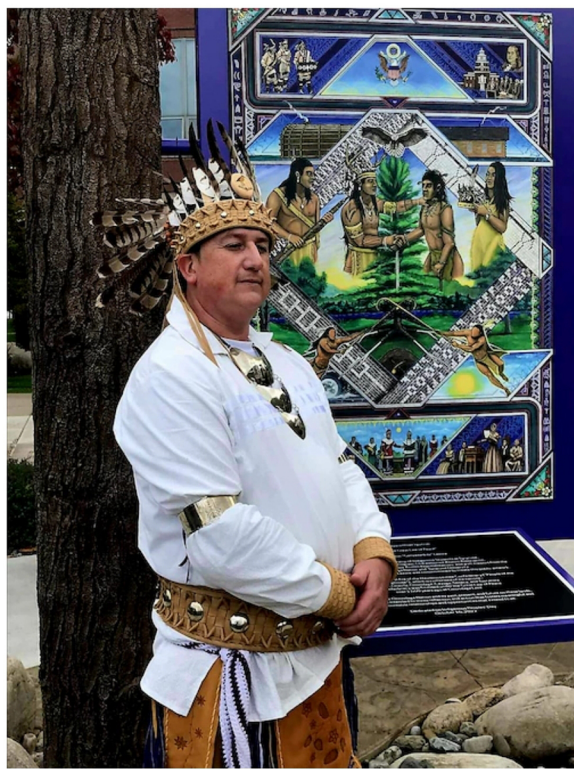


ENTERTAINMENT

From muralists to singers: Here are 4 Syracuse artists to keep on your radar in 2024



Brandon Lazore stands beside his painting at Syracuse University. (Photo courtesy of Brandon Lazore) Brandon Lazore

Brandon Lazore

When [Brandon Lazore](#) moved back to Syracuse from Washington, D.C.—where he worked as a concrete construction engineer until 2008—he went back to his artistic roots. Lazore enrolled in art classes at Onondaga Community College.

One of his assignments required him to paint a self-portrait. It was a new experience. He's used to painting murals with spray paint, not a paint brush. Completing the self-portrait was his light bulb moment. He discovered what he wanted to do for the rest of his life: paint.

Since then, Lazore has set himself apart from other artists with his own style he calls “traditional graffiti.” His signature style takes aspects of his graffiti and engineering background, and more importantly his cultural background, as a member of the Snipe Clan from the Onondaga Nation.

“It’s something I think it’s like my calling. It’s something I love to do. It’s something that I feel comfortable and happy with,” Lazore said.

Storytelling is a big aspect of Lazore’s work. The painter takes time to research and study the history of the Onondaga Nation to provide an accurate representation.

When he first embarked on his artistic career, he didn’t set out to tell the story of his community to non-native people. Rather, he wanted to create images for his people, he said. Lazore wanted the Haudenosaunee people to look at beautiful images of their culture and see them exist in museums and schools.

“These stories can be told through the art to my people. And I wanted them to be proud of these images and know that hey, you know, that represents me,” he said.

One of his pieces is on display at Syracuse University, an installation that sits in the middle of the campus. The project took a few months to map out and paint. Lazore knew this was going to be a statement piece and advised with the Onondaga Council to figure out what they—as a community—wanted to tell the world about the Haudenosaunee people.

In the painting you’ll see lacrosse players, images depicting the unification of the nations, their role in the women’s suffrage movement and involvement with the U.S. Constitution. There are also different elements scattered around the installation. Strawberries adorn the corners. The fruit was used as medicine, Lazore said.

His work will continue to tell those stories and his own, too. Lazore wants people to see the story of a native who lived on the reservation and in the city, whose experienced different elements of art, he said. The painter’s work reflects a lifetime of experiences on a canvas, and he hopes whoever comes across it will learn from them.

“I want to put my artwork out there, and not kind of work for somebody and create art for them. I would rather create my own personal art and put it out there,” Lazore said. “It’s kind of like leaving a legacy. You know when I pass on this artwork will still be around.”

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