

STREETS AHEAD

HM Consul General to Miami David Proddger talks about promoting Multiculturalism through Street Art

BY AIMÉE DINGWELL



If art imitates life, then HM Consul General David Proddger believes there's no better way to communicate in today's global society than with a visual language. Because modern life is characterized by so many unprecedented opportunities for intercultural exchanges, art is the common thread that can unify the discussion around integration and how a community grows together, says Proddger.

So much so, that as part of his post in Miami to represent the U.K. at large, Proddger is spearheading an initiative to promote multiculturalism through the arts that'll be highlighted through two events during BritWeek Miami 2016.

"Our Prime Minister David Cam-



eron has spoken at length about the need for us to do better in the U.K. about breaking down barriers," says Prodger. "I wanted to have an exchange of views of how we do things in the U.K., the way we meld and become a broader British community, and what the U.S. experience has been, to see where the parallels were."

One obvious commonality Prodger sees is art, in particular, street art. "The U.K. has a very innovative way of looking at all of the creative arts, whether that be film, music, spoken word, written word, and particularly visual art," he said. "With Wynwood here, and Art Basel, Miami's one of the greatest global platforms for that kind of art."

A second touchstone is Miami's exceptional diversity. "Street art often comes from parts of society with high levels of diaspora communities, or immigrant communities," says Prodger, "which is often a fertile environment for the kind of creative work that generates these amazing visions articulated by the artists."

BritWeek will explore this link between the U.K. and the U.S., as well as how street art may inform how multicultural communities grow and flourish. "It's the perfect opportunity to show what modern Britain is, that we love street art, and are very good at it," says Prodger. "We have a lot of British artists already working in Wynwood. Why don't we highlight this, and at the same time have a discussion about why things like street art are such an interesting catalyst to building future societies."

This year's BritWeek Miami includes two public events promoting multiculturalism through art: an in-depth panel discussion on February 11th featuring British artist Inkie, viewed as one of the founders of street art (along with fellow Bristol-borne artist Banksy), and Miami artist Abstrk, whose colorful geometric and human forms have graced walls, facades, and canvases in Miami, Cuba and around the world.

A live viewing of their art will take place Sunday, February 14th, in partnership with Fine Art Auctions Miami (FAMM) at the Miami Rum Club (2320 N. Miami Avenue).

