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# Band's graffiti earns a spray from council

Christine Sams  
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A GUERILLA graffiti campaign by one of the world's biggest rock bands has copped a spray from Sydney City officials.

Green Day has used nine painted murals and dozens of painted stencil images to promote its new album 21st Century Breakdown .

But the City of Sydney Council will quiz the band's record company, Warner Music, about whether it had permission to use graffiti to advertise the CD release.

Critics say the murals, which appeared in inner-city suburbs including Newtown and Surry Hills, along with 80 spray stencils in skate parks across Sydney, have a commercial purpose because it depicts the cover art for the album.

"Murals and public artworks require development approval including consent from the property owner," a City of Sydney spokesman said. "The [council] is investigating the graffiti. Graffiti on building hoardings is required to be removed by the developer. The [council's] general approach is to remove graffiti quickly and consistently to help maintain the appearance of our city while discouraging repeat incidents."

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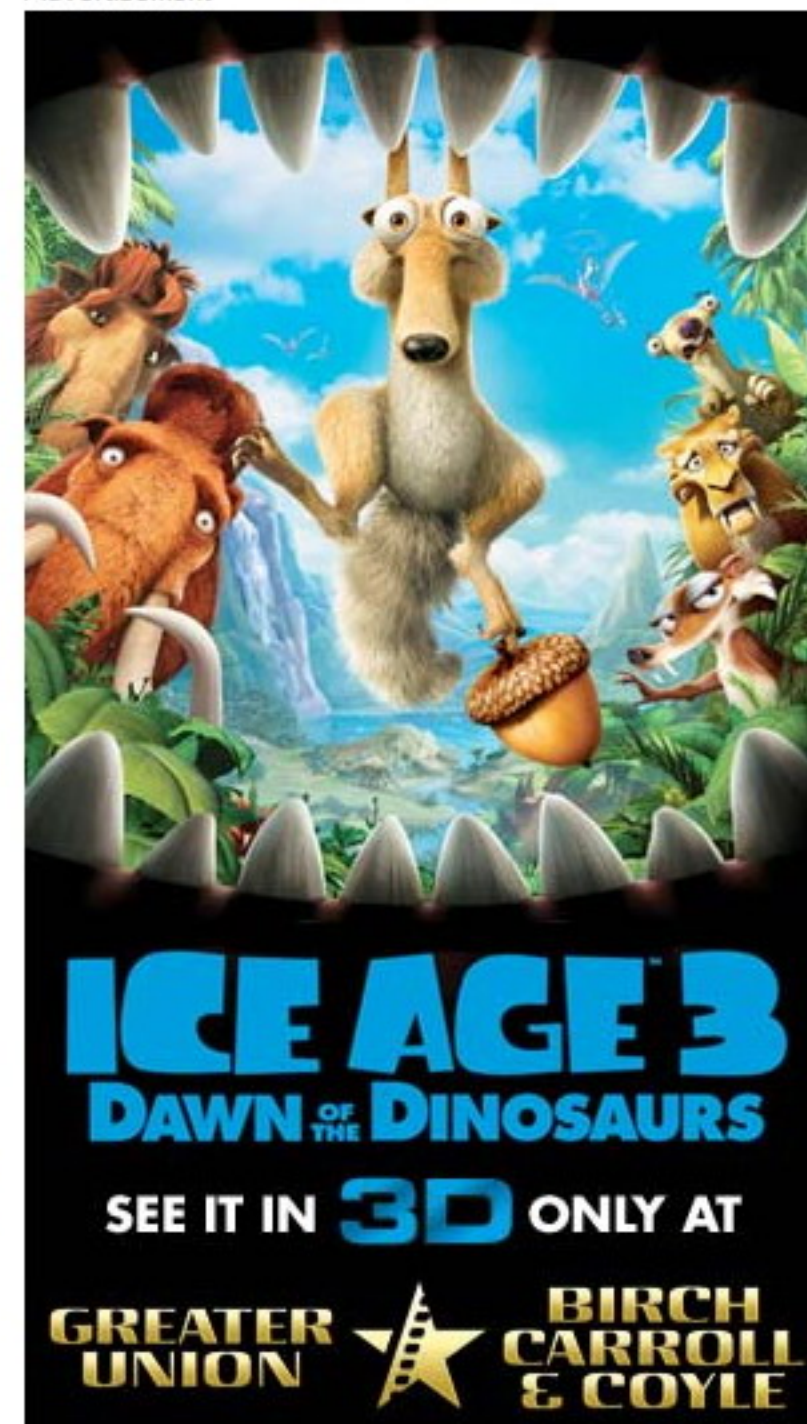
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Warner Music paid an independent Surry Hills company, Mr Perso & Detch, to create the graffiti advertising campaign. At least one large mural, in Newtown, has already attracted the ire of local street artists - with the words "cash cow" now scrawled over the top.

Warner Music said it thought the street art campaign in Sydney and Melbourne was legitimate because of the deal struck with Mr Perso & Detch. "They are a legal spray-painting, a legal graffiti company, so they have designated spots," said Mark Ashbridge, Warner Music's vice-president of marketing and promotions. When asked whether a fee was paid to council or an application lodged for approval, Mr Ashbridge said: "I don't know."

"As a record company and a marketer, we contracted the company and we're thinking that basically they've got the rights to do that. We didn't really check in terms of whether or not the company had the approval, we would assume such, considering they are a viable company that we're using for a marketing campaign," he said.

Mr Ashbridge said the Green Day deal involved multiple sites across Sydney. "There were six mega-sites - two in Newtown, one in Drummoyne, one in Bondi, one in Paddo and one in Surry Hills. And then there were standard sites - a third one in Newtown, another one in Bondi and another one in Surry Hills. We did 80 spray stencils around Sydney's skate parks. It was a more interesting way of making something a bit more arty."

Staff at Mr Perso & Detch were unavailable for comment.

Source: [The Sydney Morning Herald](#)

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