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**PUERTO RICAN STREET ARTISTS CALL UPON THE BIGGEST GLOBAL NAMES IN MURALISM TO ADD TO THE ISLAND'S BOOMING ART SCENE**

*"Blank Canvas Initiative" Invites Muralists from Around the World to Showcase their Talent Alongside Puerto Rico's Own Street Artists with "Reserved for" Spaces Throughout the Island.*

**San Juan, Puerto Rico, Oct. 29, 2019** -- In partnership with Puerto Rico's local art community, Discover Puerto Rico, the Island's Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), today launched the "Blank Canvas Initiative," a call to street artists around the world, inviting them to share their craft on the walls of Puerto Rico's streets, and form part of the Island's unique and booming arts scene. Puerto Rico boasts exceptional art museums, a flourishing art gallery scene, independent collectors, curators, quality events and highly skilled artisans, offering their work across the Island, and a thriving street art and mural experience unlike any other. For travelers who crave and seek out cultural arts and authentic experiences, Puerto Rico should top their list.

Internationally recognized Puerto Rican artist, Alexis Bousquet, also the founder of the Santurce es Ley street art festival, is teaming up with local artists Celso González, Vero Rivera and Bob Snow. Together, they are joining forces to identify wall spaces throughout Puerto Rico, including the well-known Santurce neighborhood in San Juan, to create "Reserved for" signs, which will serve as larger-than-life *blank canvas* invitations for global street artists around the world, to feature their art alongside Puerto Rico's very own.

The new artwork from the "Blank Canvas Initiative" will be showcased just in time for Puerto Rico's most festive season – the holidays – also renowned as the longest in the world. The holidays in Puerto Rico are like no other, and culminate with the Calles de San Sebastian festival, the largest festival in Puerto Rico where thousands of locals and visitors alike gather to experience parades of *cabezudos* (big heads), live music, dancing, libations, food, and hundreds of authentic crafts by local artisans. The new murals will also be a focal point during upcoming "Santurce es Ley" street art festivals, which celebrate the thriving mural scene and stunning works in the area, approaching its eighth anniversary, where works are being created and unveiled live.



"Some areas of Puerto Rico are a true haven for mural art, yet we're not a destination typically visited for that," said Brad Dean, CEO of Discover Puerto Rico. "In addition to Santurce es Ley, our Island offers many options for travelers looking for rich arts and culture to be inspired – from our artisan's work, widely available throughout the Island, to museums and art galleries open year-round, and other art-focused events like the MECA Art Fair – our Island is a culture lovers' delight for anyone seeking to immerse themselves in authentic experiences and everything Puerto Rico has to offer."

"As artists, we believe in expression, and I hope that my fellow artists around the world see this opportunity to express themselves while being a force for good," said Alexis Bousquet, founder of Santurce es Ley. "We welcome them to our Island, to take part in our booming art scene and to explore a place that will surely capture their hearts."

Puerto Rico's existing art culture sets it apart from other Caribbean destinations. The unique blend of Taino Indian, African and Spanish heritages makes the art scene across the Island one-of-a-kind with a cultural DNA unlike any other. The Island has more than 70 museums and 50 art galleries that contain works ranging from ancient Indigenous and African, to Baroque and Victorian, and contemporary works of art.

As a lead up to the holiday season and the "Santurce es Ley" festivals, Puerto Rico hosts the annual MECA Art Fair from November 21 through 24 – the largest in the Caribbean, which brings together a variety of talent that ranges beyond traditional canvas works, to sculptures and beyond.

The modern-day art boom sits alongside the Island's distinguished and diverse architecture that dates to the 1500's, as the first settlement in the New World. Most notably, the city of Old San Juan, which houses the Spanish colonial settlement and various UNESCO World Heritage Sites, will be celebrating its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021, with celebrations and events beginning in 2020.

Beyond its arts scene and rich, historic culture, Puerto Rico is on a path towards a record-breaking year for tourism, with growing visitor arrivals and air lift globally. In addition to world-class beaches, the Island boasts an impressive variety of natural offerings including three of the world's five bioluminescent bays, the only rainforest in the U.S. forest system, El Yunque, and a standout farm-to-table movement, which has evolved into a variety of agritourism experiences for travelers to enjoy.



For global artists interested in joining the "Blank Canvas Initiative," Discover Puerto Rico welcomes them to contact [BlankCanvas@DiscoverPuertoRico.com](mailto:BlankCanvas@DiscoverPuertoRico.com). For more information about Puerto Rico, visit: [DiscoverPuertoRico.com](http://DiscoverPuertoRico.com).

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**About Discover Puerto Rico**

Discover Puerto Rico is a newly established private, not for-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) whose mission is to make Puerto Rico visible to the world as a premier travel destination. The DMO brings prosperity to the people of Puerto Rico by collaboratively promoting the Island's diversity and uniqueness for leisure and business travel, and events. It is responsible for all global marketing, sales and promotion of the destination and works collaboratively with key local governmental and non-governmental players throughout Puerto Rico's visitor economy and community at large, to empower economic growth. To discover all the beauty the Island has to offer, visit [DiscoverPuertoRico.com](http://DiscoverPuertoRico.com).