

## Californian artist plans on painting future Tyre Nichols mural

By Kathryn Eftink



Tyre Nichols, 29, had a passion for photography, skateboarding, sunsets and family .

Photo from WEB

After [Tyre Nichols](#) was brutally murdered by the Memphis Police Department, Californian artist [Lourans Mikhail](#) prepares to visit Memphis and paint a mural in remembrance in the next few weeks on a wall at [Juice Orange Mound](#).



Located at 2363 Park Avenue, JUICE Orange Mound is a nonprofit founded by the Orange Mound community. Four times a year the organization travels door to door collecting spare change that funds community projects.

by Kathryn Eftink

Mikhail is an Assyrian refugee and U.S. Marine veteran who uses art to confront issues within society. He works as a muralist, sculptor, painter and graphic designer.

“Public art should speak about what's going on in our times,” Mikhail said.

Since Jan. 1, 2015, police killed 15 white people per 1 million and 38 Black people per 1 million according to The Washington Post’s database. On the [2022 Police Violence Report](#) more people were killed in 2022 by police than any other year, and like Tyre Nichols, 100 people killed by police were unarmed last year.

Through his art, Mikhail aims to force viewers to experience different narratives and to encourage change in society.

“We didn’t learn anything from 2020 and its 2023 now,” he said. “Hopefully something comes from it.”

Mikhail painted murals the past three years for [PaintMemphis](#). In December 2020, he created a mural, “Perception is Reality.” He said that it’s a play on 2020 vision and an eye chart illustrating how much further there is to go with achieving equality.



Located at 845 Main Street, "Perception is Reality," by Laurans Mikhail was created with brushes and spray paint. The eye chart says, "My Skin Color is Not A Threat To Anyone Or Anything Enough Is Enoughhhh!!!"

by Kathryn Eftink

“It’s been emotional for me to think about what happens,” he said.

Founder of Paint Memphis Karen B. Golightly has directed this project since its launch in 2015. She highlights why she and Mikhail said that a Tyre Nichols mural matters for the city.

“He just really felt like this is something that is making national news, and we really need to address Tyre’s case and the systematic issues of racism in police and across our country,” Golightly said.

Paint Memphis is a one-day festival in October where local and regional artists collaborate to embellish the city with art. It’s a community event, and all the murals the organization has produced, put together, would end up covering 30 to 35,000 square feet.



Located at 832 S Willett Street, Paint Memphis 2017 brightens dark underpass with bright murals.

by Kathryn Eftink

“Every year, it’s around 40-50,000 square feet of mural space,” Golightly said. “Last year, we were in the Broad Avenue Arts District. So, if you go up and down Hollywood and Broad and Scott, you will see the murals we did.”

A date for the mural has not been set.

