

A01+REN FLORAGRAFF! Godfathers of Toronto Graffiti Art: 1980s-NOW

Two of Toronto's original graffiti artists



Toronto, Jul 21, 2019 (Issuewire.com) - [#Hashtag Gallery](#) is pleased to announce the exhibition for our premier autumn exhibition period: **A01+REN FLORAGRAFF! Godfathers of Toronto Graffiti Art: 1980s-NOW**, an exhibition of paintings by [Andrew Owen A01 \(A01\)](#) and [Max Johnston \(REN\)](#), curated by [Alexis Venerus](#).

The exhibition will run from September 26 to October 5, 2019, with a grand opening party on Thursday, September 26, 5-9 pm, and a soft closing reception on Sunday, October 5, 12-4 pm.

The exhibition will feature **FLORAGRAFF!** a massive 1.52 x 4.88 m / 5 x 16 ft. collaborative A01+REN painting on canvas synthesizing REN's old-school 80's style graffiti lettering filled with A01's signature aerosol flower painting technique. This will be shown along with smaller collaborative paintings.

A01 and REN will also each have separate solo walls displaying with selections of smaller new paintings produced for this exhibition. For these, each artist will be visiting their personal archive and creating with nods to nostalgia.

This exhibition is bringing together A01 and REN, two of the earliest brand-name graffiti artists in

Toronto. They have been called "Godfathers of Toronto Graffiti Art" by members of the community. When A01 and REN started painting graffiti in the early eighties their work was contemporaneous with graffiti artists in New York City: SAMO (Jean Michel Basquiat), Keith Haring and SHADOWMAN (Richard Hambleton) all of whom proved that Graffiti is an important artistic practice to be shown in prominent art galleries in the United States and Internationally. Regrettably, the US artists' meteoric rise to fame and fortune was accompanied by illness and tragedy.

In the early '80s, the streets of Toronto were a blank canvas. Sparked with vigour A01 and REN, left a mark with their tags and aerosol paintings, having inspired generations of Toronto graffiti artists that followed. Leading to - for better or worse - the proliferation of graffiti painting in Toronto today. Both evolved, also becoming important artists exhibiting at prominent art galleries in Canada and Internationally. Remarkably, although A01 and REN have not risen to the fame and fortune of their US counterparts, they remain alive and productive! This exhibition is both historical and contemporary as it celebrates the historical importance of their pioneering graffiti and urban art, the longevity and scope of their vast artistic output from then until now, and the vitality and value of their ongoing, contemporary paintings. Please spread the word and join us for this important event.

CONTACT for additional information, print quality images, or to arrange interviews with the artists:



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