



Anthony “Toons One” Martin Mural To Be First in Series of Destination Crenshaw Artworks to be Unveiled Throughout 2024

More Than a Dozen Commissioned Artworks to Roll Out Over the Coming Months Along the 1.3-Mile Corridor



(LOS ANGELES, CA | February 1, 2024) — Destination Crenshaw (DC) today announced that *Hey Young World*, a mural by Los Angeles artist Anthony “Toons One” Martin, will be the first commissioned artwork to be completed along the landmark project’s 1.3-mile length. Vibrantly colored and designed in a dynamic, collage-like composition, the mural will feature photorealistic images of the faces of Black children and the words *The world is yours!* rendered in graffiti-style lettering. Located at the corner of Crenshaw Boulevard and 57th Street, the mural will be celebrated this spring as the first of the project’s art unveilings that will continue over the course of the year in the largest Black public art project in the US.

Ongoing progress in realizing the DC artworks, all of which are slated to be installed by year's end, includes construction mobilization to reinforce the Crenshaw Wall and a viewing platform above it, key steps before a new mural by the RTN Crew goes up later in 2024. In addition to murals being underway, the construction of Sankofa Park, the project's northernmost public gathering place, where several of DC's monumental outdoor sculptures will be installed, is nearing completion.

As artworks are unveiled and construction takes shape, Destination Crenshaw continues to serve as an active resource for the Crenshaw community. In addition to its highly successful workforce development program, which offers Black workers robust training in the construction trades and support to obtain union membership, Destination Crenshaw is partnering with the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Street Lighting and Council District 8 to launch a new Crenshaw Community Connectivity program which will provide free wifi access to residents, businesses, and visitors to the Destination Crenshaw project area and help close the digital divide in the Crenshaw District. Destination Crenshaw continues to support local businesses through its DC Thrive Program and is developing a Collections C.A.R.E. (Conservation, Art Handling, Restorative Art Preservation, and Environmental Art Awareness & Education) program to conserve and maintain its public art while creating career pathways for people underrepresented in the field of art conservation.

"We are excited for Destination Crenshaw's commissioned artworks to start unfolding for the neighborhood to enjoy," said **Jason Foster, President and COO, Destination Crenshaw**. "*Hey Young World* is a wonderful piece that reflects the mission of Destination Crenshaw and is a result of our close collaboration with the owner of Dog Lover's pet grooming at 57th and Crenshaw. With each public art commission, our tailored approach allows us to create economic benefits for the existing businesses while realizing each work of public art. It's a fitting start to 2024 and Destination Crenshaw's more visible stamp on the Boulevard while we focus on establishing cultural tourism and career development programs to capitalize on the opportunities Destination Crenshaw will create for the Crenshaw District."

Los Angeles City Council President Pro Tempore Marqueece Harris-Dawson, who calls Destination Crenshaw a model for community *placekeeping*—not *placemaking*—added: "Crenshaw Boulevard has long been a prominent platform for showcasing Black culture, innovation, and creativity. As Destination Crenshaw takes center stage, it is fitting to take our time and introduce each aspect of this 1.3-mile project to the community, from the curated artwork to its narrative elements, allowing every detail its moment on the Crenshaw stage to shine."

Hey Young World is one of six major mural commissions by Destination Crenshaw, including new artwork for the renowned Crenshaw Wall, and nine permanently sited outdoor sculptures. Some of the artworks will be situated in newly constructed gathering spaces along the 1.3-mile-long project. Landscape architecture, wayfinding, and storytelling elements will further enliven the spaces and art. Ultimately, Destination Crenshaw will commission more than 100 temporary and permanent works by Black artists who have strong ties to Los Angeles. Locations have been secured for additional murals to be announced in the coming months, including murals for the recently reopened Dulan's on Crenshaw, a community landmark and soul food restaurant. "To be creating one of these very large scale pieces in a

neighborhood where I lived as a child is a great honor and privilege,” **Toons One** said. “Creativity is priceless—it’s irreplaceable in any society—so for me to be able to give back to a community that had a part in shaping the person I am today is truly a blessing!”

About the Artist

Toons One was born in Los Angeles and in the early 1980s he became immersed in hip-hop culture “writing” as a graffiti artist. His projects are eclectic, ranging from album cover illustration, automotive pinstriping/custom painting, graffiti and mural painting, skateboard graphics and sculpture, to furniture design and art direction. His style incorporates California street art, aesthetics from automobile customization, pop art and hip-hop. An in-demand teacher and mentor in the US and abroad, he has worked with the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Sacramento Unified School District, and taught in Berlin, Stuttgart and Mexico City. As a member of “Earth Crew 2000” he helped pioneer the flourishing graffiti scene in Mexico. Toons One has participated in and curated art exhibitions in the United States and Germany and continues to organize and participate in hip-hop jams, workshops, and live art events.

About Destination Crenshaw

Destination Crenshaw is a reparative development project that will be the largest Black public art project in the US. Ultimately, the project will commission more than 100 temporary and permanent works by Black artists who have strong ties to Los Angeles. Over time, works will rotate on and off local buildings and public spaces. The project is creating a pipeline of work for emerging, seasoned, and internationally renowned artists and has commissioned permanent works from artists such as Charles Dickson, Maren Hassinger, Alison Saar, and Kehinde Wiley. The project’s mission is nothing less than to place a cultural stamp of Blackness on Crenshaw Boulevard—a stamp akin to other ethnic enclaves in Los Angeles such as Chinatown, Mariachi Plaza, and Little Tokyo. Destination Crenshaw also provides support and financial and technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs in the neighborhood. It functions as both a physically beautifying presence and a strategic economic partner for South LA.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Lisa Richardson, RISE Communications
lisa@riseprfirm.com | (323) 447-2421

Anna Gross, Polskin Arts
anna.gross@finnpartners.com | (989) 751-1748

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Aerial view of Destination Crenshaw's Sankofa Park, rendering by Perkins&Will, courtesy of Destination Crenshaw