

# ZAP 12 Educational Experiences – Jorge Ceja (Vezun), mural artist

## ZAP 12 on Mt. Charleston - Kyle Canyon Utility Box Art

Hello. If you are reading this, it is possible that you are interested in painting a Zap box or are curious about what it was like for me to paint mine.

I Arriving at my Zap box for the first time, I took the first attached picture and circled the box. I thought to myself, “I have to paint this big box.” And it may seem to be that straight forward, just painting a big box. I circled it and tried to think about what I was going to do. In my first look at the box, I missed a lot. There were many things about painting it that are not obvious, at first. Things that you become aware of as you go. I >



In this first photograph notice the five handles. While painting the primer coats I learned that in painting around these handles, missing a spot occurs frequently. It is difficult to see behind the handle while painting around it. You often times don't notice the missed spots until much later while you are doing something else. In addition to the handles notice the space above the doors, the space in between the doors and the space below the doors. It is difficult to anticipate, but this space is not easily accessible and painting it often results in missed spots. Even after going back and forth multiple times around an area there are often missed spots. At first I was trying to be conscious of these depressed areas, but after a while I had to forget about them and focus on the main panels as these depressed areas are really only visible when you look for them. II >

II I have included this photograph as an example of what the work-in-progress area may have looked like at any given time. Notice the masked-off areas. I used blue painters tape and newspaper. On top of the newspaper I placed rocks because of the wind. Directly in front of the large box I used a tarp.



### III, IV, V & VI

I have included these four photographs (*below*) as examples of an obvious



task that is part of the job; leaving the stickers visible. **III** This is the way the area with the most stickers looked like before I started prepping the box. I masked-off the stickers with blue painters tape. **IV** This is the same area, after I had painted it. **V** I removed the blue painters tape with a painting knife. **VI** After removing the stickers this side looked like this.

**VII & VIII** After I had already masked-off everything and started painting I came upon this problematic area which I had not noticed or considered, before. Not just static handles, the top one is a latch and the one below it is a lever. Both are moving parts and could have been required to be in use. Painting around them was a challenge as they could not simply have been masked-off. **VII & VIII** >



**IX & X** In these two photographs you can see that in this area, where the metal box and the concrete floor meet, there is a brown



object which does not appear to be concrete. (I still am still not sure what this material is.)

< **IX & X**

**XI & XII** In these two photographs (*below*), where the metal box and the concrete platform meet there is possibly a rubber (?) barrier, to take into account.

**IX, X, XI, & XII** After I finished the painting, I removed the blue painters tape. In the process of removing it some paint was pulled off, probably because of the brown object and the rubber barrier; these bare areas had to be touched-up. In this area, where the bottom of the box meets whatever is below it, there can be brittle areas where if something breaks or paint flakes-off, it can affect how the painting looks because the eye thinks that this is part of the painting.



^ **IX & X** ^

Painting outdoors on a mountain brought with it some other surprises; by the end of the first day of working on the box, there were gnats everywhere - gnats all about me, gnats in my face, gnats in the primer, gnats on the wet surface that I was painting. There is no rule book that says how to proceed at such a point. This first day of painting, I was claiming this little piece of the mountain to be, and be around. The next morning when I arrived some animal had gone to the bathroom at the corner of that space to let me know what he/she thought of that claim. One day, I showed up to find a big new spider web across the front of the box. There were gnats on other days as well. I hadn't noticed that in addition to gnats and other animals, the wind had also blown some of the rabbit brush into my painting **XIII**.



**XIII** ^

All in all, it proved to be more than 'just painting a big box'.