



Jovain Hildebrand (sover/Bwaliano)

Jovain Hildebrand was born in Winnipeg in 1993, and grew up in a family where freedom of expression was valued. He got interested in graffiti art at the age of 12. A skateboard mate who was into the art form saw his work and encouraged him to develop it. Jovain sees skateboarding, surfing, hip-hop and graffiti art as complementary elements of a subculture he admires. He says he is particularly drawn to the Los Angeles (LA) style, including street artists Revok, Augor, and Ohgeesy. He also likes the murals in our inner city that show different cultures and “let us know that this is Canada.” Jovain views graffiti art as a collective enterprise; especially while a work remains up, it reflects memories of working together with friends. Public wall artists often face trouble from the authorities. At Artbeat, Jovain has developed a unique work-around that keeps his art legal. Using acrylic markers on canvas, he replicates the spirit of wall art on a much smaller scale. This presents challenges, he says, because markers don't lend themselves to certain features such as misting and flaring that are intrinsic to wall art done with spray paint. But the upside is that the small gems he's now making can be treated as experiments to evolve new ideas for full-scale wall art. “When I do it this way, it comes out differently,” he adds.