

WOODBURY HOUSE

– PRESENTS –



27.04.23 - 25.05.23

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‘SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE’

BY DEFER

Woodbury
House

1852





Joseph Bannan, Gallery Director

WOODBURY HOUSE

Woodbury House is delighted to welcome you to ‘Spiritual Language,’ a solo exhibition of new works by Los Angeles street art pioneer DEFER.

We are honoured to showcase DEFER’s latest works, which exemplify his exceptional talent for rendering complex and intricate letterforms. Through his art, DEFER challenges the boundaries of traditional street art and offers a fresh perspective on contemporary art. We invite you to immerse yourself in DEFER’s masterful creations and experience the power of his visual language.

DEFER, or Alex ‘DEFER’ Kizu, born in 1975, has been an iconic figure of the Los Angeles street art movement since the nineteen eighties. His unique ability to create complex and mesmerising letterforms is unparalleled.

As one of the foremost members of the first generation of Los Angeles graffiti writers, he has seamlessly integrated the signature hand styles he developed during his youth into abstract compositions incorporating cultural motifs, typographic elements, and complex patterns.

DEFER is undoubtedly a leading figure in the East Coast Graffiti movement, mentioned in the same breath as other luminaries such as Chaz Bojorquez, Retna, Zes, and Saber.

The initial inspiration stemmed from the New York graffiti movement, and after watching ‘**Style Wars**,’ he became more aware of what was happening. He started primarily with traditional graffiti under the alias ‘**KAOS2**’. Gradually, the inspiration and classic New York style fused with the culture in which DEFER found himself, gave birth to a new style of graffiti commonly known as calligraphy or typography.

DEFER’s paintings are a highly detailed examination of line and colour, which he refers to as his ‘Spiritual Language’. His work stems from his culture and connection to graffiti and the urban landscape, representing a profound artistic language that distorts the lines between street art and fine art. While ‘Spiritual Language’ marks DEFER’s first U.K. exhibition, he has achieved international recognition, including features within **The Getty Museum**, **LA Louver**, and **Beyond the Streets**.

His works have garnered international recognition and are part of notable corporate collections such as **Apple**, **Facebook**, **Beats by Dre**, **Los Angeles Lakers**, and **RVCA**, as well as the private collections of **Dr Dre**, **Kobe Bryant**, **LeBron James**, **LL Cool J**, **Chris Brown**, **Chris Rock**, **Travis Barker**, and **Eminem**.

Furthermore, DEFER’s interviews and works have been shown in several esteemed compendiums of graffiti art, a testament to his artistic stature in the realm of Los Angeles street art. Such as ‘**Graffiti LA**’ by **Steve Grody**, ‘**The History of American Graffiti**’ by **Roger Gastman** and **Caleb Neelon**, and the ‘**L.A. Graffiti Black Book**’ by **David Brafman**.



“**DEFER IS THE FIRST ARTIST I HAVE SEEN IN THE LAST 10 YEARS THAT DESERVES TO BE CATEGORISED AMONGST THE OTHER BLUE-CHIP GRAFFITI/STREET ART LEADERS, THIS IS HIS TIME TO BREAK THROUGH.**”

Andy Valmorbida, International Fine Art Entrepreneur

“DEFER IS ONE OF LOS ANGELES’S MOST RESPECTED GRAFFITI ARTISTS, AND HE HAS BECOME RENOWNED FOR HIS PIONEERING STYLE AND UNIQUE APPROACH TO LETTERING. HIS WORK IS A FUSION OF TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES AND CONTEMPORARY MOTIFS, AND HE HAS A DISTINCTIVE ABILITY TO BLEND URBAN STYLES WITH ELEMENTS OF TRADITIONAL JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY. DEFER’S USE OF COLOR AND COMPOSITION IS EXCEPTIONAL, AND HE HAS AN INCREDIBLE ATTENTION TO DETAIL THAT IS REFLECTED IN EVERY PIECE HE CREATES.”





I had the incredible opportunity to witness DEFER in action as he tackled the monumental task of bringing his signature style to life on a massive 45 X 25-meter wall in Los Angeles this past January. Watching him work was nothing short of awe-inspiring, as he effortlessly brought his artistic vision to life, completing the entire mural in just 12 hours. His incredible skill and unwavering dedication to his craft are truly unmatched.

We are thrilled to announce that DEFER will be joining us for the opening, and we look forward to introducing him to as many of you as possible.

In conclusion, collecting artwork by DEFER is an essential piece of history that helped shape and scale this famous Los Angeles style of graffiti, which we all know and love. The work rate, energy, and passion he has given to his practice over the years are undeniable, and I have no doubt that we will be hearing and seeing a lot more from DEFER in years to come.

I hope you enjoy ‘Spiritual Language’ by DEFER and your visit to Woodbury House, and many thanks for your continued support.

Yours Faithfully,

Joseph Bannan
Gallery Director





Alex 'DEFER' Kizu

SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

It is with great pleasure that I present my debut exhibition in the United Kingdom, 'Spiritual Language,' hosted by the renowned Woodbury House in the heart of Mayfair, London.

This exhibition is a representation of my unique approach to artmaking, showcasing a diverse range of paintings that feature a multitude of letter forms and styles. Each piece embodies what I term as 'Spiritual Language,' which also serves as the title of the show.

'Spiritual Language' represents a sublime state of being or "flow state" that I enter while creating my paintings. It is in this state that my brush and paint flow freely on various surfaces, leading to the obliteration of structured form and the emergence of a transcendent language that has no limits.

To me, art is a medium of boundless expression that transcends conventional boundaries. As such, this exhibition represents an eclectic array of styles, angles, and modes, showcasing the limitless possibilities of artistic expression.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this exhibition a reality. The journey has been a beautiful challenge that spanned two continents, and I am honoured and thrilled to present my work in such a magnificent city as London.

Thank you for joining me on this journey of artistic exploration & I hope you find the works on display inspiring and thought-provoking.



Alex 'DEFER' Kizu

ROGER GASTMAN ON DEFER

There are countless words I could use to describe how incredible of an artist DEFER is and how much of a significant role he's played in the development of the 1980s Los Angeles scene, which has gotten us to this global scale we're at today.

His work ethic is unmatched and his loyalty to his friends, roots and collaborators is equally as impressive. **DEFER** is a true original, an artist that's always evolving, learning, and pushing the boundaries of expectation. Above all, and most importantly, **DEFER** is the epitome of authenticity, a quality that arguably stands above all the rest."

"DEFER IS A TRUE ORIGINAL, AN ARTIST THAT'S ALWAYS EVOLVING, LEARNING, AND PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF EXPECTATION."

Roger Gastman
Curator | Writer | Graffiti Historian | Collector

Founder
Beyond The Streets | Control Gallery

ROGER GASTMAN



Roger Gastman, Beyond The Streets





Shepard Fairey, Contemporary Artist

“DEFER’S ART CAPTURES THE ESSENCE OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PART OF A COMMUNITY, TO EXPRESS ONESELF THROUGH THE LANGUAGE OF THE STREET, AND TO EMBRACE THE POWER OF IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY.”

Martha Cooper, Photojournalist

“ALEX DEFER KIZU’S WORK IS A CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT, INFUSED WITH A SENSE OF JOY AND WONDER THAT INSPIRES US TO EMBRACE THE BEAUTY AND DIVERSITY OF THE WORLD AROUND US.”



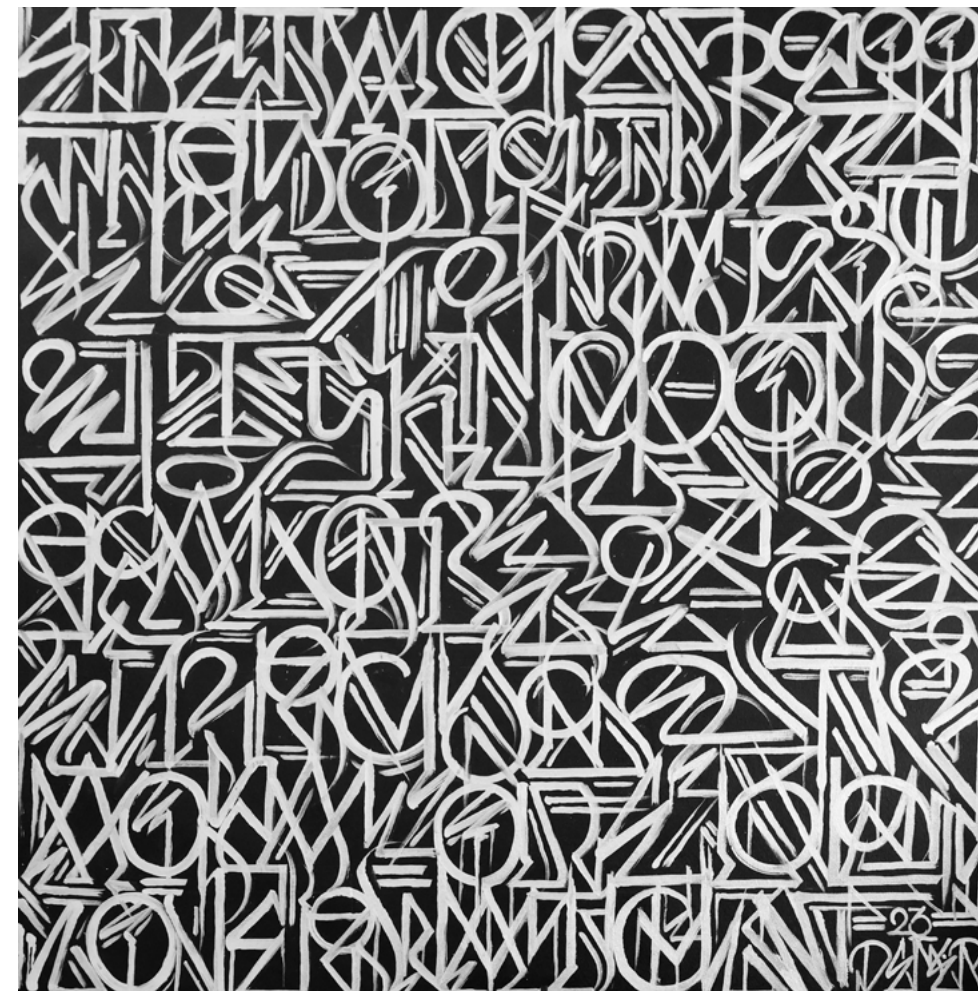
Defer
Stay Gold, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
197.3 x 161.9 cm



Defer
Reign 23, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
197.4 x 160.7 cm



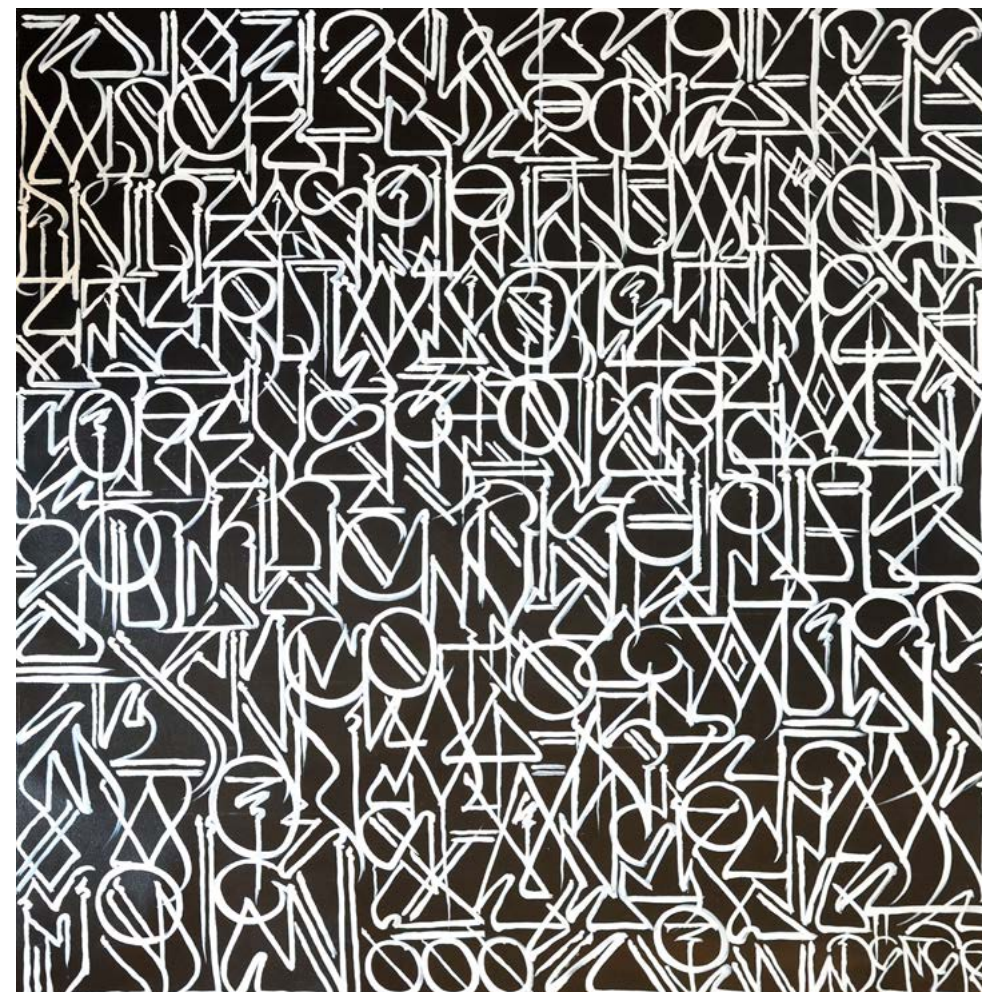
Defer
 Ready Red, 2023
 Acrylic On Canvas
 162.3 x 147.9 cm



Defer
 Raider 23, 2023
 Acrylic On Canvas
 161.3 x 151.8 cm



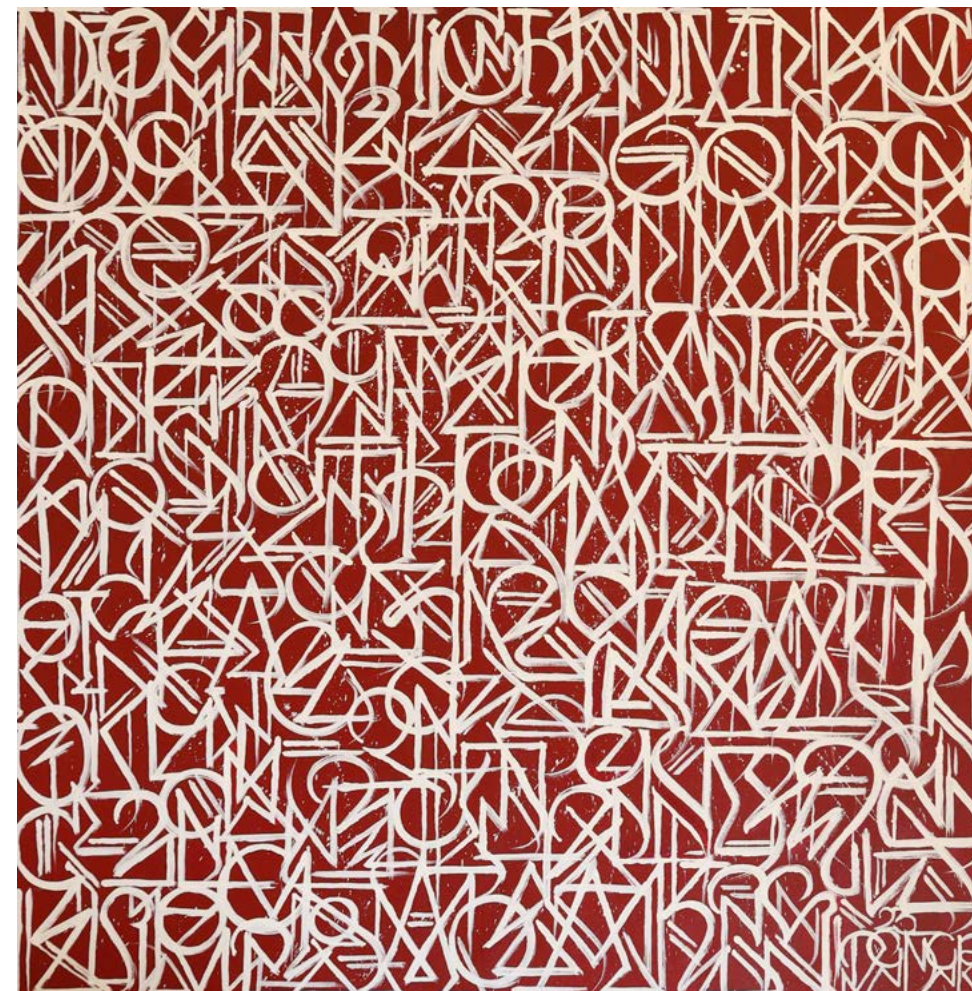
Defer
Oceans 23, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
154.1 x 162.4 cm



Defer
Love Deluxe, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
200 x 161 cm



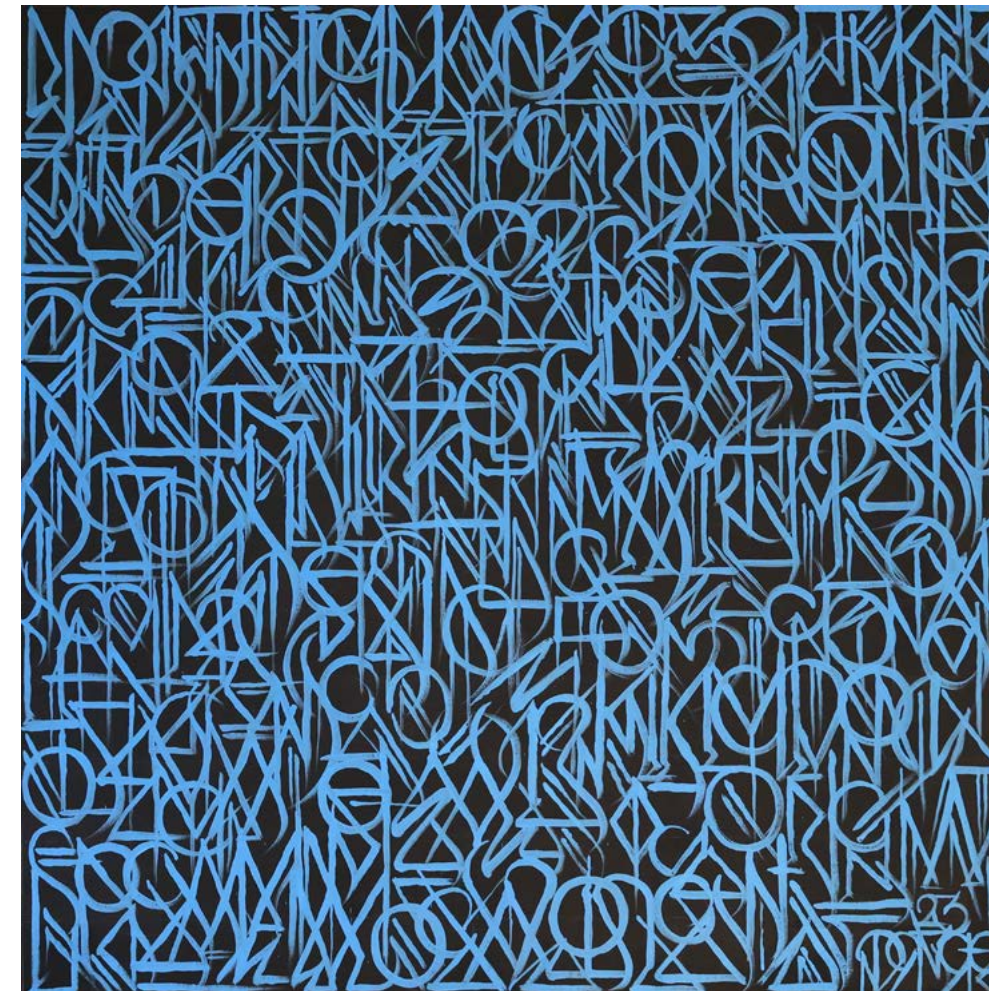
Defer
Goldie, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
161.3 x 155.2 cm



Defer
Burgundy, 2023
Acrylic On Canvas
161.2 x 155 cm



Defer
 Blk & Yellow, 2023
 Acrylic On Canvas
 161.8 x 150.9 cm



Defer
 Baby Blue, 2023
 Acrylic On Canvas
 161.2 x 154.2 cm

Additional Works
To Be Revealed.

Additional Works
To Be Revealed.



DEFER EXHIBITIONS

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2023

‘Spiritual Language’ by Defer,
Woodbury House, London

2018

Alex “Defer” Kizu: Skyroom ,L.A.
Louver Galleries ,Venice, Los
Angeles, California, USA

Selected Group Exhibitions

2022

Alphabet Soup II, Eastern Projects,
Chinatown, Los Angeles, California,
USA

Fast Forward: The Future Is Equal,
Bermudez Projects, Cypress
Avenue, Los Angeles, California,
USA

The LA 6 and The Underground,
Torrance Art Museum, Torrance,
California, USA

2021

Beyond The Streets On Paper,
Southampton Arts Center,
Southampton, New York, USA

POW! WOW! The First Decade:
From Hawaii To The World,
Thinkspace Projects, Culver City,
Los Angeles, California, USA

2020

ONLINE: New Rules, Fabien
Castanier Gallery, Little Haiti, Miami,
Florida, USA

ONLINE: One World, Fabien
Castanier Gallery, Little Haiti, Miami,
Florida, USA

A Major Minority Group Show:
Graffuturism 10 Year Anniversary,
Mirus Gallery, San Francisco,
San Francisco, California, USA

Beyond The Streets Presented
by NTWRK, Virtual Fair

2019

Pow! Wow! Hawaii: Exploring the
New Contemporary Movement VI,
Thinkspace Projects, Honolulu,
Hawaii, USA

Beyond The Streets, New York, USA

2018

Evolver, L.A. Louver Galleries,
Venice, Los Angeles, California, USA

2017

Mark Making, Fabien Castanier
Gallery, Los Angeles, Culver City,
California, USA

2016

Roll Call: 11 Artists from L.A.,
L.A. Louver Galleries, Venice, Los
Angeles, California, USA

2015

L.A. Muralists: In Their Studios II,
Couturier Gallery, Park La Brea, Los
Angeles, California, USA

2014

Bridging Homeboy Industries:
Fabian Debora, Alex Kizu and Juan
Carlos Muñoz Hernandez, Robert V.
Fullerton Art Museum, CSUSB,
San Bernardino, California, USA

Carlo McCormick,
Culture Critic & Curator

“DEFER’S WORK IS A TRUE TESTAMENT TO THE POWER OF GRAFFITI TO EVOLVE, TO MATURE, AND TO LEAVE AN INDELIBLE MARK ON THE ART WORLD.”

Triston Eaton, Artist

“ALEX DEFER KIZU IS A MASTER OF HIS CRAFT, BLENDING TRADITIONAL GRAFFITI LETTERING WITH CONTEMPORARY ART TECHNIQUES TO CREATE TRULY UNIQUE AND CAPTIVATING WORKS.”



LAVINIA DE ROTHSCHILD ON DEFER

DEFER, a true visionary and trailblazer in the realm of Los Angeles graffiti art, masterfully orchestrates an entrancing symphony in 'Spiritual Language,' harmoniously merging the essence of hand style with intricate patterns and cultural motifs. This captivating collection transcends the limitations of the canvas, forging an intimate bond with the soul and leaving an indelible impact on the ever-evolving world of street art.

As we reflect on the influential figures who have shaped LA street art history, DEFER emerges as a true visionary, possessing unparalleled artistic skill and pedigree. A pioneering force among the first generation of Los Angeles graffiti writers, his work has not only left an indelible mark on the city's street art legacy but has also charted a course for a promising and inspiring future.

With remarkable precision and finesse, DEFER has transformed his unique hand-style into a visually arresting art form that transcends the boundaries of traditional street art. His awe-inspiring abstract masterpieces, such as the works curated within 'Spiritual Language,' seamlessly meld intricate typographic elements, cultural motifs, and complex patterns, creating a breath-taking visual experience that resonates deeply within the soul.

Lavinia de Rothschild

“HIS AWE-INSPIRING ABSTRACT MASTERPIECES, SUCH AS THE WORKS CURATED WITHIN “SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE,” SEAMLESSLY MELD INTRICATE TYPOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS, CULTURAL MOTIFS, AND COMPLEX PATTERNS, CREATING A BREATH-TAKING VISUAL EXPERIENCE THAT RESONATES DEEPLY WITHIN THE SOUL.”

As DEFER continues to push the boundaries of artistic expression, his influence on the street art world remains undeniable and profoundly inspiring.

Through strategic partnerships, like the one with **Woodbury House** – a beacon of artistic brilliance where creative minds converge, passionately shaping the future of the global art scene – DEFER’S already exceptional trajectory ascends to even greater heights. This collaboration further solidifies his status as a legend in the LA street art scene and serves as a wellspring of inspiration for generations of artists to come.

The **‘Spiritual Language’** art exhibition presents a ground-breaking union of street art and spirituality, showcasing the extraordinary creations of DEFER. This collection invites you to embark on a transcendent journey through the potent visual language of urban art, diving deep into its spiritual resonance.

DEFER’S unrivalled talent and visionary perspective have created a mesmerising body of work that bridges the chasm between the streets and the ethereal realm. His bold murals, vibrant colours and intricate calligraphic patterns reveal the spiritual currents that course beneath the surface of our urban landscape.

Drawing inspiration from an eclectic array of cultural and spiritual traditions, DEFER’S art stands as a testament to the universal human experience. By blending elements of graffiti, street culture, and sacred symbolism, he has forged a ground-breaking artistic language that transcends conventional boundaries and speaks directly to the soul.

As you immerse yourself in this mesmerising exhibition, you'll uncover the profound connections between the urban environment and the spiritual world. Each piece serves as a visual mantra, guiding you toward self-discovery and awakening a deeper understanding of the sacred energy that permeates our surroundings.

‘Spiritual Language’ is more than just an art show; it's an invitation to experience the transformative power of street art as a catalyst for spiritual growth and heightened self-awareness. Delve into the vibrant world of DEFER'S creations and unravel the hidden wisdom of the streets, where the power of art and spirituality converge in a symphony of colours, shapes, and symbols. Embrace the journey and let the spiritual language of DEFER’S street art guide you towards a new level of consciousness and connection in partnership with **Woodbury House**, shaping the future of the global art scene.

Lavinia de Rothschild
Rothschild Fine Art
Animal Freedom Organization



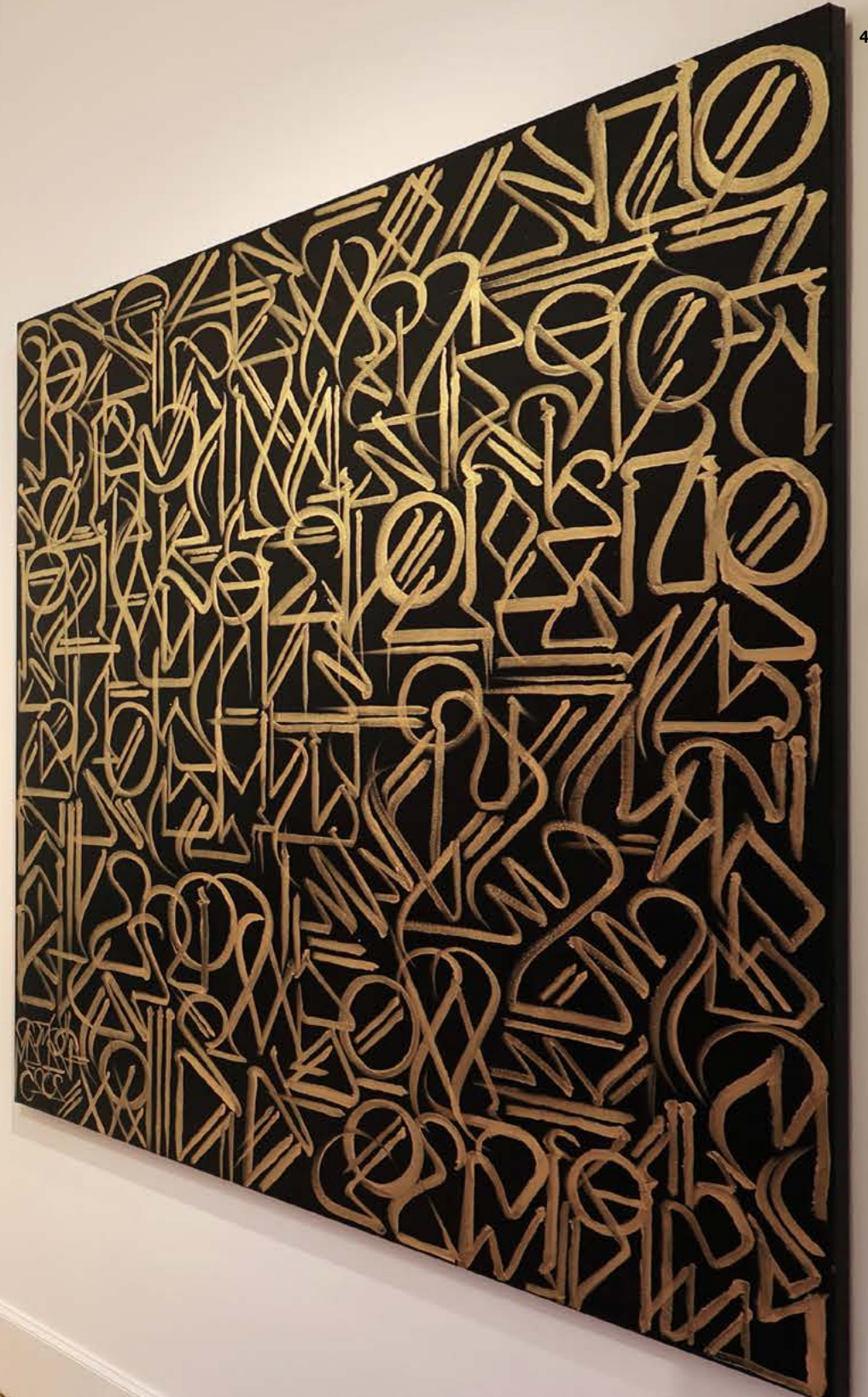
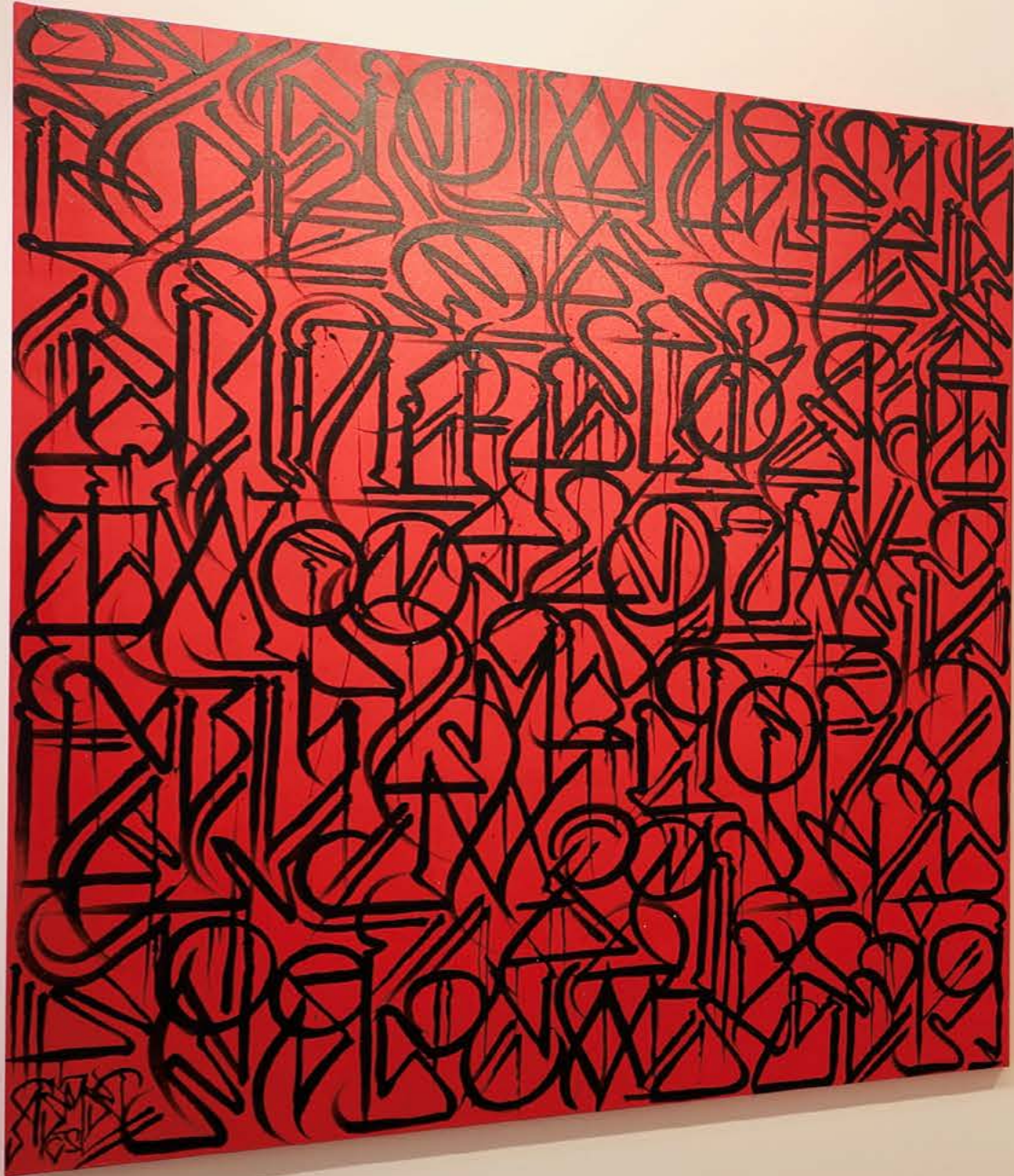


REVOK, Graffiti Artist

“ALEX DEFER KIZU’S ART IS A CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND INDIVIDUALITY, CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF WHAT MAKES STREET CULTURE SO POWERFUL AND TRANSFORMATIVE.”

SABER, Graffiti Artist & Muralist

“ALEX DEFER KIZU’S ART SPEAKS TO THE STREETS AND TO THE SOUL, CAPTURING THE ENERGY AND VIBRANCY OF URBAN CULTURE WITH EVERY STROKE OF HIS BRUSH.”



CONTACT

For more information on works for sale or to arrange a private viewing, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

- T** 0203 750 2222
- E** gallery@woodburyhouseart.com
- W** www.woodburyhouseart.com
- A** 29 Sackville Street, Mayfair, London, W1S 3DX

Opening Hours

Monday - Thursday: 10:00 - 18:00
Friday: 10:00 - 17:00

Please note Woodbury House & the viewing of 'Spiritual Language' is available by appointment only.



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