

# Street PARTY

Absolutely meets Peckham-based street artist Remi Rough

Words JOY MONTGOMERY

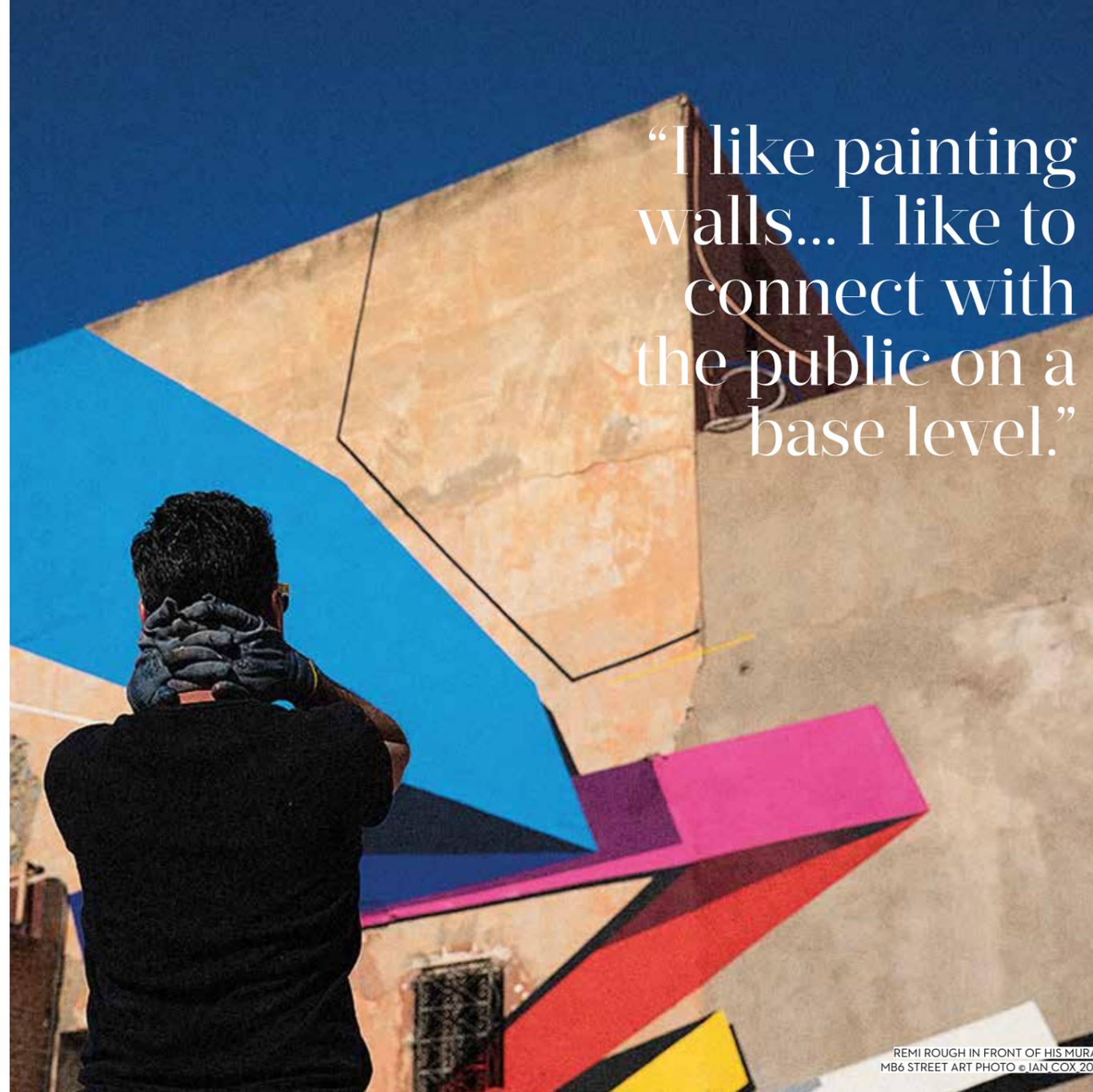
**R**emi Rough's iconic street art has carried him across the globe. He has adorned the world's walls: from the MB6 Marrakech Biennale and the DC Mural Project in Washington to the Dubai

Sole Dxb and the Megaro Hotel in central London. He is represented by galleries in Paris, Switzerland and Los Angeles, for whom he produces work in his Peckham-based studio.

Often referred to as 'visual symphonies', his work is expressed through a geometrical treatment of form, colour, line and space, inspired by avant garde movements such as Suprematism and Italian Futurism. Motion, energy and speed are all there, re-imagining the experience of movement - concerned more by the preoccupation of participating in the world rather than imitating it. "Remi Rough continues to challenge the boundaries of contemporary painting," muses New York-based artist Carlos Mare. "He traverses between the collected history of art and today's urban lexicon."

We met Remi to discuss inspiration, elitism and the problems that surround London's gentrification. 📍

MEGARO HOTEL LONDON  
ARTISTS: REMI ROUGH, LX ONE, STEVE MORE AND AUGUSTINE KOFIE



BELLINZONA, SWITZERLAND



DC MURAL HIGH RES PART OF THE DISTRICT WALLS PROJECT



"I like painting walls... I like to connect with the public on a base level."

**ABSOLUTELY:** *How did you get into street art?*

**REMI ROUGH:** I started doing Graffiti in 1984. Street Art wasn't even a thing back then. The more I changed the type of work I made, the more people found it hard to label, and I guess I got placed in the Street Art movement. I'm not sure that really tells the whole story though.

**ABS:** *What was it about the medium that appealed to you?*

**RR:** I like painting walls... I like to connect with the public on a base level. Having your artwork on walls that people walk past all day every day just seemed like the best way to connect.

**ABS:** *What inspires your artwork?*

**RR:** Architecture, Malevich, Futura 2000, Dondi, RammellZee, Van Doesburg, Russian Constructivism, Jerry Inscoe (Joker), Jaybo Monk, Carlos Mare, Basquiat, Michael Craig Martin, Zaha Hadid, colour, shapes and so much more.

**ABS:** *What is your favourite piece?*

**RR:** Usually my most recent work, which in this case would be a rooftop I painted in Bethesda, USA with a Polish artist called Nawer.

**ABS:** *How do you think street art compares to the traditional gallery experience?*

**RR:** I think the lines have become extremely blurred. If you saw one of my gallery shows and didn't know my history you would never know - you'd simply think, 'Here's another contemporary artist who probably went to Slade or Camberwell', but I didn't. I am self-educated in my art and my knowledge of it. I think that puts me in a far better position than most artists who have been through the system.

**ABS:** *Do you think the art world is still elitist?*

**RR:** Not really, only the people who work within the background of it are elitist, and to be honest they're completely irrelevant. The art is what matters. I go to Frieze or Art Basel and see some good and some bad art. I never think the art world is out of reach. Everything is within our grasp.

**ABS:** *Why have you chosen to set up shop in Peckham?*

**RR:** I grew up in south east London and I went to school in Dulwich. It's my home and I love it. I couldn't see myself living anywhere else.

**ABS:** *Do you think London's gentrification is negatively affecting the emerging art scene?*

**RR:** It's definitely pushing a lot of artists out of London, but these things are completely cyclical and will always keep changing. 📍