

RETNA

RETNA, born Marquis Lewis (b. 1979, Los Angeles) is a prominent name in the worlds of graffiti and street art. A self-taught graffiti artist working since his teenage years, his work spans creative spaces. Since featuring in the exhibition *Art in the Streets* at MOCA in Los Angeles in 2011, RETNA has been a key figure pushing art historical boundaries and questioning categories, blurring the lines between street art, graffiti and fine art.



Employing spraypaint and brushwork, he combines fluid, expressive strokes and dripwork, with angular motifs into strikingly ordered compositions whether bold, monumental murals commissioned by various public institutions and private figures in exterior city settings, or sculptures and paintings in curated formal galleries and museums.

RETNA's work explores themes of multiculturalism, hybridity and spiritualism with his African-American, Spanish, Cherokee and Pipil identity and heritage often serving as inspiration. His visual language montages texts, alphabets, symbols and typographic styles such as Blackletter, Old English, Roman calligraphy, Arabic, Hebrew and Egyptian hieroglyphs. The result is a linguistically illegible script that whilst refusing literal and direct translation, offers a poetic, emotive vision that is up for personal interpretation. Through

disrupting language, one of the most significant modes of cultural communication sustaining society, RETNA masterfully creates a new, mysterious and beautiful visual language that brings diverse communities closer together:

“we're...all one people. We just all grew up in different places...”

Music is an important part of RETNA's artistry. Indeed, his linear style is rhythmic, the name 'RETNA' comes from a Wu-Tang-Clan song, his work features on the cover art for Justin Bieber's 2016 album *Purpose*, and many of his visual motifs appear like the language of musical notation. RETNA's works are clearly multidisciplinary as well as multisensory; he frequently incorporates ambient soundscapes into his creative process and subsequent displays, making for highly engaging, refreshing viewing experiences.

RETNA exhibits globally in cities such as London, Los Angeles, Miami and New York and features in prominent collections such as Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles. RETNA collaborates with luxury designers from Louis Vuitton to Chanel and Nike and is collected by high-profile individuals such as Jeffrey Deitch and Steve Aoki.

RETNA CV

RETNA, born Marquis Lewis b. 1979, Los Angeles

Solo Exhibitions:

- 2025 *RETNA: LOVE LETTER / CARTA de AMOR*, Madison Gallery, California, USA
- 2025 *Rewriting Los Angeles Through Art and Fire: RETNA*, The Core Art Gallery, California, USA
- 2025 *Letter to Myself | Carta a Mi Mismo*, Art Life, Miami, USA
- 2025 *Urban Art Showcase Auction #16231*, Heritage Auctions, Dallas, USA
- 2025 *Retna: Carta A Mi Mismo*, ArtLife Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2025 *SEQUENCE OF SENTENCES*, The Core Art Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2025 *Silence Decoded*, Mash Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2023 *RETNA | Appetite for Destruction*, Burgess Modern and Contemporary, Fort Lauderdale, USA
- 2023 *RETNA | Pardon Me*, Alchemy Gallery, New York, USA
- 2023 *Beyond the Streets*, Saatchi Gallery, London, UK
- 2021 *RETNA | HALLELUJAH PAINTINGS*, Chase Contemporary, New York, USA
- 2020 *RETNA 'Valle de Guadalupe' Solo Show*, HOFA Gallery, London, UK
- 2019 *Retna*, Patrick Painter, Inc., California, USA
- 2018 *LA CUENTA LARGA*, MAIA Contemporary, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2017 *Hall of Nations*, The Kennedy Center, Washington DC, USA
- 2017 *Museum of Contemporary Art*, Oaxaca, Mexico
- 2017 *Dubai Street Museum, Mural in the City*, Dubai, UAE
- 2017 *MARGRAVES*, Maddox Gallery, London, UK
- 2017 *Retna: Mano A Mano*, New Image Art, Los Angeles, USA
- 2017 *Afrikicks Benefit*, RETNA's Studio, Los Angeles, USA
- 2016 *RETNA, Speakeasy*, Casterline Goodman Gallery, Aspen, USA
- 2016 *Retna: New Works*, Madison Gallery, California, USA
- 2015 *RETNA | "Articulate & Harmonic Symphonies of the Soul"*, HG Contemporary, New York, USA
- 2015 *Articulate and Harmonic Symphonies of the Soul*, HG Gallery, New York, USA
- 2015 *Murals in the City*, Copenhagen, Denmark

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- 2013 *RETNA: Para Mi Gente*, Solo Mural in conjunction with Urs Fischer Exhibition, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles, USA
- 2013 Mural, Petty Cash Restaurant, Los Angeles, USA
- 2012 *A Conversation With A Great Friend*, Houston/Bowery Wall, New York, USA
- 2012 Facade of Louis Vuitton Store, Mural, Miami, USA
- 2011 *Brimstone*, Mural, Wynwood District, Miami, USA
- 2010 *Silver Lining*, Solo Exhibition, Art Basel Miami, Primary Flight Gallery, Miami, USA
- 2010 *DESATURATED*, New Image Art Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2010 *RETNA*, Rivera & Rivera Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2007 *Dialect of the Scribes*, UpperPlayGround, San Francisco, USA
- 2006 *Day of the Dead*, Mendenhall Sobieski Gallery, Pasadena, USA
- 2006 *Casa De Tinta Negra*, 222gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2006 *Wall Street Journals*, White Walls Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2005 *Read the Writing on our Walls*, Installation, Greystone, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, USA
- 2005 *Identity and Inspiration*, Millard Sheets Gallery, Pomona, USA
- 2005 *Promise Land*, Nike Exhibit, Union Station, Los Angeles, USA
- 2005 *Urban Edge Show*, Milan, Italy
- 2004 *Application*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Australia
- 2004 *Incognito*, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, USA
- 2003 *Still Alive*, Subject Matter Gallery, Costa Mesa, USA
- 2003 *INRI*, Subject Matter Gallery, Costa Mesa, USA
- 2003 *Street Dream*, Ghetto Gloss Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2002 *Abstract Reality*, I.C.U Art. Los Angeles, USA
- 2001 *El Bago De La Calle*, Zero One Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2000 *Graffiti Art: The Auction*, Guernsey's, New York, USA
- 2000 *Contemporary Corruption II*, Zero One Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2000 *Sarcastic*, Installation, Tokyo, Japan
- 1999 *East Meets West*, Martinez Gallery, New York, USA
- 1999 *Contemporary Corruption*, Zero One Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 1997 *DADA*, Installation, Los Angeles, USA

Group Exhibitions:

- 2025 *The Core at the Ritz*, The Core Art Gallery, Paris, France
- 2025 *UNSPOKEN EMERGENCE*, Mash Gallery x Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, USA
- 2025 *Rare and Collectible Artist Books*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *Urban and Street Themed Art*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *Select prints and multiples from the Alpha 137 Gallery Collection*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *Artist Designed Plates, Skates, Merchandise and Design Objects*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *Works by Black Artists*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *ART Miami 2025 Selection*, Dorian Grey Projects, New York, USA
- 2025 *Art with Text*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *Memories Of The Underground*, MAIA Contemporary, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2025 *Blue Dimensions: Collecting by Color*, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA
- 2025 *"Decked Out" — A Limited Edition Skateboard Art Show*, Signari Gallery, California, USA
- 2025 *Shadows and light: The art of contrast*, Mash Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2025 *Electric Visions*, Mash Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2024 *Concrete to Canvas | Featuring Joe Iurato*, West Chelsea Contemporary, Austin, USA
- 2024 *30 Years of New Image Art*, New Image Art Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2023 *Colours From The Streets*, Woodbury House, London, UK
- 2023 *Street Life*, Maddox Gallery, London, UK
- 2023 *ON VIEW: SUMMER SELECTS*, Mimesis Projects, Los Angeles, USA
- 2023 *Stencils, Shadows & Strokes: Urban Art Unleashed*, Woodbury House, London, UK
- 2023 *Masters, Universally Unknown*, Los Angeles, USA
- 2022 *A Simple Mark*, Maddox Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2022 *Concrete to Canvas*, West Chelsea Contemporary, Austin, USA
- 2022 *ADORNMENT | ARTIFACT*, Eastern Projects, Los Angeles, USA
- 2022 *Gallery Art Winter 2022 Exhibition*, Gallery Art, Florida, USA
- 2022 *Street Art EVOLVED: KAWS, Hebru Brantley, Matt Gondek, Jerkface & More*, CuratedBySey, New York, USA

- 2022 *ALPHABET SOUP II: BIG SLEEPS, CHAZ BOJORQUEZ, CRYPTIK, DEFER, PRIME, RETNA*, Eastern Projects, Los Angeles, USA
- 2022 *Keith Haring to Banksy: The Skateboard Sale*, EARLH, Washington, USA /Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2021 *Summer Exhibition Gruppenausstellung*, Bakerhouse Gallery, Graz, Austria
- 2021 *Autumn Contemporary*, Maddox Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2020 *Spring Contemporary*, Maddox Gallery, Gstaad, Switzerland
- 2020 *Winter Contemporary*, Maddox Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2020 *Five*, Maddox Gallery, London, UK
- 2019 *Celebrating Twenty Years: A Multi-media Group Exhibition*, Laura Rathe Fine Art, Houston, USA
- 2017 *LA/LA/LA*, Robert Berman Gallery, California, USA
- 2016 *Roll Call*, L.A. Louver Galleries, Los Angeles, USA
- 2016 *Urban Dawn II*, McCaig-Welles Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2016 *Set Designs for AIDA*, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, USA (& The Kennedy Center, Washington D.C, USA, 2017, Seattle Opera, Seattle, USA, 2018, Minnesota Opera, Minneapolis, 2019)
- 2016 *Between The Lines*, The Mine, Al Quoz, Dubai, UAE
- 2016 *The Future of The Past: Mummies & Medicine Legion of Honor*, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, USA
- 2015 *Coney Art Walls*, Jeffrey Deitch, New York, USA
- 2012 *New Paintings and Works on Paper*, Michael Kohn Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2012 *The Boneyard Project: Return Trip*, Pima Art and Space Museum, Tucson, USA
- 2011 *Art in The Streets*, Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles, USA
- 2011 *The Hallelujah World Tour*, presented by Andy Valmorbida & Vladimir Restoin Roitfeld, New York & London
- 2011 *Ward of the State: Tony Ward Artists Muse*, curated by Robert Standish, Stephen Cohen Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2011 *Nose Job*, curated by Carlo McCormick, Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton, USA
- 2010 *The Lost Ones*, curated by Marsea Golberg, New Image Art Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2010 *Vox Humana*, L.A. Art Machine, L.A. Art Show, Los Angeles, USA

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GALLERY

- 2010 *Of Our Youth*, with El Mac, Mural, California, USA
- 2010 Skid Row Mural, with El Mac and Estevan Oriol, Los Angeles Skid Row, Los Angeles, USA
- 2010 Hollywood & Wilton, with El Mac, Mural, Los Angeles, USA
- 2010 *JUSTICE*, for Manifest Equality, with El Mac and Kofie, Los Angeles, USA
- 2009 *Vagos Y Reinas*, with El Mac, Robert Berman Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2009 *Follow the Line*, The Don Gallery, Milan, Italy
- 2009 RCVA Headquarters, with El Mac, Mural, California, USA
- 2009 *Memento Mori*, with El Mac, Mural, Los Angeles, USA
- 2009 *The Knight*, with El Mac, Mural, Los Angeles, USA
- 2009 *Primary Flight III*, Mural, Margulies Warehouse, Miami, USA
- 2008 *Primary Flight II*, Mural, Miami, USA
- 2008 *Writing alla Ribalta*, Mural, Milan, Italy
- 2008 *Low & Slow*, Mesa Contemporary Arts, Mesa, Arizona, USA
- 2008 *Angeles Will Rise, The Seventh Letter Crew*, Robert Berman Gallery, Santa Monica, USA
- 2007 *Letters First '07, Bread & Butter, The Seventh Letter Crew*, Barcelona, Spain
- 2007 *From LA With Love*, curated by Art Don't Sleep, Interior Installation, A+D Museum, Los Angeles, USA
- 2007 *All writes Reserved*, PowerHouse Arena, Brooklyn, USA
- 2006 *Iron Eye*, Group Show, Scion Gallery, Culver City, USA
- 2006 *Superiority Complex, The Seventh Letter Crew*, Group Show, Scion Gallery, Culver City, USA
- 2005 *Emerging From Aztlan*, Group Show, The dA Center for the Arts, Pomona, USA
- 2005 Iron Eye Gallery, Group Show, Los Angeles, USA

Art Fairs:

- 2025 New River Fine Art at Hamptons Fine Art Fair 2025, New River Fine Art (Fort Lauderdale, USA)
- 2024 Dorian Grey Projects at Art Miami 2024, Dorian Grey Projects (New York, USA)
- 2024 Burgess Modern and Contemporary at Art Miami 2024, Burgess Modern and Contemporary (Fort Lauderdale, USA)

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- 2024 Dorian Grey Projects at Hamptons Fine Art Fair 2024, Dorian Grey Projects (New York, USA)
- 2023 Burgess Modern and Contemporary at Art Miami 2023, Burgess Modern and Contemporary (Fort Lauderdale, USA)
- 2022 Burgess Modern and Contemporary at Art Miami - 2022, Burgess Modern and Contemporary (Fort Lauderdale, USA)
- 2022 HOFA Gallery (House of Fine Art) at Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary 2022, HOFA Gallery (House of Fine Art, London, UK)
- 2022 Vertu Fine Art at Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary 2022, Vertu Fine Art (Boca Raton, USA)
- 2022 Burgess Modern and Contemporary at Palm Beach Modern + Contemporary 2022, Burgess Modern and Contemporary (Fort Lauderdale, USA)
- 2013 Michael Kohn Gallery, Art Basel Miami Beach (Miami, USA)
- 2013 *Keith Haring / RETNA*, Art Basel Hong Kong (Hong Kong, China)

Prominent Collections:

Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Los Angeles
Pasadena Museum of California Art
Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)
Louis Vuitton
Chanel
Nike
Restoration Hardware
Vista Jets

Notable Private Collectors:

Jeffrey Deitch (curator and former MOCA director)
Usher (musician)
Dave Chappelle (comedian)
Justin Bieber (musician)
Steve Aoki (musician)

Publications:

- 2015 W Magazine (June/July)
- 2014 Architectural Digest: cover
- 2014 Language Arts, C California Style Magazine
- 2013 Los Angeles Confidential: *7 LA Artists to Watch*,
- 2013 Fresco Magazine: cover and feature
- 2012 Huffington Post, *RETNA Paints The Bowery Graffiti Wall, Replacing Faile*
- 2012 Juxtapoz Magazine: *Retna Mural on Bowery & Houston, NYC*
- 2011 LA Times: *Art in the Streets sets record for MOCA*
- 2011 LA Times: *Street Artists Brighten West Hollywood Library*
- 2011 Black Book: *Graffiti Artist Retna's World of Words*
- 2011 The Daily Beast: *A Street Artist's Fashion Week Debut*
- 2011 The Economist: *The Q & A: RETNA*
- 2011 Arrested Motion: *Installation/Set-up – Hallelujah World Tour*
- 2011 Miami Herald: *Wingspan by Retna and El Mac*
- 2011 LA Times: *Man One and Retna at Fowler Museum*
- 2010 Miami New Times: *Best Public Art of 2010*
- 2009 Miami Herald: *Graffiti Artists Make Their Art Basel Mark*
- 2009 Biscayne Times: *Winners & Losers*
- 2009 944 Magazine: *Primary Flight*
- 2009 Alianza: *RETNA & MAC, Upper Playground / Ginko Press*
- 2009 Indiepreneur Issue: *Status (US) issue 06*
- 2008 United Kingdom: *Mynameis*
- 2008 Angeleno Magazine: *The Radar Art*
- 2008 Bliss: cover / feature
- 2008 LA Times: *On These Gallery Walls Graffiti*
- 2008 Swindle Magazine: *Tarot*
- 2008 Publikat (Greece): *Mural Art, Kiriakos Iosifidis*
- 2007 Book, by Steve Grody: *Graffiti LA: Street Styles and Art*
- 2007 LA Weekly: *The Rise of the Seventh Letter*
- 2007 Juxtapoz Magazine: *The Seventh Letter Issue*
- 2007 LA Times: *Streetwise*
- 2007 Catch Me if You Can Magazine: Feature
- 2006 California Homes: *Greystone Home Collection*
- 2006 California Home + Design: *Inner City Arts*
- 2006 Rime Magazine: *Freestyle*
- 2005 Warp Magazine (Japan): *RETNA*
- 2003 Lit Magazine: *Dialect of the Scribes*

Selected Works:



RETNA

Ice Cream, 2025

Acrylic and enamel with diamond dust
on canvas,

72 x 59 7/8 in,

183 x 152 cm



RETNA

Gold Standard Classics, 2025

Acrylic and liquid gold on canvas,

72 x 72 in

183 x 183 cm