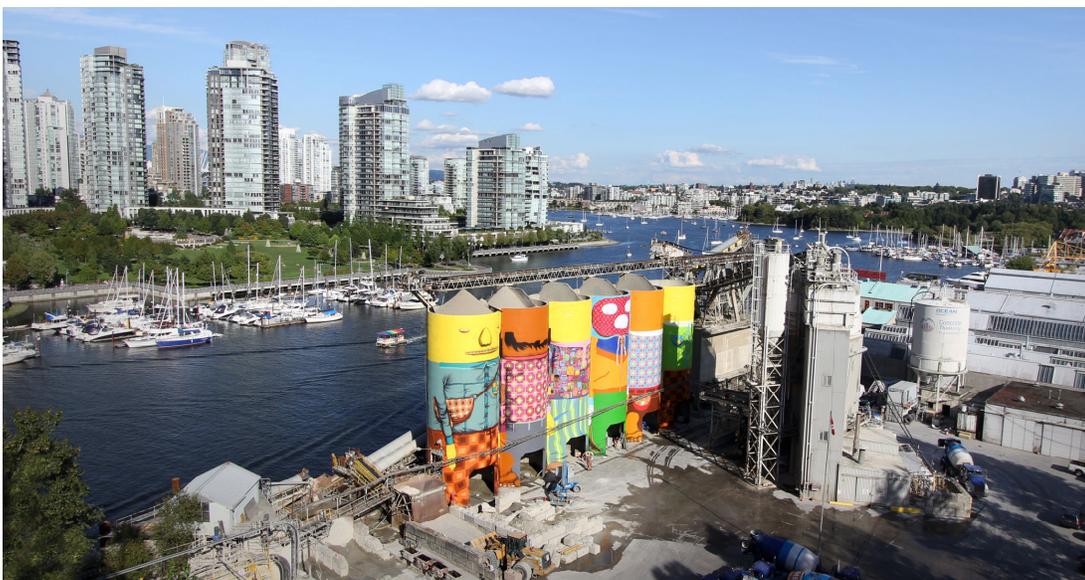


Giants Os Gemeos (São Paulo, Brazil)

“it is necessary...embark on an experience that exceeds the visual: to feel first and to understand later.”
– Os Gemeos

WHO MADE THIS ART INSTALLATION?

Identical twins Otavio and Gustavo, together, are the graffiti duo Os Gemeos (translated as “THETWINS” in Portuguese). Since the age of three they have been drawing, creatively telling stories through images, imaginatively blending reality and fantasy. Today they have become a major force in graffiti and urban art in Brazil, and have gained international attention, exhibiting and creating works worldwide. Graffiti and hip hop culture captivated the twins and their peers in Sao Paolo in the mid 1980s, and it was through hip hop and American images and films that the twins began to experiment with graffiti style painting. Using any kind of paint they could think of, including car paint, latex, and experimenting with spray nozzles, they tried unconventional approaches to their graffiti art as there was no access to the spray paints or graffiti painting equipment in their early years. This led them to develop their own urban art style.



limbs and boldly colored clothing.

Their style has grown into one that is immediately recognizable when one sees their work on trains, walls, and in urban spaces. Their world is one of yellow human figures, inspired by the yellow-tinged skin the twins have had in their dreams, and their characters often feature rounded faces and bodies with elongated

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They are musicians, artists, children, and whimsical characters from an imaginative realm the twins have pictured since childhood. Humor and fantasy elevate the everyday scenes and characters they paint, and their work serves as a window for viewers into a parallel universe inspired by our own but expressed through the imaginative world view of Os Gemeos. They want their work to attract the eyes and spark the imaginations of the public, especially those who may not have the opportunity to visit galleries or art museums.

Their work is most often narrative, representing stories from the world around them. Whether they create paintings of urban youth tagging and painting, political ideas or the carnivals, music, and folk art of rural Brazil, life inspires fantastical scenes, processions and characters in their always bold and colorful art style. Today their work can be seen on trains and buildings in Brazil, and on urban walls throughout Berlin, Lisbon, New York, Moscow, Athens, Krakow. They were also asked to paint the airplane for the 2014 Brazilian World Cup soccer team, and have been featured in group and solo exhibitions in galleries and museums around the world.



WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS ART INSTALLATION?

While they twins do create work for exhibition indoors in gallery spaces, their outdoor urban art is an intentional dialogue with each person passing and directly or indirectly interacting with the



painting in its urban setting surrounded by the architecture and forms of the city. The grey silos of this chosen site for their Biennale installation draw attention to the often



underappreciated industrial area along the shore of Granville Island, offering the viewer an entirely new way to experience these massive buildings. The brothers chose the silos in order to create a work that would not be flat like their past works, but would follow the curve of the silos giving each character in this edition of the Giants series an

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almost sculptural element, in keeping with the sculptural focus of the Vancouver Biennale. It is a work that is both two and three dimensional.

HOW DOES THIS PIECE OF ART CONNECT TO THE ARTIST'S PREVIOUS WORK?



Os Gemeos' urban works often conform to the form of the buildings chosen for each work. Through their style, the brothers offer surprising new ways to experience urban architecture, interrupting the grey of an industrial building with imaginative color and characters. The *Giants* mural here in Vancouver connects with an ongoing *Giants* series they have created around the world, including sites in Greece, USA, Poland, Portugal, the Netherlands, Brazil and England. The Giant of Boston is an example of a previous work in this series featuring a yellow character whose body echos the lines of the building it is painted on. In this new work in Vancouver, the

archways and cylinders of each silo offer a perfect base for the forms of six Os Gemeos giants, each boldly colored in Pantone colors, their kneeling legs framing each doorway. The work begs for the public's active engagement, inviting the viewer to walk around the building to see it from all angles, taking in the giants from both front and back, surveying the city on all sides.



THOUGHTS ON GRAFFITI AND STREET ART

"Graffiti is a language as well, though not everyone can understand it. Streets speak. When the whole world has gone to sleep and everyone is quiet, the tags remain there, and the throw-ups remain there, and if you see them, they speak to you. Graffiti is like a key which opens the city's doors to you. If you grab the key, you have a way of controlling the city, if not, the city controls you.

That's what is great about graffiti, you choose what you want to do and where you want to do it, you leave something on the street. Some will like it, others won't, but you decided to put it there, and someone will see it. What has always fascinated us about graffiti is this total freedom on one hand. And on the other hand is the concept of respect, within that liberty the feeling of respect is so important, and it's a fundamental value which you have

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to understand if you paint. For example, we never step on other people's toes, we never cross out work...we believe that there is space for everyone on the street, you just have to search for it. " – Os Gemeos

HOW WAS THIS ART INSTALLATION MADE/INSTALLED?

Over the month of August, 2014, the mural was made. It measures 23-metre tall (75 ft) and 7,000 square meters of painting and is the biggest public mural of their career and their first in Canada. *Giants* is painted in 360 degrees on all sides of six gigantic silos that are part of the Ocean Cement manufacturing and distribution plant on Vancouver's Granville Island, an island that thrives with students to Emily Carr University of Art and Design, artist studios, the popular public market, and is beloved by tourists and locals alike. Overlooking the island, False Creek and downtown Vancouver, it brings a surprising and playful interruption to the grey and glass of the surrounding cityscape. An Indigogo campaign invited residents of Vancouver to get involved, supporting the project and even helping to paint the undercoats of the giants, with the twins spray painting layers and details in their style to bring each figure to life. In this way, the work is truly a public work—funded and created with help from the community, created for the community by artists who are passionate about creating work for the public and inspiring a visual conversation with the city, architecture and art.



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Artist Website: <http://www.osgemeos.com.br/>

Photo Credits :

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