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**LOCAL ARTIST AND ART EDUCATOR, DAN SMITH AKA SEEDANPAINT,
NAMED ATHFEST THEME ARTIST FOR 2020**

AthFest Educates, the nonprofit that puts on the AthFest Music & Arts Festival and the AthHalf Half Marathon and 5K, announced that Dan Smith will be the theme artist for both events in 2020.

Smith has been making and teaching art in Athens for decades, using the moniker SEEDANPAINT for his artwork. In addition to making art that can be seen all around town, including several pieces at The World Famous downtown, Smith taught art at local elementary and high schools for twenty years. Currently, Smith is working on a PhD at the University of Georgia in Art Education and works as the Fine Arts and Physical Education Curriculum Coordinator at the Clarke County School District.

Smith says being the theme artist for AthFest is a “Bucket List item” for him. “I’ve applied to do it before and have been beat out by friends, who I was happy for, but this year it was great to be asked.” He says his art will be, “something cartoonish, something monsterish. I’ve got lots of ideas right now and will hopefully come up with something cool.”

Smith, who has received AthFest Educates grants for his work with students in the past says, “I love that the AthFest Educates mission feeds the whole artistic scene here in that it pays and values artists for their work, and exposes kids to working artists and arts that they might not otherwise meet or experience. And having art in our classrooms and schools like that has kids surrounded by it and part of their daily experience, which is great.”

His AthFest Educates grants included bringing in artist Patrick Dean to show students his work and another to bring in artist Jamie Calkin to do a big mural with kids at Barnett Shoals Elementary.

AthFest Educates Executive Director, Jill Helme said, “We are so excited to have Dan’s work to theme this year’s events. His work is so playful and colorful and fun and perfectly reflects the spirit of our events and of Athens itself. We also especially love that Dan has been an AthFest Educates grantee, so he really gets the mission and work of our organization on that level.”

Smith received both a BFA in Painting and a MAEd in Art Education from the University of Georgia. He developed a technique he calls Spontaneous Monsterfication, in part influenced by the Saturday morning cartoons of his childhood, punk rock culture and the art of skateboards. His art will be featured on logos, promotional materials, advertisements and merchandise for the 2020 AthFest Music & Arts Festival (June 26-28 in downtown Athens) and the AthHalf Half Marathon and 5K in October.

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