

## Back Art Gallery Self-guided Tour

The Back Alley Mural Project began over 20 years ago and the KCBIA has helped organize and fund the 33 beautiful murals on view in this self-guided tour. Along the walk you will see some historical buildings, as well as other artwork in our downtown core.

**1. Italian City, 2012. Ken Wells. 219 Victoria St.**

This is an Italian architectural mural with a special point of view best seen from the alley. The arch way creates a window to an active scene. The theme of this mural is a meeting place. The dog, a Welsh Sealyham Terrier, appears in a few local murals and is a nod to the artist (Ken Wells) mother who was an artist and dog breeder in the UK.

**2. The Jaguar Gate, 2017. Alex Moir-Porteous. 223 Victoria St.**

Porteous depicts an Olmec/Inca temple site, whose ruins have become overgrown by the forest. Move through the guardians at the gate, past the megalithic stone wall and drift back to the step pyramid in the background. Imagine yourself in another time and place. Drawing inspiration from diverse cultures to add depth and breadth to the Alley Art Gallery.

**3. Tuscan Villa, 2011. Ken Wells. 231 Victoria St.**

Tyler, in brown overalls, was one of the mural artist assistants. The mural consists of a few different parts. For instance, on one side a woman sits on a bench gazing toward a fountain and there are beautiful flowers above her head. The idea with this mural was to improve the overall look of the building with different focal points.

Tyler's tattoo is correct too!

**4. Shoe Window Display, Janice Gurney. 241 Victoria St.**

This mural recreates the look and feel of an old style, traditional shoe store. Commissioned by the owner, the Big Boot Inn.

**5. Abstract, Tricia Selmer. 245 Victoria St.**

This abstract mural is located on the back of the former Tricia Selmer's Gallery. Since then, Jardine's Domaine moved into the building. Jardine's is a popular local clothing store that's located in Downtown Kamloops. This abstract mural on Jardine's Domaine demonstrates a unique style of murals in the downtown location with its abstract design.

Tricia Selmer's works hang in public and private collections internationally. Locally, her artwork is proudly displayed in the Brownstone Restaurant and at the Plaza Hotel. Notice how she used the abstract shapes in the building to add to the mural.

**6. Lady and the Shoe, 2002. Alex Moir-Porteous. 249 Victoria St.**

The whimsical "House in a Shoe" is accompanied by a Bodhi Tree on the back of the Golden Buddha.

This is to represent Kennell's Shoes and the current Golden Buddha.

## **7. Italian Villa Courtyard, 2011 Ken Wells. 255 Victoria St.**

This is a forced perspective mural, which essentially means that it looks as though it is three dimensional but isn't. This is a scene with many details incorporated. The flying angel bricks on top show the artist's names. The dog is used as a focal point for the boy and to move the viewer's eye from one side of the composition to the other.

Fact: All brick pieces are individually painted.

## **8. Downtown Scene, 2010. Ken Wells. 263 Victoria St.**

This piece incorporates all the things that make Kamloops unique and showcases the activities in which you can partake within our beautiful city. It is meant to represent the 200 block of Victoria Street. This is the street view you would see if the building was not here. This mural, which is a completely different style than Ken's other murals, demonstrates the variety of styles that our alleys have. Variety is one of our goals for the Back Alley Art Gallery.

## **9. No Parking, 2018. Kelly Wright. 258 Seymour St.**

This mural was designed with the community in mind! During the KCBIA's 2nd Back Alley Block Party, the community was invited to throw paint filled balloons at the wall. Afterwards, the artist used colour splatters as fill for the beautiful grizzly bear pictured above! This mural took four weeks to complete.

## **10. Urban Art, 2000. 273 Victoria St.**

This mural was done before the KCBIA's mural program. Two young men who moved on to Toronto for a career in the arts, completed this mural around 2000. If you look up, you will see a little Lego Mario Bros. who appeared one night out of the dark.

## **11. Homage to the Leland Hotel, 2017. Evan Christian. 301 Victoria St.**

This mural was designed to celebrate the rich history that Kamloops offers. The building that stood here until 1980 was the Leland Hotel, which was built in 1905, but met its end in flames. During the painting process many locals paid tribute to the hotel by sharing stories and memories they had of the building - stories such as parents leaving their children in the car while they snuck into the bar for a drink or two. Comparing the Leland hotel to the Plaza Hotel, the Leland was more casual. Instead of bringing your wife you would bring your girlfriend.

Rumor has it that there were underground tunnels connecting the two hotels, so no one could see the elite come and go from the hotels.

## **12. Winking Man, 2019. Zach Abney. 322 Seymour St.**

This recent mural was created by Zach Abney. It's located on the side of Royal Lepage Kamloops Realty. This piece explores the gaze as a form of wordless expression. Body language expresses so much before words become a part of the equation. A brief glance conveys so much emotion – from happiness and joy, to sadness, grief, and pain. “The Winking Man” communicates a wisdom that comes from age and experience, while the facial posture of the man recounts a sense of both wisdom and glee.

**13. Kuan Yin (Kwan Yin), 2011. Alex Moir-Porteus. 319 Victoria St.**

The art represents the owner's interest in Buddhist culture. History tells us that Kuan Yin (Kwan Yin) is the Chinese version of the male god, whom the ancient texts eulogize as the deity of compassion. The Buddhist Deity Green Tara is also known as a heavenly deity who hears the cries of beings experiencing misery. The Diamond/Triangular Mandalas in Buddhist cultures embraces what they consider to be the four facets of life: unconscious, conscious, emotional, and spiritual.

This wall was very heavily tagged by graffiti, so the owners were happy to have a mural created here.

**14. Music in Venice, 2013. Ken Wells. 329 Victoria St.**

This is a view of a side street in Venice, complete with the canal. The business and building owners are incorporated in the mural, they are standing on their patio.

**15. Underwater Scene, 2012. Kelly Wright. 347 Victoria St.**

The owner wanted a seaside-inspired fantasy visual. It was originally supposed to be just on the lower half of the wall, but the artist became so inspired that he kept going. The concept for this mural is to help the viewer feel surrounded by the multiple dimensions of the walls. It took about 6 weeks to complete. Note how the sun is coming through the water surrounding the mermaid.

**16. Marilyn, 2013. Evan Christian. 350 Seymour St.**

Tribute to the iconic Marilyn Monroe. The owner had a poster of Marilyn that he showed to the artist. This entire piece is done with spray paint. This was our first mural of this genre, and it shows the amazing detail that is possible with a good spray paint artist. Christian has completed many commissioned murals within the City of Kamloops and elsewhere.

**17. Italian Countryside, 2012. Ken Wells. 353 Victoria St.**

Kamloops has a large Italian community, Anthony Salituro (the owner of the shop) being one of them. He gave the artist several photos of Italy from which Ken created this work of art. Note the three-dimensional effects. Notice the little dog?

**18. Wheel in the Sky, 2016. Alex Moir-Porteus. 357 Victoria St.**

The "Wheel in the Sky" mural depicts a festive evening in 1920 Ireland. Located behind Carlos O'Bryan's, this mural features a carnival with a Ferris Wheel in the center, which also inspired the name of the mural. The pub in the mural called "An Inghean Dhamsa" is Irish Gaelic for "The Dancing Maiden". A magician breathes fire as the city folk bustle throughout the street while they go about their daily activities. This festive scene represents the boisterous and jovial atmosphere of the Carlos O'Bryan's restaurant.

"Alex the Freehander" is his nickname. This artist also collaborated on the bee city mural... see any similarities? (UFO)

## 19. Saxophone Man, 2018. Zach Abney. 220 4th Ave.

This building resides beside the Commodore Grand Café & Lounge. The Commodore – as it's commonly known, opened in 1927 and is both a licensed restaurant by day and a club by night. The Commodore is known for their diverse range of music, from DJ's that specialize in hip-hop and electro to playing soft rock and jazz throughout the week. The mural honours the jazz roots of the Commodore.

## 20. Bonjour la Francophonie, 2023. Turbo Bambi. 260 4th Ave.

The mural depicts a vibrant celebration of Francophone culture, capturing the essence of diversity through a vivid array of colours. The word "Bonjour!" stands boldly, inviting viewers to engage with the warmth and friendliness it represents. From the iconic sugar maples of Quebec to Paris's famous Eiffel Tower, the design showcases the coexistence of multiple Francophone backgrounds. Turbo Bambi's signature characters interact harmoniously, symbolizing unity with the French communities of British Columbia.

## 21. JuiceBox 1998, 2018. Robin Hodgson & Jack Morris. 465 Victoria St.

This mural echoes the contemporary architecture of the TNRD building and honours the cutting-edge vision of the architects Peter Cardew and Nigel Baldwin. The playful combination of shape, line, and colour also speaks to the history of abstract painting — a medium often featured on the walls of the Kamloops Art Gallery. Segments of the concrete wall will remain visible, to balance the materials of the original building with the mural. This mural took 5 days to complete. 1998 refers to the year the building was constructed.

- **Public art- Wildfire Memorial (TNRD Statue), Cameron Kerr, 2004. 465 Victoria St.**

This sculpture represents the thousands of evacuees and firefighters who helped fight the 2003 fire season. 2003 still stands as the most significant interface (involve structures) wildfire event in BC history.

## 22. Films on My Mind, 2019. Zach Abney, Assistant Nancy Kuchta. 503 Victoria St.

This mural was completed in the summer of 2019. It features several scenes from films shown at the Paramount Theatre. The first film that was known to be played was in 1955; Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. The mural imagery depicts people recalling movie scenes that stuck with them, which is why it fades from a person's face to the movie. This mural is done with spray paint.

How many movies can you recognize?

## 23. Sports in the Loops (Organized Chaos), 2016. Ken Wells. 520 Seymour St.

The title is "Organized chaos", this idea drove the concept and the idea that without rules sports of all kinds would not be possible. This mural is all about movement. The spiral background entices the viewer to glance across the work. Where possible the artist borrowed the actual sports team colour but always kept in mind the overall flow of form and colour from left to right. Since Service Canada is in the building, the owner wanted to have a mural that depicted the Canadian spirit and what better than sports. The mural includes single person and team sports and represents many sports activities that occur in the Kamloops Area.

**24. Billy Miner Train Robbery, 2010. Alex Moir-Porteus. 130 5th Ave.**

This mural was completed in the summer of 2010 by Alexander Moir-Porteus. A local community leader named Fredrick Fulton prosecuted the infamous train robber, Billy Miner, in Kamloops in 1905. After a successful robbery in Mission, BC in which Billy netted almost \$100,000, he came to the Kamloops area and became a respectable rancher. The thrill of train robbery was, however, far too tempting, and Miner struck again in Kamloops. Unfortunately, he only managed to steal \$17, and the attempt led to his capture by the Mounted Police. Frederick Fulton put him in jail on a twenty-five-year sentence. He soon escaped and was never re-captured.

Billy Miner is known for coining the phrase “Hands Up”. This mural depicts the last of the old West train robberies by cowboys on horseback. This mural is dedicated to that piece of Kamloops' history. The artist took great effort to ensure that this mural was historically correct.

**25. Fantasy Garden, 2010. Alex Moir-Porteus. 422 Victoria St.**

First official mural in the new Back Alley Mural program. In 2010, the business at the time, Karateristics wanted a fantasy image. The path between the oak trees portrays a portal to the fantasy garden.

**26. Moving Art, 2015. Ken Wells. 167 4th Ave.**

Ken worked with the art gallery owner to create a design that suited the wall. Fun details you'll notice are the feet of people carrying the painting and fish that have fallen out of the painting. This creates a feeling of action within the mural. The feet also signify the impact humans have on spawning grounds that leads to declining salmon stocks.

**27. Alley Oasis, 2013. Kelly Wright. 126 4th Ave.**

The owners wanted to create this mural to go with the Oasis pub in the alley. The art wraps around the corner of the building and continues around to the walls under the pub's patio. This mural was done with a mix of exterior latex brushwork and high production air-brush painting.

**28. History of Brewing, 2016. Kelly Wright. 355 Lansdowne St**

One of three murals completed in the 2016 season, the Red Collar's History of Brewing is an ambitious examination of the history of brewing up to the present. On the side of the building, you will meet the Goddesses of Hops & Barley, while on the back of the building you will meet Louis Pasteur, the man who made pasteurization and the consumption of safe beer possible. You will also see a giant barrel with the namesake of the building whose spirit lives within the beer inside. It also pays tribute to Red Collar's mascot dog.

## **29. Bee City, 2017. Collaboration by Alex Moir-Porteous, Ken Wells, Evan Christian, Marianna Abutalipova and Kelly Wright. 366 Victoria St.**

The Kami Inn parking lot was the location for the 2017 SpringFest. During the weekend event a collaborative mural was painted on the side of Jonathan Buchner Gems & Jewelry. This mural consists of local wildflowers and bee friendly flowers painted in different styles by an array of talented artists.

It showcases Kamloops as a bee friendly city. Kamloops was the first city in BC and the third in Canada to commit as a bee friendly city. This commitment means our businesses and community organizations are doing everything possible to promote a healthy ecosystem for bees.

Can you spot something else flying around besides the bees?

## **30. The Mystic, 2017. Ken Wells. 316 Victoria St.**

The story behind this mural is that the Old Mystic is sending his red roses out into the world with his doves. Although she doesn't know where they come from, they are received by the lady at the front. The intention of this mural is the promotion of peace and love throughout the world, without knowing who you are sending it to, or who is receiving it. The artist has designed elements in the painting to camouflage parts of the building structure; the window became the bird cage. By using this technique, the artwork is not diluted by the building. The ladies' patio in the painting blends with the actual head office patio which overlooks Victoria Street.

Remember, send it out into the universe – knowing it will be received with gratitude.

- **Public Art on Lansdowne Parkade**

Not officially a KCBIA mural, but local artist Bill Frymer paired with the Kamloops art Gallery and the City of Kamloops in 2019 to complete this. Consists of over 90,000 metal tiles to express the meeting of the two rivers.

## **31. Matt Berger 2020 Olympics, 2021. Kelly Wright, Landon Muzio, Clay Walker. 226 Lansdowne St.**

Canadian Tire sponsored this commemoration of Matt Berger's 2020 Tokyo Olympic journey. Berger was part of Team Canada, and this mural celebrates his roots in Kamloops where he learned to skateboard.

"We collaborated in our styles and used some designs from Matt's skateboards to make an eye-popping colourful mural that gets all the attention it deserves. We wanted to showcase where he came from and where is now. Truly an inspiration that he competed in skateboarding for the 2020 Olympic games."

## **32. Dragon Storm, 2015. Alex Moir-Porteus. 238 Lansdowne St.**

This mural, painted on the back of All Aboard Games, is based on a dragon from the Dungeons and Dragons universe. This creature breathes lightning and is depicted amidst the flaming wreckage of a battle with an enemy not in the frame. The artists and business owners came to an agreement on the design and incorporated the gaming business's characteristics within the painting.

### **33. Artist Mid Creation, 2015. Kylene Cachelin. 250 Victoria St.**

This was a wonderfully large canvas to work with. The building owner wanted something completely different from other murals. A fun, modern, more European street art style. With art-based businesses in the building, the image of an artist in her studio amid creation seemed perfectly fitting. The former business 4 Cats Art Studio selected this painter.

Fun fact: the toothbrush you can see in her bag was requested by the dentists on the other side of the alley.

#### **Summary of the program:**

Won BIABC 'Best in the West' Award - Public Spaces Category for project.

The Back Alley Art Gallery is an integral component in the KCBIA's Complete Streets Initiative: public spaces that are friendly, supportive, appealing, and safe. As always, community partnerships are a key component of a successful BIA and its programs.

This program creates partnerships between the local business and creative communities and provides an opportunity for local artists to showcase their talents, diversify the downtown business environment, and beautify public space. It serves as an example of what can be accomplished when we all work together for a common goal - improving Downtown Kamloops!