

BEST ARTIST

1. **Ila Rose** facebook.com/ilaroseart
2. **Shanna Trumbly** trumblydesigns.com.
3. **Max Von Kaspar**

BEST MURAL

1. **Woman with Snakes, Ila Rose** *Elevation Builder Gym at 348 W. 3rd Ave.*
2. **Tiger and Dragon, Hua Tunan** *Vistra Framing and Gallery, 411 W. 4th St.*
3. **Bee of Wildcraft, Steven Lopez** *WildCraft Cider Works, 254 Lincoln St.*

Her newest creation of art, a show-stopping piece covering the walls of another building in Eugene, has clearly captured the attention of many, as **Ila Rose** — a Eugene native and lifelong painter — is not only the winner of this year's Best Mural, but is crowned Best Artist as well.

"There was never a starting point for art for me, it's just always been what I do," Rose says.

The winning mural dignifies the north and east walls of the Elevation Builder Gym at 348 W. 3rd Avenue and features a two-faced head of a woman with snakes in her hair. The mural is centered on the corner connecting both walls, and the geometric patterns in the green and yellow backdrop create a perfect contrast to focus in on the detail of the woman looking out onto the two. At the second glance, you see a young girl reaching out to greet the woman.

"Essentially, it's about how children face obstacles with more of an openness and curiosity than adults," Rose says. "This child is facing what an adult might see as a beast, but the child is looking and examining differently, pondering what lessons can be learned rather than seeing it as something scary to avoid."

Rose's mural is part of the 20x21Eug Mural Project, a city initiative to create 20 or more world-class outdoor murals in Eugene between now and the 2021 IAAF World Championships. She reached out to the project committee about their inclusion of local artists in the project; they gave her a wall and she came up with the design in only a week.

"Murals are an awesome way to make a public statement and engage with the world around us," Rose says. "I wanted to paint one as a way to engage with my local community and just connect with the people in Eugene."

Rose says this mural was in part a response to her first public mural that paints another wall in Eugene, at 5th Alley and Blair Boulevard, that she did as a commission for the Whiteaker Community Art Team a few years back. "Imagery in this mural was born from shifting around images and thoughts from my other mural," she says.

The project brought in artists from around the world, and Rose says at times she felt she had less technical skill than some. But, she says, the support she received as a member of the community kept her going. "There is so much support for local artists in Eugene, and that really helped me feel like I could be successful," Rose explains. "I've always had my whole town behind me, and that is really cool."

What's in Rose's future? "Finding something with a salary," she laughs. She is considering going to graduate school and getting a degree to teach art in an educational setting. "Whatever I do, I'll always be creating art."

The remarkable second-place mural — an intricate, deep-red wall featuring a battle between tigers and a black dragon — was created by Chinese artist **Hua Tunan**. The mural is powerful, displaying the result of a focused combination of traditional Chinese art and the act of graffiti. The action-filled, detailed creation can be found on the west wall of Vistra Framing and Gallery, at 411 W. 4th Street.

Steven Lopez, the artist behind the third-place mural, works and lives in Los Angeles but graduated with a degree in fine arts from the University of Oregon. His mural is vibrant in color and grand in character — a dynamic bee stands out among a geometric honeycomb, creating an extravagant scene with a subtle environmental message about the importance of wildlife in our world. The bright, elaborate mural can be seen on west side of WildCraft Cider Works' warehouse at 254 Lincoln Street. — *Morgan Theophil*



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