

RETNA

Biography

Los Angeles-based artist RETNA accesses spaces between text-based imagery and abstract emotive states with his mysterious lines of verse. Each block of text is a sophisticated system of hieroglyphs, calligraphy and illuminated script. With influences from Arabic, Egyptian, Hebrew, Anglo-Saxon (or Old English) and Native American typographies, RETNA's distinctive language communicates a personal form of poetry. RETNA's messages are masked in ciphers: words and meanings that are never immediately revealed, nor capable of being accurately translated. He employs ancient totemic symbologies as a baseline, overlaid with beats from the urban jungle (sourced from his background in Los Angeles, born from Pipil - western indigenous El Salvadorian - Cherokee, Spaniard, and African-American bloodlines. These diverse subcultures are channeled into his work, often accompanied (either in the studio or on the street) by a stream of ambient or musical sounds. It is this multi-sensory experience that is brushed onto the surface for RETNA: a synthesis of auditory and visual content, spontaneously manifested.

RETNA (Marquis Duriel Lewis) was born in 1979 in Los Angeles. At the age of fifteen, he began painting on posted fashion advertisements and, from there, led one of the largest and most innovative graffiti art collectives in the city. In addition to exhibiting at institutions and galleries in Los Angeles (including the façade of The Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art's Grand Avenue location for their 2013 Gala celebrating the blockbuster exhibition *Art In The Streets*), Miami, London, New York (including the prestigious public exhibition space of the Houston-Bowery Wall), and Hong Kong, RETNA has created exclusive collaborations with brands such as VistaJet, Nike, Louis Vuitton, and Chanel. His work appears on the cover of Justin Bieber's 2015 album *Purpose*. RETNA lives and works in Los Angeles.

CV

RETNA (Marquis Lewis)
B. 1979 in Los Angeles / Lives and works in Los Angeles

Selected Exhibitions & Commissions

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| 2016-18 | Set Designs for The Opera <i>AIDA</i> |
| 2016 | Solo Show at Loirdes Sosa Galeria, Mexico City |
| 2016 | <i>The Future Of The Past: Mummies and Medicine</i> , Legion of Honor, Fine Arts Museum Of San Francisco |
| 2015 | Solo Show (at Halvandet Refshalevej) and city murals, Copenhagen, Denmark |
| 2015 | <i>Believe Me When I Tell You I Know Where I'm Coming From</i> , Coney Art Walls, Curated by Jeffrey Deitch and Joseph J. Sitt, Brooklyn, NY (mural) |
| 2015 | <i>Articulate and Harmonic Symphonies of the Soul</i> , Hoerle - Guggenheim Gallery, New York, NY |
| 2013 | Michael Kohn Gallery, Art Basel Miami Beach |
| 2013 | <i>Keith Haring/RETNA</i> , Presented by Andy Valmorbidia, exhibition during Art Basel Hong Kong |

2013 Mural, in conjunction with the Urs Fischer Exhibition at MOCA, Los Angeles, CA
2013 Mural, Petty Cash Restaurant, Los Angeles, CA

2012 *New Paintings and Works on Paper*, Michael Kohn Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2012 *The Boneyard Project: Return Trip*, Pima Art and Space Museum, Tucson, AZ
2012 *A Conversation With A Great Friend*, Houston/Bowery Wall, New York, NY
2012 Mural, Facade of Louis Vuitton Store, Miami, FL

2011 *Art in The Streets*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA
2011 *Brimstone*, Wynwood District, Miami FL (mural)
2011 *The Hallelujah World Tour*, Presented by Andy Valmorbida & Vladimir Restoin
Roitfeld, New York and London
2011 *Ward of the State: Tony Ward Artists Muse*, Curated by Robert Standish, Stephen
Cohen Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2011 *Nose Job*, Curated by Carlo McCormick, Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton, NY

2010 *Freedom*, Known Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2010 *DESATURATED*, New Image Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2010 *RETNA, Rivera & Rivera*, Los Angeles, CA
2010 *The Lost Ones*, Curated by Marsea Golberg, New Image Art Gallery, Mexico City, MX
2010 *VOX HUMANA*, L.A. Art Machine, L.A. Art Show, Los Angeles
2010 *Of Our Youth*, with El Mac, Culver City, CA (mural)
2010 *Skid Row Mural*, with El Mac and Estevan Oriol, Los Angeles Skid Row, Los Angeles, CA
(mural)
2010 *Hollywood & Wilton*, with El Mac, Los Angeles, CA (mural)
2010 *JUSTICE*, for Manifest Equality, with El Mac and Kofie, Los Angeles, CA (mural)
2010 *Art For All*, Malaga, Spain (mural/exhibit)
2010 *Ave Maria*, with El Mac, Salt Lake City, UT (mural)

2009 *Vagos Y Reinas*, with El Mac, Robert Berman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2009 *Follow the Line*, The Don Gallery Milan Italy
2009 *Primary Flight III*, Margulies Warehouse, Miami, FL (mural)
2009 *RCVA Headquarters*, with El Mac, Costa Mesa, CA (mural)
2009 *Memento Mori*, with El Mac, Los Angeles, CA (mural)
2009 *The Knight*, with El Mac, Los Angeles, CA (mural)

2008 *Primary Flight II*, Miami, FL (mural)
2008 *Writing alla Ribalta*, Milan, Italy (mural)
2008 *Low & Slow*, Mesa Contemporary Arts, Mesa, AZ
2008 *Angeles Will Rise*, Robert Berman Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

2007 *Letters First '07*, Bread & Butter, Barcelona, Spain
2007 *From La With Love*, Interior Installation, A+D Museum, Los Angeles, CA
2007 *Dialect of the Scribes*, UpperPlayGround, San Francisco, CA
2007 *All writes Reserved*, PowerHouse Arena, Brooklyn, NY

2006 *Day of the Dead*, Mendenhall Sobieski Gallery, Pasadena, CA
2006 *Iron Eye*, Scion Installation, Culver City, CA
2006 *Casa De Tinta Negra*, 222gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2006 *Wall Street Journals*, White Walls Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2006 *Superiority Complex*, Scion Installation, Gallery Culver City, CA

2005 *Emerging From Aztlan*, The dA Center for the Arts, Pomona, CA

- 2005 *Read the writing on our walls*, Greystone, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles, CA
 2005 *Identity and Inspiration*, Millard Sheets Gallery, Pomona, CA
 2005 *Promise Land*, Nike Exhibit, Union Station, Los Angeles, CA
 2005 *Urban Edge Show*, Milan, Italy
- 2004 *Application*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. Australia
 2004 *Incognito*, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA
- 2003 *Still Alive*, Subject Matter Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA
 2003 *INRI*, Subject Matter Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA
 2003 *Street Dream*, Ghetto Gloss Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2002 *Abstract Reality*, I.C.U Art. Los Angeles, CA
- 2001 *El Bago De La Calle*, Zero One Gallery. Los Angeles, CA
- 2000 *Graffiti Art: The Auction*, Guernsey's, New York, NY
 2000 *Contemporary Corruption II*, Zero One Gallery. Los Angeles, CA
 2000 *Sarcastic*, Tokyo, Japan. installation.
- 1999 *East Meets West*, Martinez Gallery. New York
 1999 *Contemporary Corruption*, Zero One Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 1997 *DADA*, Los Angeles - Installation.

Selected Articles & Publications

- 2015 W Magazine, June/July 2015
- 2014 Architectural Digest, Cover
 2014 Language Arts, C California Style Magazine
- 2013 7 LA Artists to Watch, Los Angeles Confidential
 2013 Fresco Magazine, Cover and feature
- 2012 RETNA Paints The Bowery Graffiti Wall, Replacing Faile, Huffington Post
 2012 Retna Mural on Bowery & Houston, NYC, Juxtapoz
- 2011 Art in the Streets sets record for MOCA, LA Times
 2011 Shepard Fairy, Street Artists Brighten West Hollywood Library, LA Times
 2011 Graffiti Artist Retna's World of Words, Black Book
 2011 A Street Artist's Fashion Week Debut, The Daily Beast
 2011 The Q & A: Retna, The Economist
 2011 Installation/Set-up – Hallelujah World Tour, Arrested Motion
 2011 Wingspan by Retna and El Mac, Miami Herald
 2011 Man One and Retna at Fowler Museum, LA Times
- 2010 Best Public Art of 2010, Miami New Times
- 2009 Graffiti artists make their Art Basel mark, Miami Herald (US)
 2009 Winners & Losers, Biscayne Times (US)

- 2009 944 (US) Primary Flight
- 2009 Alianza: Retna & Mac, Upper Playground / Ginko Press (US)
- 2009 Status (US) issue 06 - Indiepreneur Issue

- 2008 Mynameis, (UK)
- 2008 The Radar Art, Angeleno (US)
- 2008 Bliss (US) Cover / feature
- 2008 On These Gallery Walls Graffiti, LA Times (US)
- 2008 Tarot, Swindle (US) Feature
- 2008 Mural Art, Kiriakos Iosifidis, (Greece) Publikat

- 2007 Graffiti LA: Street Styles and Art, Steve Grody (US)
- 2007 The Rise of the Seventh Letter, LA Weekly (US)
- 2007 The Seventh Letter Issue, Juxtapoz (US)
- 2007 Streetwise, LA Times (US) Feature
- 2007 Catch Me if You Can Magazine (US)

- 2006 Greystone Home Collection, California Homes (US)
- 2006 Inner City Arts, California Home + Design (US)
- 2006 Freestyle, Rime (US) feature

- 2005 Retna, Warp Magazine (Japan) feature

- 2003 Dialect of the Scribes, Lit Magazine (US) cover / feature

Television and Video Commissions

- 2014 "What is it?" - /1 Anthem 2014, Dr. Pepper Commercial, Director: Michael Delahaut
- 2014 Season 6, Usher, The Voice
- 2013 "Acclaimed Street Artist RETNA Reminisces On His Rise", REVOLT TV
- 2003 Love at first sight, Mary J Blige, Director: Chris Robinson
- 2003 I'm Good, Blaque. Director: Jake Nava
- 2002 Naughty Girl, Holly Vallance, Director: Jake Nava
- 2003 Red Blooded Woman, Kylie Mynogue, Director: Jake Nava
- 2001 Training Day Trailer
- 2004 Season 4: Episode 4, Made, MTV, Flutie Entertainment
- 2005 Season 3: Episode 2: Usher, Cribs, MTV
- 2005 Switch, Will Smith, Director: Paul Hunter
- 2003 AMA Awards, Metallica Live Painting
- 2005 Usher Live in Concert (JACKET), Puerto Rico
- 2005 Don't Cha Pussy Cat Dolls 2005 Director: Paul Hunter
- 2005 Don't Forget About Us, Mariah Carey, Director: Paul Hunter

Installations

- Dressing Room Doors, The Forum, Los Angeles, CA
- Sarcastic Clothing Store, Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan
- Native Boutique, Hollywood, CA
- Louis B. Meyer Building, Hollywood, CA
- BPHH store, Hollywood CA
- 76 gas station, Los Angeles, CA
- 8912 Boutique, West Hollywood, CA