

KOND THAT WAS, KOND TO BE

Goal

To encourage the transformation of Yerevan's most ancient neighborhood of Kond into an area of historical, cultural and touristic significance for the city.

Objectives

- Invite local and international graffiti artists to give Kond's drabby streets an interesting 'facelift'
- Help anchor Kond's historic neighborhood into Yerevan's city centre with unique attractions
- Encourage the government to reinvest into preserving the city's oldest Armenian district.

Project Description & Background

Yerevan is a city older than Rome, but Kond is the Armenian capital's oldest surviving district. Perched on top of a rolling hill just west of the city center, Kond has been continuously inhabited for over a thousand years. While the city became a battleground for the interests of Persian, Arab and Russian rulers, Kond preserved its uniquely character.

Despite its significance to the city's Armenian identity, the neighborhood has decayed over the years. Its ancient cobblestone streets have been haphazardly asphalted over and cheap emergency repairs dominate the look of some houses in what could be a well preserved medieval neighborhood. Inhabitants sometimes lack basic sanitation. The soviets had deliberately denied these services as the whole neighborhood was slated for demolition. Thankfully, the USSR's collapse and a lack of funds ended those plans.

The Kond Gallery initiative was the brainchild of local street artist **Sergey Navasardyan**. Trained as an artist, he began by painting on the walls of his house, and then moved on to urban streets. He calls his art form "**Yerevantropics**" because of the signature palm trees which appear throughout his work. He believes that murals are more than just art, they protect the urban environment.

The initiative aims to kickstart the historic neighborhood's revival as a cultural hub for the city. We decided to help Sergey in his mission to rekindle Kond's value by inviting two internationally renowned graffiti artists, and teaming them up with 5 local counterparts, we plan to facelift the area. Sergey designs managed to convince homeowners in the neighborhood to let us paint over some of the more ugly concrete constructions with unique and creative decals which would surely attract urban explorers and "ruin porn" enthusiasts to the area.

If all goes well, Kond's new street art might signal a sense of gentrification for the neighborhood. Those coming to see the murals might want to sit at a cafe in a historic building. Others might find new value in the homes and alleys around them. Through spontaneous action, Kond could become a natural progression of the city centre, with young people traveling up the winding alleys to visit cultural centres, restaurants or bars.

By kickstarting Kond revival, we hope to draw the municipality's attention to the neighborhood. They might just be convinced to spend money into rebuilding infrastructure and preserving the historic character rather than bulldozing a part of history.

Join us to make Kond come alive!

Budget

ITEM	TOTAL AMD
Tickets for two international artists	₴790,000
Accommodation	₴220,000
Painting materials	₴2,000,000
Promotional materials	₴300,000

The exchange rate as of May 2nd, 2019

1 USD = 475 AMD

TOTAL

₴3,310,000