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# Viral Houston artist who painted Ukraine message on 'Be Someone' bridge wants to make a difference

 **Ryan Nickerson, Staff writer**  
Updated: March 8, 2022 8:41 a.m.



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'No War Know Peace' has been painted one usual spot of Houston's iconic 'Be Someone' graffiti as Ukraine if

NO WAR KNOW PEACE HAS BEEN PAINTED ONE USUAL SPOT OF HOUSTON'S ICONIC BE SOMEONE GRAFFITI AS UKRAINE IS  
attacked by the Russian military. Monday, Feb. 28, 2022, in Houston.

Marie D. De Jesús/Staff photographer

Chandrika Metivier considers themselves fearless.

Two weeks ago, Metivier was taking a personal safety risk on a bridge above I-45, painting the words 'No War Know Peace' in protest of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine where the infamous "Be Someone" graffiti lived for years.

**OnHoustonChronicle.com:** [Live updates: Ukraine, Russia report progress in talks](#)

This is the third time the mid-twenty-year-old made the risky decision to change the sign and hopes that by claiming their name to the alteration, along with their recent viral TikTok moment, the Houston-based multidisciplinary artist will control the direction their artistic career will go.

"There's probably no other way I wanted to emerge into the public eye," Metivier said. "There have been opportunities to go in a very corporate industry route."

"I never wanted that."



**ch4ndrika**  
Houston, Texas



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*No War Know Peace, 2022.*

"The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service; the fruit of service is peace." -Mother Teresa

This piece speaks for itself. I'm advocating for peace. Our time on Earth is short and we need to help the next generation live in a world that is peaceful and united. We all have a role to play in promoting this—above all our diversity, differences, mutual distrust and animosity.

It's now or never.

#NoWarKnowPeace

Metivier graduated from Lamar Consolidated High School in Rosenberg and started their artistic career in graphic design. As they continued to progress, Metivier's passions and hobbies started to intersect with their art, turning them into a multidisciplinary artist that works through different mediums. Metivier now works with the material Mylar, to create, "instinctual, raw, and inimitable large scale sculptures," that, "serve as a reflection of ourselves and our era," according to their artist website.





Chandrika Metivier has changed the 'Be Someone' sign three times. They hope their activism is indicative of their artistic career.

Staff Photo

Metivier has always been interested in grassroots organizing and calls to action, one of the reasons they first changed the 'Be Someone' graffiti to read 'Vote or Die' before the 2020 presidential election.

"I really just wanted to empower people to vote," Metivier said. "I wanted it to be as neutral as possible but also enough to spark conversation. Something about using that slogan, which was coined by Diddy, gets the conversation going. And that's exactly what happened."

Metivier said they are fully aware of the risks of vandalizing the bridge. According to the Houston Police Department, the city does have a graffiti ordinance that treats the crime as a misdemeanor if the damage is less than \$500, and a felony if damages are more than \$500. A spokesperson for the Houston Police Department said that the legality of the 'Be Someone' bridge graffiti is tricky because the railway is owned by Union Pacific. The Chronicle reached out to Union Pacific about the graffiti but did not receive a response.

Aside from the legal ramifications, it's also dangerous, from the painting process to getting there in the first place. "There's like a two foot gap where the highway is. So you could fall," Metivier said.

**PREVIEW:** [Dawoud Bey's MFAH photography exhibit shows off an American original](#)

For Metivier, the point of painting messages like "No War Know Peace" is to make a difference.

"There have been times when there have been meaningless messages on the bridge," Metivier said. "So I'm like, I'm gonna get my message up there because no one else is going to go up there and do it."

## Going viral in Los Angeles

Metivier was in Los Angeles three weeks ago walking along Skid Row - an area in Los Angeles known to have many people who are experiencing homelessness. Metivier came across a man named James Safari Parker who built a makeshift shelter on the street. His home recently went viral on TikTok and Metivier recognized the home and the first thing they thought was, "I should wrap it."

They ordered as much Mylar material as possible and with Parker's permission, began wrapping the home in Metivier's artistic style.

Parker watched Metivier wrap his home for about six hours before they were captured on TikTok.

"That video has over a million likes and it was all unplanned," Metivier said. With their increased popularity, Metivier set up a GoFundMe to help rehouse Parker.

"As far as my activism goes, it couldn't have gone better," Metivier said. "And I don't really view this in particular as fame, I do see a lot more traffic to my page and more people know my name, but I'm like finally, give me the torch because I can do good with it. My intent is pure."

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