

AUTHENTICATION
IN ART

AiA news-service



Mercedes-Benz sues in dispute with artists over Detroit murals

Auto company accuses the artists, including Windsor, Ont., painter, of engaging in an 'aggressive shakedown'

The Associated Press · Posted: Sep 12, 2019 12:57 PM ET | Last Updated: September 12



The ad in the Detroit dispute was posted on Mercedes-Benz's Instagram account in January 2018. (United States District Court - Eastern District of Michigan)

Mercedes-Benz USA is asking a judge to protect it from legal action over its use of images of Detroit outdoor murals in social media posts.

The company said four artists threatened to file a lawsuit after their works appeared last year in Instagram posts about the G 500 Series truck. Mercedes-Benz removed the posts, although it insists it didn't infringe on copyrights and was entitled to fair use of the murals.

The company has accused the artists of engaging in an "aggressive shakedown."

One of those artists is internationally renowned: Windsor, Ont.-based Daniel Bombardier, also known as Denial, who painted a mural in Detroit's Eastern Market in September 2017.



The mural is located at the corner of Russell Street and Division Street in Detroit's Eastern Market district. (Daniel Bombardier)

The Mercedes-Benz court filing said the street art is "exempt from protection under the Architectural Works Copyright Protection Act."

Lawyer Jeff Gluck said any original work is entitled to copyright protection, regardless of its location. Gluck asked the courts to dismiss the lawsuit from Mercedes-Benz.

Detroit federal Judge Avern Cohn on Wednesday rejected that request.