

Manifest

“There is an aspect of graffiti that is reverse colonization. I look at it as the people’s media.” - Estria



ESTRIA

Overview

Estria has been spray painting for over 26 years, and is recognized around the world as a graffiti living legend, valued historian, and leader on graffiti’s social and political impact. Hailing from San Francisco’s “Golden Age” of graffiti in the 80’s, Estria is a pioneer in painting techniques, and the originator of the stencil tip. Through graffiti Estria has become an educator, entrepreneur, and social activist, working with numerous non-profits, and high profile corporations. In 2007, Estria founded the “Estria Invitational Graffiti Battle”, a nationwide urban art competition that honors and advances creativity in the Hip Hop arts. Originally from Hawaii, Estria has called the Bay Area home for half of his life. His murals are known to be whimsical, cultural, political, and vibrant, with a focus and dedication to uplift the communities they serve.

Past & Present Clients

Sega
MTV
Toyota
McKesson Corporation
Nokia
The Mills Corporation
McDonald’s
Oakland Museum
President Bill Clinton
Alameda County (CA)
City of Oakland, CA
City of San Francisco, CA

Cities Painted In

Italy
Mexico
Japan
Honduras
Honolulu
San Francisco
New York
Los Angeles

Contact Information

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Publicist

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Career Timeline

1984
Began spray painting

1993
Began writing articles, teaching classes, & lecturing at universities on graffiti’s social & political impact.

1994
Arrested for graffiti, appearing on CNN, National Enquirer, San Francisco Chronicle and, San Francisco Examiner.

2000
Co-founded “Visual Element”, the EastSide Arts Alliance’s free mural workshop Visual Element develops youth into the voice of the people. Though no longer a part of the program, Visual Element continues to serve at-risk youth.

2002
Founded “Tumis Design” in Oakland, CA. Tumis develops graphic communications and web applications for non-profits and foundations.

2007
Founded “Samurai Graphix”, a custom screen-printing company in San Leandro, CA, serving Oakland’s public school needs.

2007
Founded “Estria Invitational Graffiti Battle”, a nationwide urban art competition that honors and advances creativity in the Hip Hop arts.

Be true to your culture. Only you can find that path. Respect cultures, learn history, make an impact to change the future.

-Estria



ESTRIA

FAQ

When did you start painting?

We started in '84. My friends were breakers and we saw graffiti on things like the Jelly Bean album, and in the movies Breakin', Beatstreet, Wild Style, Style Wars. Our first piece was with an airbrush and a can of compressed air. We climbed into a canal and tried to airbrush the word 'fresh' on raw concrete. People stopped to watch, no one thinking it was illegal. We got to the 'R' when the air ran out. It got us juiced enough to get spray paint and try it again. That was the beginning of a life-long love affair.

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Hawaii and have been in the Bay Area for half my life.

How did you get your name?

Back then everyone was taking a word for their tag name, but I wanted a name. For a month I played with letters I liked until I came up with Estria. Years later a man told me estría, with the accent on the 'i', means stretch mark in Portuguese. He said the Latin root was 'stria' meaning to stretch. He said it was a good name, as in stretching your mind.

Who has inspired you?

Crayone TWS inspired me to believe that I could paint anything with spray paint. He and Risque TWS taught me how to outline my pieces very cleanly. Raevyn TWS taught me to explore anything and everything and to make them into letters. He taught me to have fun inventing new styles of lettering. Other than that there was no one to teach us back then. I learned a ton from Barron Storey on visual communicating, techniques, and being creative. Going to the YMCA as a teen taught me to envision a better world and how to work to make that happen.

How do you come up with ideas?

I pay attention to everything. Meditation and martial arts are great. Dreams do a lot for me. Painting with others is good for sharing ideas. Graffiti is very collaborative and you learn from others. Studying geniuses and masters in other fields and cultures is very good too. Having fun and being in a playful, stress-free state is good for the idea flow. Basically, I feel like a gate and the ideas flow through me, from the universe/higher being.

Why do you work with youth?

I was taught at an early age to give back to the community. Working with youth reshapes the world.

Why is it important to create murals for the community?

When you paint for the community you speak on issues that impact us. You can shift the social consciousness on these issues. You can empower and galvanize people. You literally can save lives. You can bring beauty and joy to an otherwise bleak wall and neighborhood. A friend of mine says you should always leave things better than when you found them, including relationships. Burners can build relationships and community pride.

Why do you live in the Bay?

It's gorgeous, it's the progressive capital of the US, and it's a good place to be if you're a conscious artist.

What do you want people to know about your work?

It's fun and it's always changing. As I grow, my pieces get better.

Publicist

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