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## Artists Splash Color On The West Hollywood Library

October 24, 2011 By [Rachel Shapiro](#) 1 Comment



The West Hollywood Library was filled with a spirit of creativity and inspiration, as artists and locals engaged in a fascinating discussion about art, passion and the importance of having a public place to learn and be creative. The artists whom recently splashed new colors on the library came to share their stories: David Wiseman, Shepard Fairey and RETNA.

Of the three artists, **David Wiseman** spoke first. David, who “pays homage to the organic” with his intriguingly unique style, designed the giant cascading coral trees in the Library’s sun-lit stairwell. His work includes nature-inspired installations like a lily of the valley project for a Dior store in Shanghai. David handcrafts the flowers, branches and natural elements in his work by welding them one-by-one in his studio along with the help of his team. He works with bronze, porcelain and glass depending on the one-of-a-kind project he envisions.

## Hot on the Wire



**Screenwriters Reunite**  
Screenwriters Gene Stupnitsky and Lee Eisenberg and director Jake Kasdan (makers of 'Bad Teacher') are re-teaming for an untitled

comedy at Sony. Here's the logline according to Deadline: "After a Supercuts manager advises his best friend to break off his engagement, he unexpectedly falls in love with the jilted fiancée, testing both his new romance and [...]"



**Township Kitchen Americana and Saloon – Restaurateur George Abou-Daoud Has Done It Again**  
A brand new restaurant is

blossoming on Sunset. Restaurateur George Abou-Daoud (owner of Bowery, Mercantile, Mission Cantina,



“It was a very intuitive process,” David says of the massive trees he created, that are now growing in the grand interior stairwell of the Library. His hope is that “the growth of the massive trees would grow and emerge through the walls and up toward the sunlight.”

To join in the conversation graffiti artist **RETNA (a.k.a Marquis Lewis)** followed up with his story. “Every wall poses challenges of their own...let the paint be the paint,” RETNA says of his remarkable work featured on the outside of the Library. His art is very “text-based,” influenced by all writings, languages and cultures; RETNA says, “My work often deals with pain or loss...on this piece I felt that I needed to write about something a little bit different.”

So he used this quote by **Salman Rushdie** to inspire his public mural:

Rosewood, and Delancey Restaurants) has now opened Township Kitchen Americana and Saloon. Township has a real emphasis on bourbons, U.S. whiskeys, rye, and corn whiskeys, playing to the Americana theme there are twelve lesser-seen, regional drafts, [...]



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**The Lux Of Life – Caviar and Cashmere**

Caviar and Cashmere, having launched as a lifestyle brand just this past June, carries many lifestyle products such as throws, blankets, robes, scarves, and travel sets. The brand was started by Caitlyn and Marilyn Chase. Caitlyn has a background as a fashion and luxury writer, and Marilyn is an interior designer. This mom and daughter [...]



*“Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit, where I hope to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart.”*



RETNA describes his process for the piece as *“free-styled, would be the best way to say it.”* He believes in creating the unconventional, and that is what he has done with his amazing addition of colors added to the Library. *“You don’t want to have a blank wall, when you can have a little bit of color,”* he says.

Last to share, but definitely not least, was world-renown artist **Shepard Fairey**. Shepard described how he has come full circle in his career. He started as a street artist and believes all art should be for the people. *“A library is an amazing public building, and I was happy to contribute to that.”*

Shepard contributed two separate murals to the Library. The first fills the glass-windowed City Council chambers entrance on the Auto-Court level of the Library with a remarkable collage of West Hollywood and what the city represents—providing a deeper contextual link between the library and the community it serves. Through both online and paper surveys, the community contributed to the mural by giving input on the images and iconic sites that Shepard depicted in the piece. Shepard went on to create a deeply dimensional “portrait” of West Hollywood that reflects both historical elements and values of the city—such as peace, tolerance and creativity. The mural is titled **Peace, Freedom and Creativity**.

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He also discusses tackling his largest canvas ever featured outside of the Library's parking garage. Now looking out over the streets of West Hollywood is a giant peace elephant. *"Peace is something I've been trying to promote since the Iraq War,"* Shepard says. When asked by a member of the audience, *"Why a giant elephant?"* He explains, *"It's safe,"* with a laugh. Shepard then jokes, *"it's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission,"* discusses how he has been through a few controversies, but will continue to try his best to be as politically and culturally aware as possible. Shepard gained international recognition for his 2008 Obama "Hope" poster and continues to be intrigued by politics. Shepard uses his creativity to inspire the people of West Hollywood, *"I do everything the best I possibly can."* He encourages members of the discussion to pursue their creative dreams, *"people who haven't considered remotely making money doing something creatively"* to go for it!

These three artists combined their passion, inspiration and collective talent to make the West Hollywood Library a more colorful place for all to go to appreciate, experience and learn. This quote by RETNA pretty much sums up the work of these three artists at the West Hollywood Library: *"I'm the person that designed it, but it's not for me...it's for the people to enjoy."*

*\*The West Hollywood Library Murals were made possible because they were sponsored by Vanity Fair, Cadillac, MOCA (The Museum of Contemporary Art L.A.) and the City of West Hollywood.*

**Written By: Rachel Shapiro**



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