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# Finding some Common Ground

**JUSTIN LUSCHINSKI**  
STAFF REPORTER

## WEST END

A new mural on Sargent Avenue is meant to portray the diversity of the area in a unique way.

The West End BIZ unveiled Common Ground, a new mural, on Wed., Aug. 7, at the corner of Sargent Avenue and Young Street. The mural, designed by Antoinette Baquirian and Rachel Goossen, features a variety of animals that correspond to a community within the West End.

Goossen said she hopes the mural is inviting to new Canadians.

"We're hoping this can represent the diversity of the area. We want people to look at the mural and recognize themselves in one of the animals," Goossen said.

The mural is filled with references to the cultural groups who live in the West End. For example, a giraffe is meant to represent the African-Canadian community and a whale to represent the Australian community. The mural also has more obscure references, as the landscape is dotted with Syrian flowers and other plants, to show how the West End has become a haven for many new Winnipeg residents.

Baquirian and Goossen wanted to create a mural that represented the area in a more subtle way than other projects. They wanted a mural that was full of references and allusions to other cultures.

They landed on the idea of representing different countries with animals. After designing the mural on Photoshop, they got help from children in West End daycare and youth programs.

The mural location was donated by Unger Properties. It was made using panel boards, which were primed and attached to the side of the building, making for an easier surface to paint on.



Photo by Justin Luschinski

(From left) Antoinette Baquirian and Rachel Goossen show off a bison in their mural at the corner of Sargent Avenue and Young Street.

Baquirian said the diversity of the West End is under appreciated.

"It's nice that we got to represent that. People, whether that's people who live downtown or whatever, don't recognize that as much as I would like," Baquirian said. "We have so many new Canadians joining us, we should be happy that we have such open arms to (new Canadians.)"

The mural was created through the West End BIZ Mural Mentor Program, which has

resulted in over 100 murals for West End neighborhoods.

Baquirian and Goossen are moving on to the BIZ Shutter Art project. They will be painting several old signal boxes in the area, which should be unveiled later in August.

For more information, contact the West End BIZ at westendbiz.ca



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