



Artist Myneandyou suggests date for “Brexit” Referendum

London -born artist Myneandyou paints an impromptu mural in The East End (Clerkenwell) proposing a date for the next UK-wide referendum to re-enter the EU (or “Brexit”). Finished at 4am this morning with help from Dr. Lee Bofkin, from Global Street Art, the 15-metre high mural states the date when the 48% Remain minority will become a small majority, based on simple demographics (voter preferences by age and an aging population).

Q. How did the mural come about?

Myneandyou (real name Marwan Shakarchi, born in the UK to parents who immigrated from Iraq in 1984) and Lee Bofkin (co-founder of Global Street Art, whose great, great grandparents all moved to the UK from Europe) had planned to paint one of the walls in the Hat & Fathers car park (2 Clerkenwell Road, EC1M 5PQ) with the landlord’s permission. Because of access issues the pair were forced to paint another, larger wall in the same car park but didn’t have enough paint for their original design. Whilst painting the wall white on Saturday afternoon the pair got talking about Brexit.

Because of voter demographics, the young are much more pro-Europe than older generations. At some point, the pair hypothesized, there will be a switch when the large Remain minority, will become a small majority. Using a weighted average method, Lee calculated the date would be in 2022, all other things being equal.

The pair, who have been friends and worked together over the past four years, thought that painting the date on the wall would spark debate:

Myneand yours says “Art is about provoking conversation. The Leave campaign won a democratic referendum but the quality of the debate was poor, the facts were thin and the £350 million figure that was so widely used for the UK’s weekly contribution to the EU was spurious. However, the number became an anchoring point and partly framed the debate. As the population ages we thought it would be interesting to offer an alternative anchoring point – a date for another referendum.”

Lee Bofkin “We’re leaving Europe and this is uncharted territory. The regions that were more likely to vote out disproportionately received more EU funding – it’s a cruel irony that they’re likely to suffer the most from a Brexit. The feeling amongst young people, especially in London, is that they’ve been sold out by an older generation concerned chiefly with immigration. Marwan and I are both descendants of immigrants – we’d never have become friends if the UK hadn’t accepted our families. Now we’re faced with leaving the EU and the break-up of the UK.”

Q. How long did the mural take to paint?

A. We started painting the wall white at half seven at night. We had the idea at 9pm. We shook hands and were then committed. We started designing the mural and doing our sums soon after. We started painting the numbers at midnight and were finished by 4am. We were awake again at 9am and back at the wall soon after to take photos (and write this press release).

Q. Does the landlord know about this?

A. Not exactly. OK, no - no he doesn’t.

Q. How long will the mural last?

A. If it makes it until the end of the day we’ve done well. Chances are the landlord will call us when he notices and ask us, to put it politely, to paint it out.

ABOUT MYNEANDYOURS

Myneand yours, real name Marwan Shakarchi, was born in Manchester in 1982 and lived in London until 2014, when he moved to Dubai to introduce the region to his iconic cloud design. The symbol has become synonymous with the artist himself: “Clouds are elusive. Throughout history their mysterious nature have sparked curiosity. They appear free in the sky, unbounded by any law, and invite us to believe that the same is possible for ourselves”.

ABOUT GLOBAL STREET ART

Founded in 2012, Global Street Art has organised over 1300 legal street art murals in London. They also have the largest online street art photo archive, at www.globalstreetart.com, with over 100,000 photos uploaded by artists from over 100 countries, and over 320,000 fans on social media. In addition, GSA has a thriving agency that works internationally with public and corporate clients, supporting artist partnerships and painting commercial murals. Global Street Art’s mission is simply “To live in painted cities”.

Co-founder Dr. Lee Bofkin is a graduated from Oxford University with a top first in Biology, then finished his PhD in evolutionary mathematics at Cambridge. He also used to breakdance for the UK with his crew “Soul Mavericks”.