day Inn Express

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For more information and artist profiles, visit [www.futuresm.com/downtownmuralproject](http://www.futuresm.com/downtownmuralproject)

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