

Stephen Powers

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Awards

2007 Fulbright Fellowship

Solo Exhibitions (selected)

2016 **Stephen Powers: Coney Island Is Still Dreamland (To a Seagull)** Brooklyn Museum
2014 **Today is Already Tomorrow** Target Gallery
2013 **Visual Blues** Alice Gallery
2012 **A Word is Worth a Thousand Pictures** Joshua Liner Gallery
2011 **Days** V1 Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark
2008 **Signarama** Deitch Projects at Art Basel, Miami.
2007 **The Magic Word** The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, Philadelphia, PA.
2004 **My List Of Demands**, Deitch Projects, New York, NY.

Group Exhibitions (selected)

2015 **Dismaland** curated by BANKSY
2011 **Art In The Streets** curated by Jeffrey Deitch, MOCA, Los Angeles, CA.
2010 **TRANSFER** curated by Lucas Ribero, Brazilian Cultural Pavilion, Sao Paulo, Brazil.
2007 **Lots Of Things Like This** curated by Dave Eggers, Apex Art, New York
2005 **Love Letters** (with Joe Armhein and Tauba Auerbach), Luggage Store Gallery, San Francisco, CA.
2004 **Beautiful Losers**, Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, OH (exhibition traveled to Yerba Buena Art Center, San Francisco, CA; Orange County Museum of Art, Newport Beach, CA; Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy; Le Tri Postal, Lille, France) .
2002 **Session The Bowl**, Deitch Projects, New York, NY.

Special Projects

2014 **Love Letter to Baltimore** Led 6 artists in painting words from the community across several walls in Baltimore MD. In conjunction with Baltimore Public Arts ICY Signs held sign painting workshops and painted free signage for local businesses.
2014 **Love Letter to Japan** Painted words from the community across several walls in in Shibuya Japan.
2013 **Love Letter to Johannesburg** Painted words from the community across several walls in Johannesburg South Africa.
2011 **Love Letter To Brooklyn** Led 10 artists in painting words from the community across several walls in downtown Brooklyn.
2010 **VOLTO JA (I'll Be Back)** Led 5 artists in engaging the Bom Retiro community to paint a mural that depicted the names of the residents of the neighborhood in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Sponsored by SESC.
2010 **Love Letter For Syracuse** Led 10 artists to engage the Near West Side community and paint a love letter across three train bridges in Syracuse, NY. Sponsored by Syracuse University.
2009 **A Love Letter For You** Led over 20 artists to paint a love letter across 50 walls in West Philadelphia. A collaboration with The Mural Arts Program sponsored by the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.
2008 **Waterboard Thill Ride** part of Creative Time's Democracy In America Exhibition, Coney Island, NY
2005 **Service**, (Canal Street Raincoat Project). Created raincoats for flyer touts on busy street in New York City.
2004 **Dreamland Artist Club**, Creative Time, New York, NY.
Co-curated and participated in project where over 40 artists painted signs and attractions in New York landmark Coney Island.
2001 **Street Market**, 49th Venice Biennale (with Barry McGee and Todd James) Venice, Italy.
2000 **Street Market** (with Barry McGee and Todd James) , Deitch Projects, New York, NY.
Indelible Market, (with Barry McGee and Todd James) Curated by Alex Baker.
Institute Of Contemporary Art, University Of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

Commissions

2002 **Waylon/Saul**, Henry Moore Foundation, Liverpool, England.
Included in the 2002 Liverpool Biennial International Exhibition

Power Of Art, Artworks, Cincinnati, OH.

Created a narrative painting series for the Adolescent Care Clinic of The Cincinnati Children's Hospital while teaching teens in a studio setting.

Talks

2014 "Creative Mornings" at MOMA New York

2010 "LoveLetters Philly and Sao Paulo" TEDxPhilly

2010 "Storytelling" 2010 PSFK Conference, NY, NY

2005 "The Art Of Public Service. The Service Of Public Art" Harvard Graduate School Of Education
Cambridge MA.

2003 "The Story So Far" Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA.

Published Work

2017 **Five Thousand Ideas You Can Have Right Now** Mark Surface International

2014 **A Love Letter to the City** Princeton Architectural Press

2010 **Love Letter. Brick Valentines On The Philly Skyline** Free News Projects, Philadelphia

2007 **Studio Gangster** (catalog) Gingko Press

2006 **First And Fifteenth Pop Art Short Stories** Villard, New York (Author).

2003 **Stuck On The Map** Dan Murphy, Mark Surface Intl., New York (Publisher).

1999 **The Art Of Getting Over** St. Martin's Press, New York (Author).

1989 – 1997 **On The Go Magazine** Philadelphia & New York (Publisher, Editor).

Bibliography (Selected)

"Love Letters to Philadelphia" Candace Jackson *Wall Street Journal* August 28, 2009, p. B1

"Wonderwalls" Ivan Solotaroff *The Guardian* April 18, 2010 p17

"Coney Island Sideshow Has Guantanamo Theme" Ariel Kaminer, *New York Times*, August 5th, 2008, p D1.

"Still Painting Messages On Walls But No Longer An Outlaw" Niko Koppel, *New York Times*,
May 29, 2008 p B1

"Slicker Price" Rob Walker, *New York Times Magazine*, October 30, 2005, p 17.

"Flash, Dash, and Now, Art" Randy Kennedy, *New York Times*, June 17, 2005 p D1.

"Best Of 2001" Vince Aletti, *Artforum*, December, 2001, p 92

Education

1990-1992 University of the Arts Philadelphia, PA .

Stephen Powers was born and raised in Philadelphia, where in 1984 as an overgrown 16 year-old, started writing the name ESPO around his neighborhood and eventually around the world. In 1999 Powers stopped writing graffiti and tending bar to dedicate himself to being a full-time artist. In spite of early spite his work has been shown at Venice and Liverpool Biennials, as well as numerous shows at Deitch Projects. Powers was a Fulbright scholar in 2007. He used the grant to paint in the streets of Dublin and Belfast. His work in Belfast's Lower Shankill area was inspired by the area's political murals; Powers told the *New York Times* that he was "taking the form of the murals, which are powerful for all the wrong reasons, and trying to retain some of the power and use it in a really good way."

Building on the first Love Letter project started in Ireland, Powers executed a mural project about the complexities and rewards of relationships titled A Love Letter for You. In Philadelphia, Stephen (call him ESPO) and his crew (call them ICY) painted more than 50 walls along the elevated train along Market Street in West Philly. The project, sponsored by a grant from the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage through the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, and produced with the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, has generated positive reviews from the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Art in America* The Love Letter project has now grown to more than ten cities spanning the globe from São Paulo to South Africa

.He has published 5 books including his newest publication compiling the last 6 years of global public art projects, A Love Letter to the City (Princeton Architectural Press 2014)

He lives and works in New York City where he makes and sells art at his store, ESPO's Art World in Brooklyn's Boerum Hill