

# TROOST AVE.

# *Festival*

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR: Troost Festival Folks Committee

SUBJECT: 31st & Troost Mural Unveiling

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## 31st & Troost Mural Unveiling

(Kansas City, MO)- Alexander Austin will unveil his 31st and Troost Mural on Labor Day, Monday, September 4th. Everyone is invited to gather for this historic event between 3 pm and 6 pm . Sharing of the significance of Austin's mural, music, and food will be provided. The official unveiling of the 100 foot mural is scheduled for 4 pm.

The mural project, commissioned by the 'Troost Folks' (sponsors of Troost Avenue Festivals) celebrates the rich, though painful, history of Kansas City's Troost Avenue. Mr. Austin, locally recognized for his engaging mural of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks on the southeast corner of Linwood and Troost, has spent countless hours, day and night, on this labor of love to awaken Kansas City to its history.

### BACKGROUND

What was to become Troost Avenue was a Native American hunting path, then, when the first white explorers and settlers arrived, a trail past a huge slave plantation, an exclusive street lined by millionaire's estates, the hub of an eclectic urban life that fostered Jazz, Walt Disney, the Isis Theater, and a vibrant commercial center. Yet, for the past 40 years, following riots and 'white flight', Troost has been viewed as the racial dividing line of the city which local broadcaster Walt Bodine referred to it as the "Berlin Wall of Kansas City".

### NEW VISION FOR TROOST

The 31st & Troost Mural along with the annual Troost Avenue Festivals, Hands across Troost, the Troost Community Market, Tulips on Troost, Troost Alliance, Troost Folks, and many new resident artists, represent a new vision of Troost as a 'gathering place' rather than a 'dividing line'.

This mural project is a story of community collaboration: A local merchant, Ben Herron, of Best Deal Furniture, and Darrell Williams, of The New Creations Barber Shop & Hair Design, approved the use of the wall. The firemen from #17 Station, at 34th and Paseo, power washed the wall to prepare it for paint. Sherwin-Williams donated the majority of the paint. Troost Corridor Community Association, TYCOR Community Development Corporation, JCC Gourmet Popcorn, Reconciliation Services, St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church, Creative Mind Art Center, Operation Breakthrough, The Creative Process and Center for Global Community provided support to keep the project moving forward. Scaffolding was provided by Chameleon Arts Project and Best Deal.

For more on the Troost Ave Festival

<<http://www.creativeprocess.net/cgc/troost>>

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