

How Much?! Demystifying Pricing for Murals

A guide to pricing your work as an emerging mural artist with tips from experts in the industry





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Introduction

This resource summarizes a panel talk co-hosted by OCAD University's RBC Centre for Emerging Artists & Designers and Mural Routes on February 1, 2022. The event, *"How Much?! Demystifying Pricing for Murals"* was moderated by **Marta Keller-Hernandez**, Managing Director at Mural Routes, and featured artists **Bareket Kezwer, Curtia Wright, and Omar Hopkinson (Oms)**.

This resource summarizes the key points from the conversation to help emerging artists understand and develop their own strategies around setting a fair price for mural works.

Watch the recorded workshop at:
vimeo.com/678268461

Bios of Panelists

Bareket Kezwer (she/they)

www.bareketkezwer.com

Instagram: @bkez

Bareket is a muralist, community engaged artist, curator, frequent collaborator and eternal optimist. Their work is motivated by a desire to spread joy, cultivate gratitude, celebrate the power of kindness and compassion, and support the growth of inclusive and connected communities. They work with bright colours and bold patterns to captivate people's attention and fill them with delight. They are passionate about creating art that aesthetically and psychologically brightens environments.

Bareket Kezwer, *The Honourable Harvest*, 2021



Curtia Wright (she/her)

www.curtiawright.com

Instagram: @curtia

Curtia Wright is a multi-disciplinary fine artist, mural artist and arts educator based in Toronto, Ontario. She received her BFA at OCAD University in the Drawing and Painting program in 2015. Her artwork re-imagines our reality using elements of fantasy and surrealism. Using bold and vibrant colour, she aims to transport audiences to her alternate worlds. Colour functions as a powerful element to create a sense of bliss within the viewer. Wright's murals commonly depict abstract figures surrounded by floral patterned elements. Her narratives focus on telling stories of black peoples of the African diaspora, primarily speaking about her own heritage and history as a Jamaican-Canadian. She's collaborated on mural projects with community organizations and private mural commissions across the Toronto and the GTA.

Curtia Wright, *McCallum, Selina - Oakwood Village*



Omar (Oms) Hopkinson (he/him)

Instagram: @omscreates

Omar Hopkinson (Oms) bleeds creation onto the canvas. An Ontario College of Art and Design alumni, Oms drew early inspiration from Toronto's urban culture. He is an early navigator of Toronto's hip hop scene and a creative contributor of "The Circle", a Toronto-based collective of musicians, creators and industry professionals. A veteran live painter, working at large events such as The Artist Project, House of Paint, Escapade Music Festival, and more. Oms has collaborated with brands like MARTK'D and Footlocker, and contributed creations for the United Way. He currently serves as an active member of Arts Milton Board of Directors.

Oms, *What Dreams May Come*





Oms, *Pandemic*

Your Starting Point...

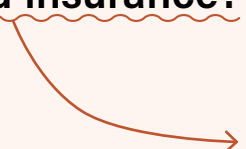
While there is no standard fixed rate to set as your flat rate, this resource provides considerations and questions that will help you get started in determining your final quote. We also encourage you to do additional research and reference resources like CARFAC or Pandr to establish a baseline.

When you present your quote to the client, you can choose to present the quote as a number based on square-footage, hourly rate, or a single-fixed rate. While there is no one correct way to present your quote, be sure that it is clear and outlines your process to your client.

Considerations that affect how you price your mural artworks

Yourself

- ◇ How many years of experience do you have?
- ◇ How busy are you during the period?
You can **price differently based on your demand**, for example, charge more in summer when you're busier, and charge less in winter.
- ◇ What is an amount that would make this project worth it for you?
- ◇ Will you need an assistant to support you in the project?
- ◇ How much time will you need to spend on administration and emails?
- ◇ Do you need insurance?




Getting Insurance

It is possible to get both an annual policy that is valid year-long, a temporary policy that is valid only for a specified duration. If you need insurance, apply for your insurance in advance and try to get as many quotes as possible! The system is hard to navigate, and the process may take a long time.

The Client


- ◇ Who is your client? Are they a large corporation or small shop?
- ◇ What style of work is your client expecting? Does their expectation match your style?
- ◇ What is their communication style? How many meetings will you be expected to attend?
- ◇ Who is your key contact? Knowing this will allow you to connect immediately to the decision maker.
- ◇ Will the client be providing any support (i.e. personnel, a safe space to store your things, etc.)
- ◇ What is their expected budget?



Always start by asking the client what their expected budget is. Clients usually start with their lowest price, so it will give you a baseline of what to expect and give you a chance to negotiate a higher price.

Mural Location & Setting

- ◇ Is there a safe space onsite where you can leave your materials, or will there be additional costs to securely store your things?
- ◇ How long will it take for you to travel to the location? Do you need to stay some days overnight? Consider including gas fee or accommodation fees in your pricing.
- ◇ How will the weather affect your ability and speed in completing the project? Do you need extra materials or support to accommodate the weather?
- ◇ Will the mural be high off the ground? Will you need special height certification or additional equipment rentals?



"Working at Heights" Certification

Depending on how high the mural is, you may need to get specialized training. For example, in Ontario, you would need to get a "Working at Heights Certification". Different locations may have different certification processes and regulations for working at heights - be sure to look into these requirements before you start your project.

For Ontario Artists, Mural Routes offers training and resources:
muralroutes.ca

The Design and Production

- ◇ How big is the wall?
- ◇ How complex is the design? The more complex the design, the longer it will take.
- ◇ Calculate the time and labour it takes to create the design and produce the actual mural
- ◇ Do you need any additional equipment or support to complete the mural creation?
- ◇ During the creation of the design, how will you handle revisions to the concept?



Handling Design Revisions

Clearly articulate your process for accepting revisions from the client. For example, give them 2-3 revisions as part of your initial fee, and indicate how if you charge an hourly or flat rate or revisions that exceed the limit.

Maintenance and Repair

- ◇ Does your client want mural protection?
If yes, include a fee for the anti-graffiti topcoat and account for your time.
- ◇ Specify how long and what types of repairs and maintenance you will provide for the mural
- ◇ Consider additional costs you may need to incur if it's your responsibility to maintain the project (materials, your labour, etc.)

Using an Anti-Graffiti Topcoat

- Pros: Looks good for a long period of time and helps protect the mural from damage.
- Cons: The coating is toxic for humans and may damage your work. Make sure to research the different options available

Sometimes using protection coating is unavoidable, due to contractual obligations to the client.

Pricing what you're worth

We encourage you to believe in your own worth and stand for it!

"...really believe in and understand your worth, because if you don't understand your worth, you'll always be running in circles with how you should price. You have to realize: 'I'm worth this much. I've been doing this for *this* long.' You have to stand up and be able to say, 'here's my price' and if they say 'no,' it's probably not the job for you. And it's probably better for you to find the correct job for yourself."

- Omar



"At the end of the day, always quote what you believe you're worth. It's about your beliefs. It's about your bottom line, and what you stand for. Don't feel reluctant to really advocate for yourself."

- Curtia

"You are worth whatever you believe that you are worth. Oftentimes people want things that are more expensive because it adds a level of allure and they think 'Ooh It's so pricey, it must be really great.' If you undervalue yourself, they could look at your work and think, 'Oh, that looks really cheap.' There must be something wrong with it.' [...] Discounts suggest that your work is less desirable."

- Bareket



Acknowledgements

Speakers:

Marta Keller-Hernandez, Managing Director, Mural Routes
Bareket Kezwer
Curtia Wright
Omar Hopkinson (Oms)

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Resources

Mural Routes: muralroutes.ca

Pandr Design:

www.pandrdesignco.com/digital-resources/free-mural-pricing-guide

Working with Heights Certification:

www.ontario.ca/page/program-standard-working-heights-training

CARFAC Minimum Fee Schedule: carfac-raav.ca

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