



# Vienna: The Street Art Waltz

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## Young Artists Grow



The atmosphere is surreal. The rustle of 30 pencils rushing on sheets of paper and as many heads moving imperceptibly, shifting their gaze to the centre of the room and then back to their drawings in lightning speed. At the centre, the model of this **Sketch Art Group**. For the past five years now, **the self-managed group meets every Thursday at 7 pm on the sofas and armchairs of a Viennese café and everyone sketches a portrait for two hours**. "Every time we change the subject and model," explains **Tiana Maros**, the organiser. "The language used is English, as many are from **Canada** or **the United States**." Different origins, different motivations. Some, like the Canadian **Jade Amazon**, studied art and want to practice. Others, like **Carina Salchegger** are **self-taught**. "I come from **Salzburg**, am self-taught and I want to meet other young people interested in sketch art." But, it is this shared passion for sketching that unites these youngsters, in an exchange of advice and friendship.

"**das weiss haus** (*The white house – Ed.*) is a non-profit organisation that supports young contemporary art," explains **Alexandra Grausam**, director of the centre. "With our projects, such as the **studio das weisse haus**, we host **16** local artists, each to whom we give a workshop where they can work, usually for **12** months.

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Every Saturday, you can visit these laboratories. We also run an exhibition space, which opened in **2007**. Since **2013**, we have also hosted **17** young international artists who have the opportunity of creating a project in Vienna for **three** months, which we support financially." Among the internationals, there is **Rah**, a Canadian video artist who will interview members of the LGBT community in Vienna, capturing their life experiences. She has just arrived but "the atmosphere is youthful and exciting, I feel very motivated," she says. **Juliana Herrero**, sitting beside Rah on the sofa, agrees: "Compared to the very low cost for the workshop, the networking opportunities and exchanges offered with other young artists are priceless." On the other hand, "it's nice to have such close contact with the young art scene and make it accessible to the city of Vienna," says **Katharina Brandl**, the project coordinator, enthusiastically. Vienna 1, stereotypes, 0.

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