



Photo by Ligia Braidotti

Justin Poirier and Patrick Allard partnered to beautify the North End.

Colour spot on Selkirk Avenue

BY LIGIA BRAIDOTTI
STAFF REPORTER

NORTH END

A local landlord and artist are bringing colour to Selkirk Avenue.

Patrick Allard owns the building at 693 Selkirk Ave. and recently met with Justin Poirier, a long-time spray paint artist who lives in the North End. Allard wanted to contribute to beautifying the community and Poirier used his talent to bring life to a street that's going through a significant revitalization over the last few years.

On the front of the building, Poirier, also known as Zedone, painted images that refer to two of the Seven Sacred Teachings, love and courage. The image of the mother bear and the cub represent courage, and an eagle and a feather represent love.

"Two little references from the Seven Sacred Teachings. Patrick messaged me and said he wanted some beautiful native artwork," said Poirier, who grew up learning the Seven Sacred Teachings. "He trusted my skills and let me go to town."

"We've been getting nothing but positive feedback. When I was painting, people were walking by, driving by, taking pictures, and they say 'this is amazing that you're painting.'"

Poirier is the artist who painted the

"Welcome to the North End" sign on a Salter Street building, across from the Slaw Rebchuk Bridge.

Allard said he is a landlord who cares and made it a goal to renovate rundown buildings in the North End and bring them back to something people would be proud to live in.

"I thought putting art like this in the building would tie the community together, bring positivity, peace, and togetherness," he continued. "One building at a time and we could make the North End a beautiful place again."

"Selkirk Avenue has all kinds of characters, and you'll have people at the lowest of the low, and as soon as they see the colours and the pictures, something ignites in them, and they're like, just for a brief five seconds, it wakes them up. I never thought it was going to be so positive and so uplifting."

A landlord who cares, he explained, is someone that takes the most run-down building on the block, tries to get it at a reasonable price and rejuvenates it.

Allard's initiative has already created a ripple effect. While Poirier was doing his art on the building, the next door neighbour started painting his house.

"Positive energy spreads. When you put a drug house, the next one ends up turning into a drug house, and then the next one, and the next one. We can get this to spread," Allard said.

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