

What's going on  
in Winnipeg  
and who's  
making it  
happen

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# Artist adorns Transit boxes with murals

**SIMON FULLER**  
Sun Media

Cyrus Smith is painting the town black, as the Downtown BIZ looks to jazz up Winnipeg's urban environment.

The local artist is one of three jury-selected talents commissioned by the BIZ to paint murals on Winnipeg Transit signal boxes.

"I've never painted a subject like this before, so it's cool," said Smith, 31, flexing his brush at the bus shelter outside the MTS Centre.

The U of M alumnus runs Felson Nest Industries, an agency that "handles work relating to visual art in the public sphere" out of his downtown studio. "In a lot of my studio work, I make judgment calls about esthetics and public space, so I hope people are happy with my interpretation here," he said.

Smith aims to recreate an old photograph from the Manitoba Archives of an east-

bound view down Portage Avenue, which fittingly features the old Eaton's building.

"I want to recreate the essence of that time with a little bit of modern life thrown in ... maybe I'll add a couple of passersby or a Lamborghini or something."

Artists must ensure their designs reflect the history and diversity of downtown Winnipeg. Smith said he faces a race to finish the mural in his timeline of two weeks — weather permitting.

Artists Sarah Collard and Annie Bergen, who were shortlisted with Smith from a list of 22, are also part of the painting push.

This initiative is part of the BIZ's ongoing efforts to brighten up the streets and showcase local talent. "These uniquely urban paintings add character and vibrancy to our downtown," said Stephanie Voyce, project co-ordinator of the Downtown BIZ.

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Smith displays a picture of the his mural on a Winnipeg Transit signal box at the bus shelter on Portage Avenue outside the MTS Centre.



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## Got an idea for CityFile?

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