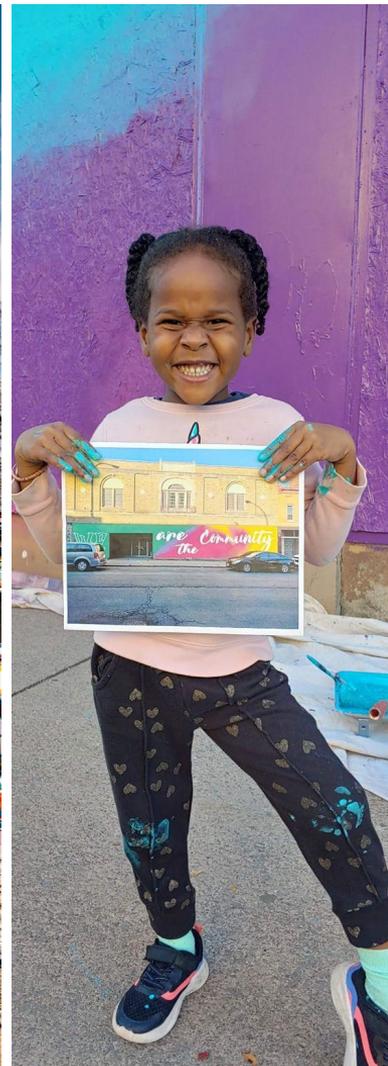


Using Public Art & Placemaking to Share Community Stories

Examples from the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area

Ally Spogr, Director of Public Art
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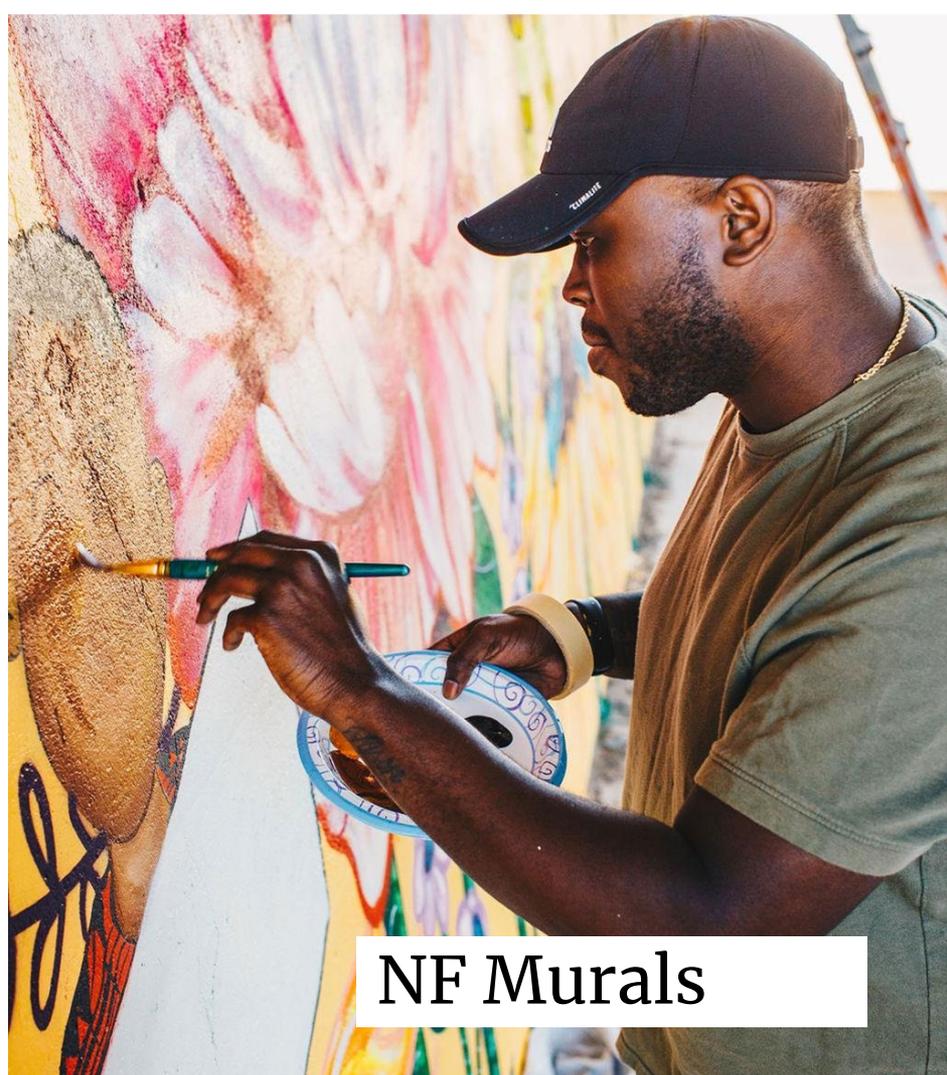
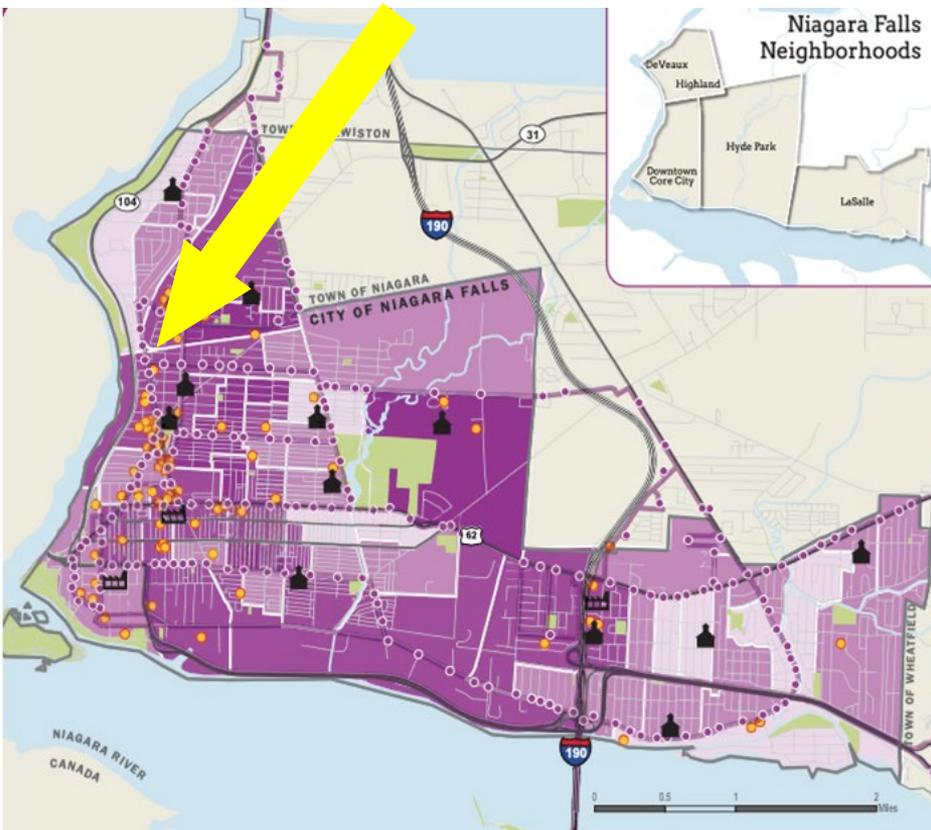
How can public art bring community together and increase visibility of local heritage?

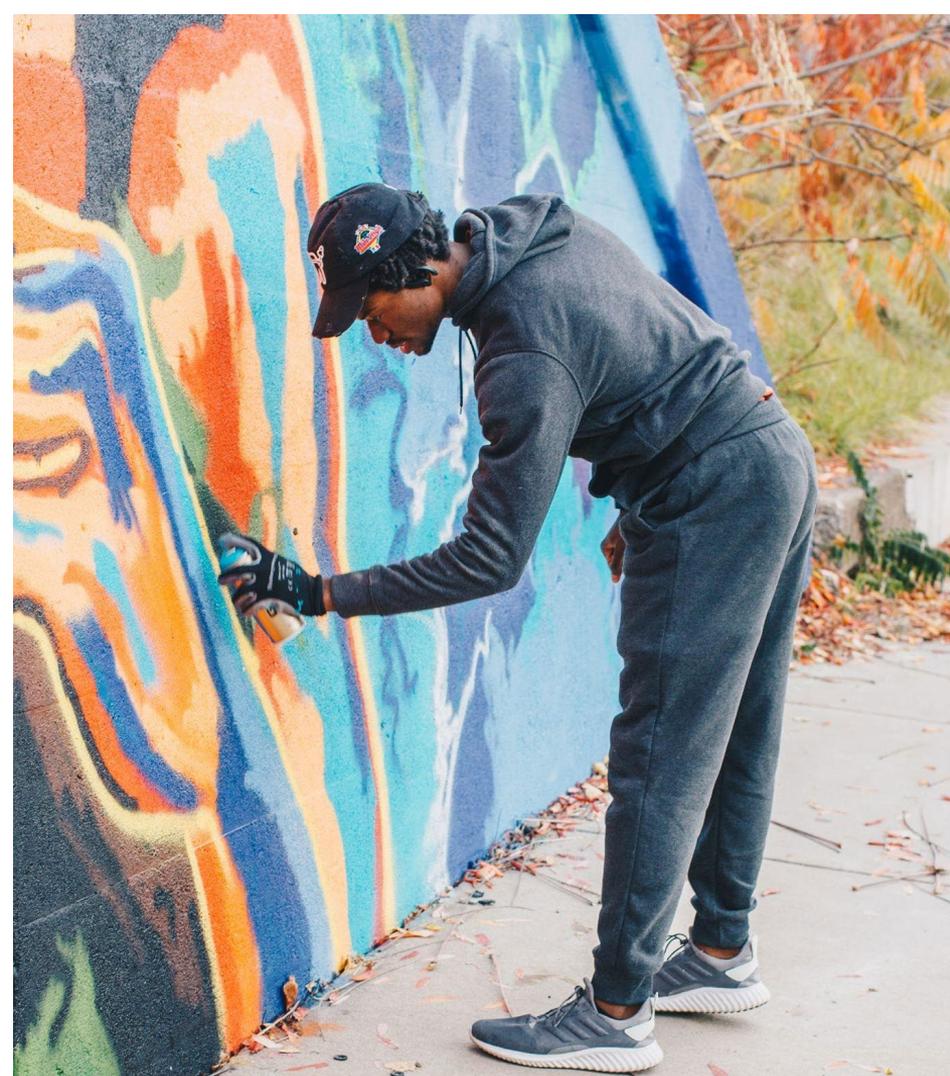
In the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area, new public art projects are bringing community together to highlight local heritage and stories.

Launching in 2019, the public art program began with a community-driven mural project, **NF Murals**, that includes 20+ murals covering a concrete underpass and walls in the North End of the City of Niagara Falls.

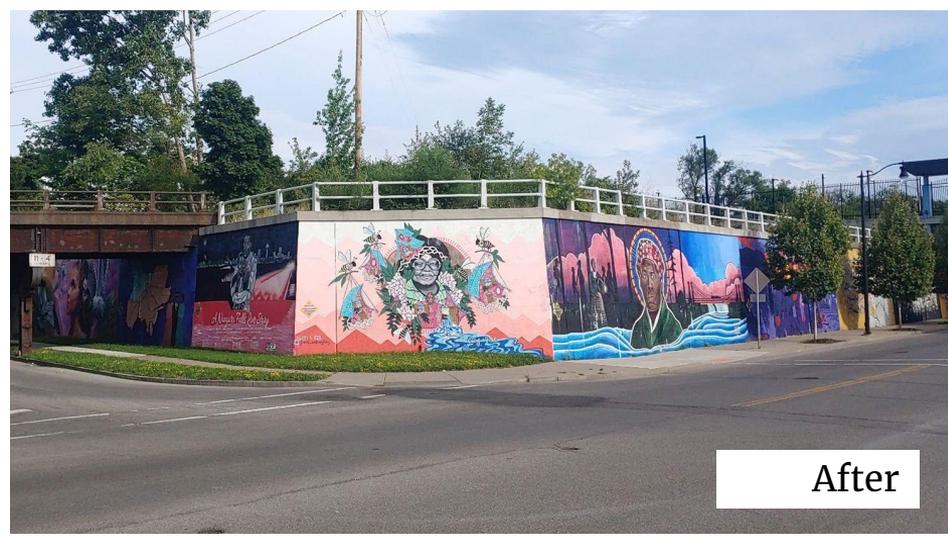
Following, came the **Prophet Isaiah's Second Coming House** art environment project in 2021, and as of two weeks ago, a community mural making project, **History Lives Here**, on boarded up storefronts on a closed up stretch of Main Street.

A new community-driven placemaking initiative, with the goal to transform public spaces by improving the neighborhoods we live and work in, and by conveying messages of hope, empathy, compassion, and social justice.





Before



After

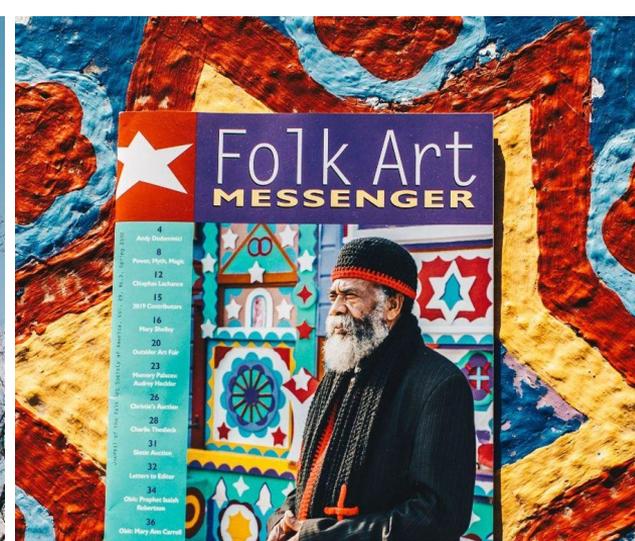
Bringing untold stories to the
forefront through mural making





Generating opportunities for dialogue

Prophet Isaiah's Second Coming House



Religion News | Isaiah Robertson Self-proclaimed prophet prepares for Second Coming

By ANGELICA MORRISON
NIAGARA CORRESPONDENT

NIAGARA FALLS — Matthew 24:37 was the basis for the prophet's message. "No one knows the day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son but only the Father."

Some who look around these days are wont to wonder, what with North Korea long-ago nuclear tests, the Iraq and Holy Land, global warming and global terrorism.

Isaiah Robertson, who calls himself Prophet Isaiah, is among local Christians who believe events have aligned to point of the end of time, and the Second Coming of Christ.

"It's the end. It is," Robertson said last week. "The world's coming to an end. It's the start of the end of time; praise God, hallelujah."

In preparation for the end, Robertson constructed a display of 1,500 candles to represent the morning of the Jubilee — when Jesus returns. The symbolic creation is on what used to be the front lawn of his Ontario Street home.

He said it took him two days to assemble the display, which consists of symbolic meals and stones that represent various spiritual things.

"When God had me to dig up all the ground, people thought I was crazy," said Robertson, who is blind. "In the last days, prophets are going to come, Isaiah God."

Robertson last the only one with the Second Coming on his mind.

The Rev. Michael Chorney, pastor of Coopers Church,



Isaiah Robertson of Niagara Falls believes signs point to the Second Coming of Christ. He has used sand, stone and 1,500 candles outside his Ontario Street home to construct a display that represents the starting of the Jubilee — when Jesus returns.

"There's no question about it. Based on the prophecy in the Bible, we're heading toward the return of Jesus," said Chorney, who looked to the Scriptures in the Book of Matthew for guidance on the issue. "The signs in the world are pointing toward the return of Jesus, and that's what we're waiting for."

Chorney said there would be famine, but not those things in the Bible nor for us to guess or speculate, but to know that we're getting close to the end.

"I think that the time is before us right now, when we look at 9/11, the tsunami, and the things talking about this [Middle East conflict] in the beginning of World War III."

Chorney said the current situation with terrorism and the

Christians claim that the Book of Revelation was understood by the people for which it was intended, and as such, the timing of Jesus' return is not known. "There will come a time when I don't want to know, but the world only knows to come to an end, God has a plan," he said.

Read more of possible signs of the times are not what's important when it comes to Christ's Second Coming, according to the Rev. William Johnson-Lark of the Zion Lutheran Church.

"This is a weird topic," he said. "You have people who are not really interested in it, but they are interested in it because of the end of the world."

"We never know how far the end of the world is, but it's a real possibility."

What is for sure is that we will see some of the signs of the times, and that's what's important when it comes to Christ's Second Coming, according to the Rev. William Johnson-Lark of the Zion Lutheran Church.

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"We never know how far the end of the world is, but it's a real possibility."

Aug. 13 to 20
Niagara County church-related events

Following is a weekly listing of upcoming church-related events around Niagara County.

If you would like your event included, send the information to: Niagara County Community Calendar, 1000 Erie Blvd. West, Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14201. Call (716) 261-1111 or e-mail to njmagazine@niagaracounty.com.

Monday

ICE CREAM SOCIAL and a meal will be held at Coopers Church, 1000 Erie Blvd. West, Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14201. Call (716) 261-1111 for more information.

Friday

PERFORMANCE will be held at the Amherst Community Center, 1000 Erie Blvd. West, Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14201. Call (716) 261-1111 for more information.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held at the Amherst Community Center, 1000 Erie Blvd. West, Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14201. Call (716) 261-1111 for more information.

CHURCH will be held at the Amherst Community Center, 1000 Erie Blvd. West, Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14201. Call (716) 261-1111 for more information.



Isaiah Robertson, a self-proclaimed prophet and artist, created artwork of his house and property, and after his passing in January 2020, the Kohler Foundation – a Wisconsin-based nonprofit organization that preserves art environments around the country – bought the house and donated it to the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area for long-term stewardship.





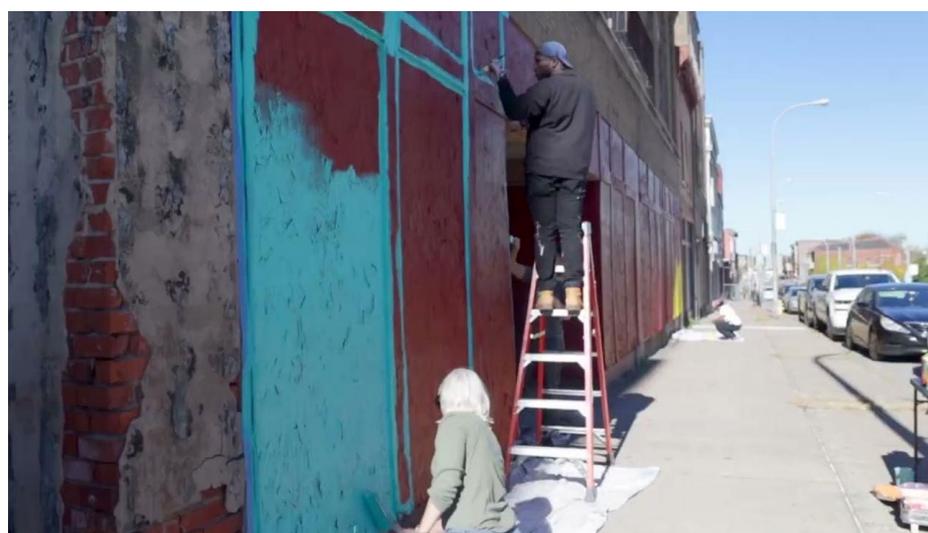
THE BUFFALO NEWS

'Second Coming' house in Niagara Falls is being conserved and donated

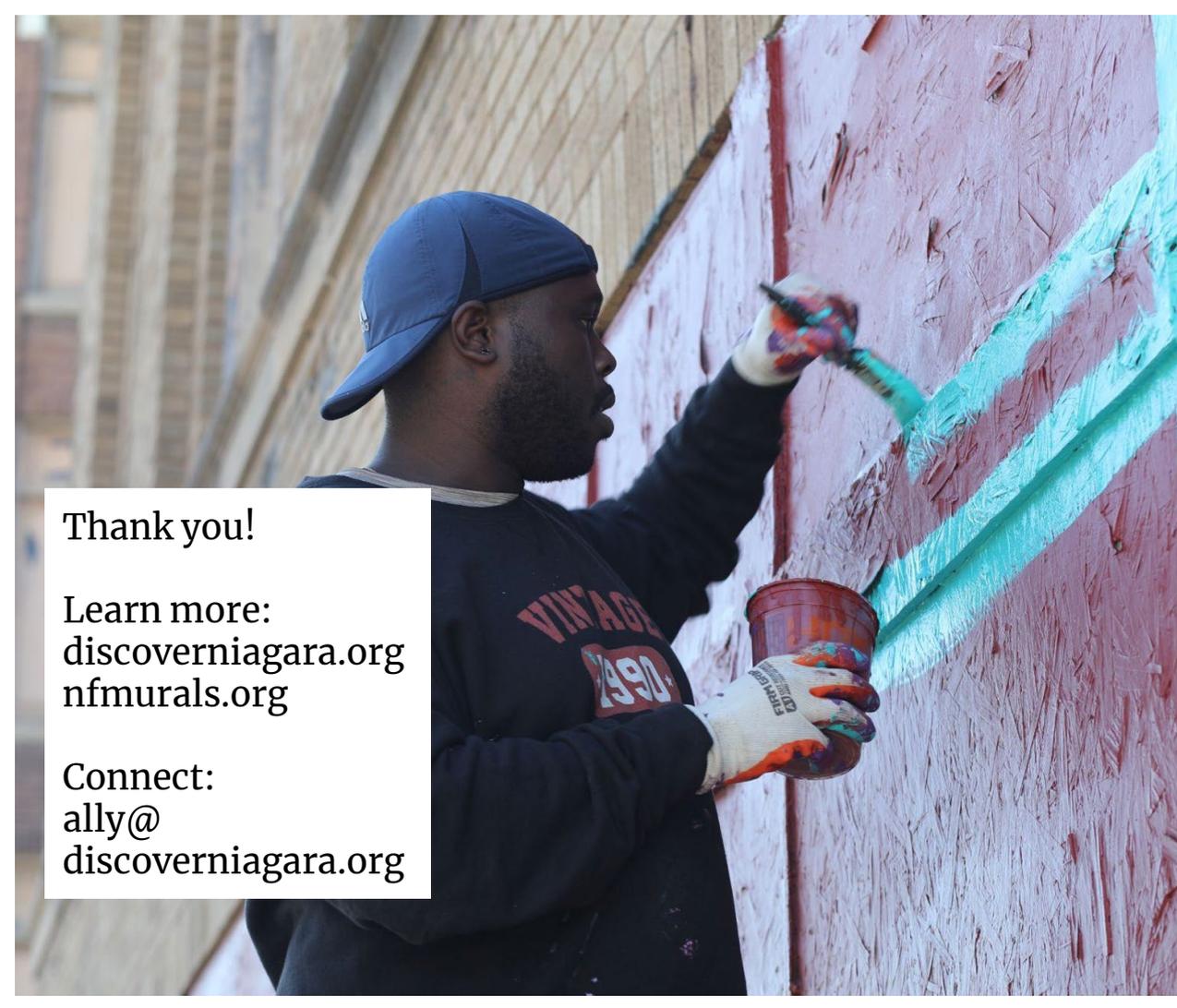
A three-story brick building with a ground-floor storefront. The upper two floors have rows of windows, many of which are boarded up with grey panels. The ground floor features a mural with three main sections: a red section on the left with the word 'HISTORY' in white, a teal section in the middle with the word 'LIVES' in white, and a purple section on the right with the word 'HERE' in white. The mural is decorated with various white line-art symbols like hearts, stars, and geometric shapes. A white text box is overlaid on the middle of the image.

Empowering community voices through mural making beautification on boarded up storefronts

The History Lives Here project aims to beautify the buildings that line the long stretch of Main Street igniting conversations about Main Street's historic legacy, present day community, and future possibilities. The murals reflect on the importance of what once was and brings voice to the residents living in the community who have ideas and visions for the possibilities of what could be.





A man wearing a blue baseball cap and a black t-shirt with "VINAGARA 1990" printed on it is painting a red wall. He is using a brush to apply a thick blue stripe. He is wearing white gloves with "ELECTRIC BLUE" and "HAND MADE" printed on them. A bucket of red paint is in his other hand.

Thank you!

Learn more:
discoverniagara.org
nfmurals.org

Connect:
[ally@
discoverniagara.org](mailto:ally@discoverniagara.org)

