

# Tag Free Kiwi

## Years 9–10

## Focus area 4

This section of the **Tag Free Kiwi** programme contains one of the following focus areas for students at years 9–10 (ages 13–14):

1. A history of expression
2. Graffiti – what does the word mean?
3. Consequences of graffiti vandalism
4. **Is it art?**
5. Making a difference
6. Pride in your community
7. Being creative

## Focus area 4: Is it art?

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## Focus area 4: Is it art?

### Notes for the teacher

Janine Williams, also known as Lady Diva, has four children, has been painting graffiti for 11 years and went legal in 2000. She has a keen interest in urban art, interior design and calligraphy. With her husband she owns a business, doing freelance design for urban art murals, clothing, and design for products. She has put together an education programme incorporating murals and art to direct energy into positive initiatives.

Charles Williams, also known as Phat 1, started as a tagger at 11, moved to graffiti art at around 15, and became a legal artist in 2000.

Both are members of TMD (The Most Dedicated), a crew/collection of artists ranging from urban artists, photographers, fine artists and scientists. They are also members of other internationally known crews. The team have held numerous gallery shows, exhibitions and live painting events throughout New Zealand, Australia and Europe. In 2006 and 2008 TMD won the world Write 4 Gold Graffiti Art Championship, held in Germany.

### Definition

**Urban Art:** Colourful, complex and skilful designs, often murals, that are commissioned or done with permission for community enhancement or beautification, in either urban art or traditional pictorial style.

### Curriculum links

**Key Competencies:** Thinking; Relating to others; Participating and contributing

**Learning areas:** The Arts; English

### Resources

Photopack: **Urban Art** (available from your School Community Officer)

DVD with interviews with the urban artists Lady Diva and Phat 1 (available from your School Community Officer)

### Learning outcomes

At the end of this learning experience students will be able to:

- define urban art
- list the differences between graffiti vandalism and urban art.

# Learning experience 1: Urban art

## Activities

### 1. What is urban art?

Invite students to discuss in pairs what they think 'urban art' means.

Ask some students to share their ideas.

#### Either

Show the photopack **Urban Art**. Afterwards:

- Ask: Does this urban art make the area look better or worse?
- How much skill do you think a person needs to produce urban art like this?
- Where is this urban art usually done?
- Do you think the artists get permission? Why, or why not?
- How do you think the community feels about this urban art? Why do you think this?
- How long do you think these pieces of art will last?
- What do you think of urban art?

#### Or

Divide students into groups. Circulate the photos around the groups. For each photo the group makes a decision on the following questions:

- Does the urban art make the area look better or worse?
- How do you think the people who work, live or play in this area feel about the art?
- Do you think it was done with permission? Why do you think this?
- How long do you think this art will last? Give a reason for your answer.

Students could view other examples of urban art on Resene Paints' website at [www.resene.co.nz/murals.htm](http://www.resene.co.nz/murals.htm). The page showcases winners of the Mural Masterpieces competition run by the company.

### 2. Interviews with urban artists

Preview both interviews to decide if this resource is suitable for your school and which interview will work best with your class.

Play the interview with Lady Diva.

- Ask: What do you think of Lady Diva's piece?
- Why do you think there is no tagging on it?
- What messages was Lady Diva giving to people like you?
- What is one important thing you learnt from Lady Diva?
- What questions would you like to ask Lady Diva?

Play interview with Phat 1.

- Ask: What do you think of Phat 1's piece?
- What things led him to become an urban artist?

What messages was he giving to people like you?  
What is one important thing you learnt from Phat 1?  
What questions would you like to ask Phat 1?

Students record in their books the main differences that they see between graffiti vandalism and urban art. This could include things such as the comparisons in the table below.

<b>Graffiti vandalism</b>	<b>Urban art</b>
Illegal	Legal
Low level of skill	Requires a high level of artistic skill
No permission	Permission
Spoils the environment	Beautifies the environment
Is quickly removed	Stays for a long period of time
No payment for doing it	May be done on commission

## Homework activity

Each student either writes a letter or an email to send to Lady Diva or Phat 1, telling them what they have learnt about urban art.

## Assessment

Check students' understanding of the differences between urban art and graffiti vandalism by viewing their charts and reading their messages to Lady Diva or Phat 1.