

## Favela Painting Foundation Background Information

Note: This resource is intended for teachers to build their own background and thus facilitate deeper conversations, as appropriate for the classroom community. Source: <http://www.favelapainting.com/>.

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Art is a unique messenger, crossing borders and building bridges. If implemented in an intelligent way it can be a powerful weapon to catalyze social change. This is the main objective of the Favela Painting Foundation, founded by Dutch artists Dre Urhahn and Jeroen Koolhaas.

It's an image seen around the world — Praça Cantão, a square within the Santa Marta favela in Rio, blasted with stripes of rainbow colors that turn the jostling masonry walls into a brightly unified vision. Spurred on in 2010 by Dutch artists Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn in collaboration with the local group “Tudo de cor para você”, the painting was accomplished by 25 young people from the neighborhood, and reframed the square as a place of shared pride. The locals have since continued the project, with monthly painting task forces and other activities that have involved 800 people and transformed the aesthetic and the social psychology of the whole favela.

Since their first project in Rio, the goal of the Favela Painting Foundation is to create striking artworks in places where people are being socially excluded. By collaborating with locals, art is used as a weapon to combat prejudice, create sustainability solutions and attract positive attention. By ensuring that each step of the creative process is open, collaborative, and community driven, Favela Painting can effectively contribute to the education and empowerment of the community, particularly local youth, instilling a sense of pride and community ownership.

The Favela Painting Foundation has a strong track record in setting up large-scale community-driven art interventions. Haas&Hahn understand the social skills needed to tactically maneuver through the dynamics within local communities and they have vast experience in creating – and keeping – a balanced yet flexible organization under extreme circumstances.

More about Favela Painting Foundation:

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/favela-painting-foundation-is-using-art-to-rejuvenate-brazils-slums\\_us\\_57b70004e4b00d9c3a16f179](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/favela-painting-foundation-is-using-art-to-rejuvenate-brazils-slums_us_57b70004e4b00d9c3a16f179)