

RICHMOND PUBLIC ARTS PUBLIC COMPLAINT

CORINTHIANS - CHAPTER X

17 | *For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.*

I wanted to begin with this quote in scripture not because I am a devout Christian; but because I respect the Christian religion and its most basic teachings. Unfortunately, those who spearheaded the Richmond Street Art Festival, on the Canal Walk, not only do not share my reverence for Christianity's precepts; but they've made a point of slandering the religion with Occultic symbols within their murals.

Two of the murals explicitly promote upside down crosses. One source claims that '*Turning the cross upside down becomes a means of denying the truth of Christ and mocking His sacrifice...*'

Is that truly the kind of message we want to be sending to unsuspecting Christian families who are enjoying a first-time stroll on the canal? It might be an esoteric jab for those who get it; on the other hand, this kind of symbolization could be extremely offensive to true believers. I know it offends me. I believe it is the responsibility of this Committee to ensure all Public Works of Arts welcome the beliefs of all residence and visitors.

In accordance with scripture quoted: '*we all partake of that one bread,*' is no different than saying that the general public all partakes in the consumption of public works of art. Therefore, within the purview of a high volume pedestrian corridor—such as the Canal Walk—the utmost discretion should be exercised.

Moreover, one mural displays barely dressed women with a joint; another with a demonic figure; and still another one with an ugly-looking rat/opossum which, in my opinion, adds no aesthetic value.

Lastly, I've incorporated several pictures of two community-oriented murals that have been defaced in the last year. First, is the Arthur Ashe Mural, which a group called 'Patriot Front,' defaced. This was an appalling racist assault, not only the sterling legacy of Arthur Ashe, but to the Battery Park community, as well as, the Richmond resident muralist, Sir James L. Thornhill.

The second defaced Mural is the one that was just finished recently on Richmond Hill by Richmond-based muralist cooperative, 'Mending Walls.' It has the tag, "*Is Our Art Not History?*" If unauthorized vandalizing is now an acceptable means of history making, then these Graffiti vandals should be celebrated. But we shouldn't be surprised, should we? It was this City Council and Mayor that condoned the standard of celebrating the vandalizing of public works when the Robert E. Lee statue was ingloriously ruined. I dare say Robert E. Lee had more wisdom to impart on today's youth than any of the Richmond Street Arts Festival participants.

It's a crying shame we've allowed critical theory and negative dialectics to skew our perception of American History.

A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday does not know where it is today. - Robert E. Lee

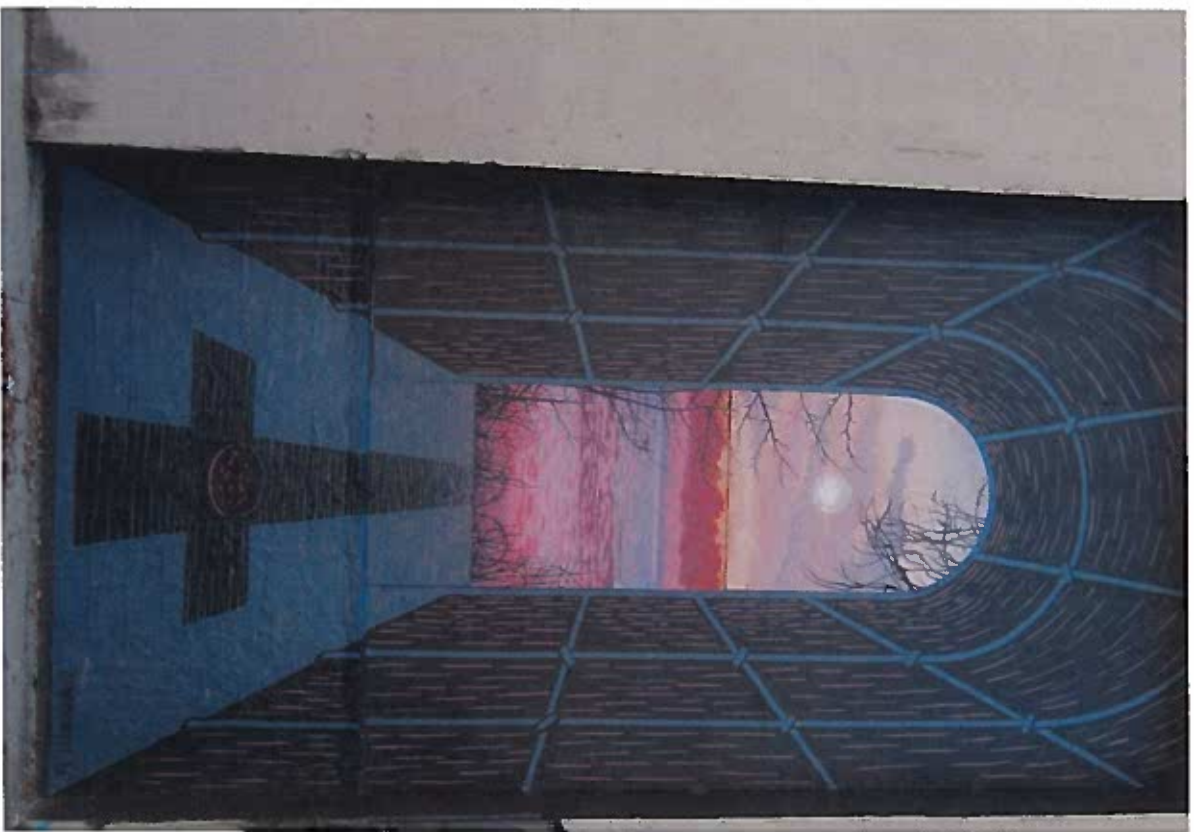
At last, I will end with another quote from scripture.

CORINTHIANS - 31 | *Whether therefor ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

Maybe some of you do not believe in God, but that's not the point. If you replace the word God with Community, hence: '*Do all to the Glory of Community,*' is that not a commonsense 'secular' standard—that we can all agree to—which can be applied to Public Works of Arts being rendered on Richmond's walls? Walls that we all have to live, consumer and commune with whether we like it or not. Thank you your time.

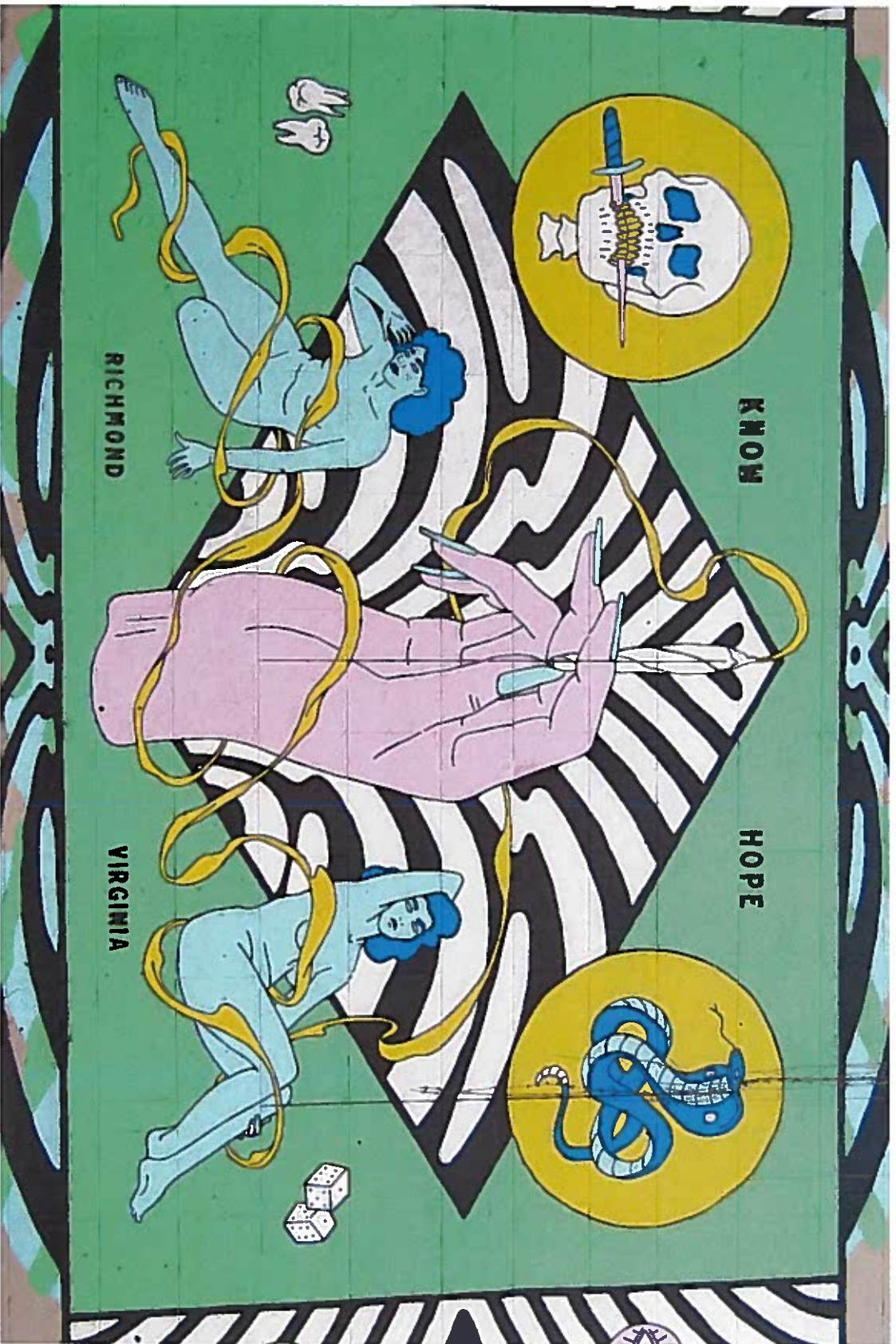
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