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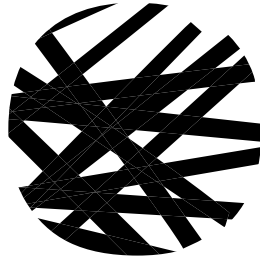
Graffiti,
Street Art &

Urban Creativity
Scientific Journal

Changing times: Tactics
Vol. 4 / Nº 1

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PROGRAMA DOUTORAL **HERITAS** – ESTUDOS DE PATRIMÓNIO [Ref.ª: PD/00297/2013]
[Programas de Doutoramento Nacionais e Internacionais – 2013]

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Changing times: Tactics

Editorial, Pedro Soares Neves

Articles

Essays / Working papers

Review

Invited authors

Pedro Soares Neves
Executive committee
SAUC Scientific Journal Editor

After Urban Creativity Lisbon activities (5,6 and 7 of July 2018) here is presented the 4th Volume of SAUC Journal, reaching other audiences and building an ongoing trajectory of recognition aimed to the highest standards, not only academic and or institutional, but above all production and practice-oriented. Engaging with a big heterogeneity of disciplines, focused on graffiti, street art as subjects of theorization and practice, towards the definition of an academic and professional disciplinary field of Urban Creativity. The 2018 activities thematic "about time" aimed the objective of problematizing the chronological constraints of street art, graffiti, and urban creativity in general. Reinforcing the idea of the atemporal, potentially interpreted as something indissociable of human nature, linking 30000 old archeological findings with today. If in the conference we used 3 venues, Main Auditorium, Lagoa Henriques of Fine Arts Faculty Auditoriums, and the Auditorium of Cascais Cultural Center, were more that 80 participants had the opportunity to share perspectives from more that 20 disciplinary fields, and 35 countries. Here in the 2018 edition of SAUC, Volume 4, with near 40 contributions distributed in 2 journal issues.

This issue 1, "Changing times: Tactics" gathers contributes about the Displacement of the Street Art Aesthetic (OSGEMEOS in the white cube), looking at a City-wide Art Gallery or The Pixed City the Body-Landscape, Aesthetics of Change with Multiculturalism. Also Sustainable Graffiti Management Solutions for Public Areas and street art and Copyright hard areas of approach. And more soft approaches (based on human sciences) on and Against Street Signs: On Art Made out of Street Signs, Work and play, in Line or within Graffiti-Writing traditions and Street Art innovations. Visioning with the posturban paradigm and where street art and graffiti are not (going to be), the evolution of Halls of Fame, and as a statement: No Tags. No Masterpieces, but also the duality of Image versus writing: from post-graffiti and murals' assault to graffiti's scriptural riposte. Also Graffiti as a catalyst of individual creativity and more broad contents about Documenting graffiti culture. All brave Paths also documenting Graffiti on trains, photography and Subterráneos.

With contributions from Germany, Iran, Brazil, Australia, UK, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Austria, Portugal, and France.

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Approaching the White Cube or Approximating the Streets
OSGEMEOS and the Displacement of the Street Art Aesthetic

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Abstract

The work of OSGEMEOS is used to shed light on the issues arising from the intersection between the realms of street art and high art. The paradox of displacing street art into a gallery or museum setting is discussed, with a particular focus on the transitional period for OSGEMEOS from 2005 to 2010, during which they established their position as artists spanning the gap between the street art scene and the institutional art world. In the first section, the critical discourse surrounding three of their exhibitions within gallery settings are analyzed in this context, alongside pertinent statements made by the artists. In the second section, the focus shifts to the highest profile commissioned work for these artists during this phase in their careers, their 2008 mural on the façade of the Tate Modern for the exhibition titled "Street Art." The debate surrounding the limitations concerning the displacement of street art and forces of institutionalization are presented and discussed in the context of this artwork as an attempt to gain a clearer understanding of this dilemma.

Keywords: OSGEMEOS, street art, urban aesthetic, institutionalization

1. Introduction

As graffiti and street art become institutionalized on an international level, there are two perspectives one could take: first, that these movements are becoming ever more displaced from their original context, with museums and galleries putting on exhibitions of "street art" within their walls, and second, that the "urban aesthetic" (Bengtsen, 2014: 76) that has been shaped by the body of work of graffiti and street artists is steadily establishing itself as a worldwide visual culture. Spurred on by these developments in the relationship between the street art scene and the world of art institutions, as represented by art galleries and museums, OSGEMEOS were catapulted onto an international stage in the last decade, thus positioning them directly in the middle of this debate.

After being featured in various graffiti magazines, both Brazilian and international, as well as in the book *Graffiti Brasil* in 2005, OSGEMEOS gained attention from various galleries, museums, and other institutions for commissioned works and exhibitions. They were chosen to represent Latin America in a project for the Olympic games in Athens in 2004, for which they painted their first international large-scale commissioned piece, the *Giant of Volos*. Promoted by New York gallerist Jeffrey Deitch, they exhibited work at Art Basel Miami Beach in 2006. Back home in Brazil, after participating in several group exhibitions, they had their first solo exhibition in Brazil at the Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo, in July 2006. In 2008 they were featured in the Tate "Street Art" exhibition, where they also produced a giant version of one of their quintessential yellow characters, bony-legged and nude, yet masked and holding a bundle of CCTV security cameras. Over the course of the following decade, they were involved in many more high-profile commissions and exhibitions. Their rise in popularity on the international art scene presents a variety of issues that are critical for the analysis of their art and offer the potential to gain insight into the effects of the museumification and institutionalization of the street art aesthetic, which is why the work of OSGEMEOS and the discourse surrounding it will be used here as a case study for the analysis of these processes.

The prominence that OSGEMEOS had gained in the street art and graffiti scenes for their prolific uncommissioned

work in Brazil helped lead to commissioned projects such as outdoor murals on urban walls, both public and private. However, as they began to attract attention from galleries and museums, a variety of questions arose, such as whether the authenticity of the street art or graffiti spirit can be preserved when their work is removed from the context of the urban landscape. Whereas their first high profile piece in the context of a museum – their piece for the 2008 Tate *Street Art* exhibition – was created on the exterior walls, OSGEMEOS have also been involved in several exhibitions within gallery spaces and these have generated a wide variety of responses.

In what follows, the work of OSGEMEOS will be used to shed light on the issues arising from the intersection between the realms of street art and high art. The museumification of graffiti and the paradox of displacing street art into a gallery setting will be discussed, with a particular focus on the transitional period for OSGEMEOS from 2005 to 2010, which was pivotal in terms of establishing their position as artists spanning the gap between the graffiti/street art scene and the institutional art world. In the first section, the critical discourse surrounding three of their early gallery exhibitions from 2006 and 2009 will be analyzed in this context. Furthermore, a selection of statements that the artists themselves have made about this relationship will be critically examined. In the second section, the focus will shift to the highest profile commissioned work for these artists during this phase in their careers, their 2008 mural on the façade of the Tate Modern for the exhibition titled "Street Art." Though the debate surrounding the limitations concerning the displacement of street art and forces of institutionalization is one that goes far beyond the scope of this paper, it will be discussed insofar as it applies to the analysis of the art of OSGEMEOS during this period, the curatorial strategies surrounding their work, and some of the critical reception.

The street art aesthetic is now firmly embedded within a worldwide urban visual culture, yet the nuances of the relationship between this movement and dominant culture remain complex, and the goal of this paper is not to give a definitive answer to this question, but instead to present certain arguments that may lead to a clearer understanding of the dilemma.

2. OSGEMEOS Inside the White Cube

One technique employed by OSGEMEOS that may have helped preserve the spirit of street art for a gallery exhibition was to transform the entire gallery structure itself into a work of art and a metaphor. For their first exhibition at the Galeria Fortes Vilaça in 2006, titled "O Peixe que Comia Estrelas Cadentes" (the fish that ate shooting stars), they turned the exterior walls of the gallery into a giant square yellow head and visitors entered underneath its right ear. Inside the exhibition, the works ranged from wall paintings of fantastic scenes from the alternate world that permeates all of their work, which they call *tritrez*, with a diverse range of their characteristic yellow figures, to a large scale installation in the center consisting of a giant puppet sitting backwards in a boat with a house-like element at its stern. The paintings incorporate many of the same elements that can be found in their work in the streets: their trademark style of characters with yellow skin, almond eyes, and bony limbs, as well as various other fantastic or surrealistic elements and indirect references to Brazilian folklore, yet the works are executed on a scale and with a level of detail that would be next to impossible for an unsanctioned work in an outdoor urban environment. In a review of this exhibition in *ArtForum*, Marek Bartelik comments on the problematic of displacing the street art aesthetic and OSGEMEOS' approaches to dealing with this issue. Bartelik states that OSGEMEOS create "a poignant metaphor for that transition [from the streets to the gallery]" by painting the "giant head on the gallery's facade, as if to enter it was to be devoured" (Bartelik, 2007). One could also interpret this as a metaphor for entering the mind of the artists, with the interior being saturated with images from their dream world *tritrez*, the source of inspiration for the characters and images that they continue to put up illegally in São Paulo and throughout the world. Bartelik sees the dreamlike characters of the interior as a way of exposing the absurdity of that which exists outside of those gallery walls.

"When graffiti leaves the dangerous streets of São Paulo, it becomes more ornamental and cerebral. Osgemeos seem to understand the consequences of such a transition, and that's where this exhibition succeeded the best–in exposing and celebrating the dreamy and artificial aspect of life in a city with one of the highest crime rates in the world." (Bartelik, 2007)

Whereas Bartelik, a Polish-born art critic based in the USA and writing for an international art magazine, validates the significance of OSGEMEOS' exhibition works by discerning a connection to their work in the streets of São Paulo, a Brazilian critic was not so forgiving when discussing OSGEMEOS gallery work in an international setting during that same timeframe.

Marcos Augusto Gonçalves, contributing art critic for the *Folha de São Paulo*, wrote in 2006 with reference to OSGEMEOS appearance at Art Basel Miami that the "criteria are different in the art world" (Gonçalves, 2006: E1). He continues by addressing the issues with the street artists' transition to a gallery setting.

"In the territory of urban visual art, the codes are not the same as those of the art circuit. Works to be shown in an established gallery of contemporary art must display a confrontation with history and with the specific criteria for recognition– even if they have been produced with the intention of ignoring or contesting those criteria." [1] (Gonçalves, 2006: E1)

The implication of this statement is that OSGEMEOS do not display enough of an awareness of the codes of the art world to create a meaningful contribution to the discourse surrounding the displacement of street art into a gallery setting. The criticism becomes more scathing as Gonçalves continues, implying that their gallery work is merely decorative:

"The hype of OSGEMEOS, in the middle of a renewed interest in graffiti, involves an approach to a work that would be able to transcend the urban illustrative universe and gain value in the eyes of collectors –people inclined to pay 41,000 Brazilian Reals to have, in paintings, the famous artists on their walls. The commercial interest, as one can see, exists – but it is not sufficient to determine whether the production of OSGEMEOS will be able to surpass the level of curiosity and decorative character." [2] (Gonçalves, 2006: E1)

Since the article dates from 2006, it represents only the beginning stages of OSGEMEOS foray into the contemporary art circuit, so Gonçalves leaves open the possibility that the artists may in fact make an impact later in their career. However, the tone of the article indicates that the author is skeptical that such a transformation will take place.

Three years later, OSGEMEOS created an exhibition titled "Vertigem," which opened at the Museu de Arte Brasileira da FAAP in São Paulo in 2009, a much more high-profile location for the two artists. This museum, with its strong focus on Brazilian art and cultural representation, seems to have been drawn to OSGEMEOS not only because of the Paulistas' growing international fame, but also due to their thematic treatment of Brazilian daily life and the influence of Brazilian folklore in their work. The description on the FAAP website bills the exhibition as "bringing together works that reflect the duo's sensitive view of Brazilian daily life, from the urban periphery to the northeastern folklore, in surrealistic images that generate a dreamlike atmosphere, by means of cheerful colors and melancholic characters." [3] (Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado)

For this exhibition, another critique appeared in the *Folha de São Paulo* that was quite a bit harsher than that of Gonçalves in the same newspaper in 2006. The author of the article, Fabio Cypriano, not only declares that their exhibition has nothing to contribute to the discourse, but also accuses them of commodifying poverty and misery. *Vertigem* included a similar combination of painting, sculpture, and installation as the exhibition at Fortes Vilaça, but Cypriano did not find the same metaphoric significance in this medial transfer of OSGEMEOS' urban folklore imagery as Bartelik did. Cypriano states:

"However, the 'installation,' which appeared more like an attraction at an amusement park, was situated in the field of entertainment and added nothing to the debate about carrying a transgressive work made in the street into the white cube of the art gallery." [4] (Cypriano, 2009: E1)

Furthermore, the more problematic issue according to Cypriano, is the strategy they employ to try to transfer the dynamic of the streets into the gallery, that is, to incorporate imagery of those people into their work, mainly residents of poor urban neighborhoods, such as *favelas*, depicted in the same cartoonish style as their fantastic characters. This, according to the author, does a disservice to the harsh realities of those people who actually live under such conditions:

"The problem is that, while in the streets this tension is authentic, within a museological space, the images of these suffering people are merely illustration, or even worse,

shallow appropriation of a state of indigence typical of Latin American metropolises. Since OSGEMEOS create an "aesthetic of poverty," they turn misery into a product of easy consumption, falling once again into the field of entertainment."[5] (Cypriano, 2009: E1)

Cypriano, who is known in Brazil to write harsh critiques at times, is unambiguously fierce in this case, driven home by the final statement: "In the debate about the transposition of street art into the museum, '*Vertigem*' has nothing to declare."[6] (Cypriano, 2009: E1)

What remains unclear is whether or not OSGEMEOS actually intended on adding to that debate with their exhibition pieces. If their goal was to replicate some sort of authentic street art experience within gallery walls, be it the aspect of danger, the reappropriation of space for the people, the transformation of the urban environment, the restoration of culture to the residual voids of public space, combating the hegemonic gray of the concrete jungle with their colorful outbursts of graffiti (Cf. Kuttner, 2014), one would gather from these reviews that OSGEMEOS achieved none of these in the two gallery exhibitions. However, in order to assess their intentions and also to gauge their awareness of these critical issues, it will be necessary to consult statements made by the artists that directly address the topic.

In various forums, such as interviews for articles, exhibition catalogues, and television talk shows, OSGEMEOS have repeatedly been quoted as saying that there is a major difference between what they do in the streets and in the galleries, and this difference goes beyond the medium, scale, and ambition of their works, but touches upon the essence of street art. They have expressed an acute awareness that the site of their art is of critical importance and that the spirit of what is done within the urban landscape cannot be simply relocated to a protected gallery or museum setting.

In the same newspaper as Cypriano's critique, three years earlier, Rafael Cariello had quoted OSGEMEOS as saying "In reality, we separate the world of the streets and the world of the gallery"[7] (Cariello, 2006: E1). In 2007, Otávio Pandolfo was quoted by Bill Hinchberger in ARTnews as saying "What we do in galleries has nothing to do with graffiti" (Hinchberger, 2007: 136-137). In an interview with Vik Muniz in 2008 for the graffiti magazine *Bomb*, they stated: "We know how to keep things separate. The universe of the street

cannot be compared to that of the gallery in the least" (Muniz, 2008: 63). In a 2010 interview for the Brazilian television station SESCTV, Otávio reaffirmed these sentiments: "The gallery is another story. The street is a unique thing, you can't compare it with a museum. When you go out to do *grafite* in the street it has nothing to do with a museum"[8] (SESCTV, 2010). In fact, the two seem fairly consistent in expressing that any attempt to bring the unique characteristics of their graffiti or street art from the urban environment into a gallery setting would be doomed to fail. When interviewed by Ana Luisa Vieira for the Brazilian magazine *Cartacapital* in 2009, they elaborated "*Grafite* for us is in the street, you can't take it into any gallery. Inside here it's another support. They can call it contemporary art, if they want, but we believe in art that is atemporal"[9] (Vieira, 2009: 85). There is a subtle irony in this statement as their work in the streets is often far more transitory than atemporal, since it is subject to weather conditions, buffing, modification, or demolition. However, the quote gets to the heart of the paradox of the transplantation of street art or graffiti. Contemporary art galleries and museums must intrinsically be concerned with the contemporaneity of the works on display, either due to the critical relevance of those works regarding current issues and debates or by pushing boundaries and expanding concepts of artistic practice. Street art in its natural setting secures its critical relevance by being an intervention in the urban environment, yet when institutions displace it in an attempt to promote an expanded concept of contemporary artistic practice, they simultaneously negate its original critical value. Recognizing street art as contemporary art is to rob it of its contemporaneity.

OSGEMEOS have also demonstrated that they are conscious of the political implications of their work in the streets. When asked by Vik Muniz in 2008 if they intend on engaging in social criticism with their street art, they responded:

"Using public space was our way of dialoguing, directly or indirectly, with other people. The mere act of interfering in public space already entailed a critique, changing something. [...] To intervene in public space was our way of speaking out." (Muniz, 2008: 59)

OSGEMEOS understand that social critique in street art does not necessarily have to take the form of a direct social statement, because the use and alteration of public

space itself is a statement and has an impact on society (cf. Kuttner, 2014). They also are conscious of the fact that this is a form of critique that is site-specific, as in it must take place within the urban landscape, and cannot be transferred into a gallery setting.

The aggregate of these statements reveal two important aspects that disarm the criticism cited above. Firstly, OSGEMEOS cannot be faulted for failing to bring the socio-political impact of street art into a gallery setting, not only because this is not their intention, but also because they have repeatedly stated that such an effort would amount to a fool's errand. Secondly, they have indeed shown an awareness of the implications of their work in the streets. However, one might ask what their intentions are for entering the gallery if they admit that it cannot approach the same level of critical significance as their street art. OSGEMEOS insist that the intention is merely to paint, create art, and express themselves in any possible setting, and that the prospect of entering the art market and thereby making a living does not alter that intention. When interviewed by Aaron Rose for the graffiti magazine *Juxtapoz* in 2005, OSGEMEOS explained their motivation for utilizing both "supports" for their art, whether interior and exterior:

"We think that gallery spaces, museums, the street, all these places are just one little support for us to show what we believe and make the experience, our dreams, more true for us and for the people that don't fear to discover who we are. Maybe the only unique place where our work is truly safe is in our heads." (Rose 2005: 37)

Although the setting has changed, the essence of this sentiment fits into the narrative about street art and graffiti that has fascinated cultural observers for decades, that is, the subtle narrative about graffiti & street artists' seemingly pure desire to express themselves under any circumstances and by any means necessary. Even in 1976, Jean Baudrillard lamented that graffiti was being recuperated by means of the "bourgeois humanist interpretation" of the movement as "a reclamation of identity and personal freedom" (Baudrillard, 1993: 83) in a society which denies one's autonomy and individuality, a sort of pure will towards self-expression, regardless of the lack of financial benefit or the persistent threat of arrest.[10] The statement by OSGEMEOS cited above, on the other hand, subtly modifies this narrative, presenting

a will towards individual expression that transcends the streets, one in which the concept of creating art under any circumstances truly means any circumstances, even within institutional settings, or at the risk (or inevitability) of compromising critical value. Yet in each of these realms they are subject to different risks. In the streets, aside from the risk of arrest and the ephemeral nature of an art form subject to weather, alteration, and buffing, there is also the risk of it being simply dismissed as vandalism rather than acknowledged as art. On the other hand, in the gallery setting, they are somewhat ironically subject to accusations that their art does not maintain the same critical value as in the streets and at risk of being dismissed as insignificant and labeled "decorative." Perhaps that is why they believe the only truly safe place for their art is in their own heads.

Nevertheless, in order to maintain the opportunity to express themselves in both of these settings, they understand that they must walk a figurative tightrope that is not always easy to navigate. "We've learned to search for a balance in our production so that our work can participate in these two extremely different worlds" (Muniz, 2008: 62). They strive to create something that is accessible and appealing to drastically different demographic groups. "Everyone can enjoy our art, from the collector to the beggar who lives underneath the viaduct of Glicério" (Hora, 2006: 18).[11]

Therefore, those representatives of cultural institutions who wish to bring the art of OSGEMEOS into the gallery setting have to consider their motivations for doings so. If they wish to attempt to solve the paradox of preserving the sociopolitical and site-specific aspects of street art and transferring them into a gallery setting, OSGEMEOS may have certain approaches like the exterior modification of the Galeria Fortes Vilaça that add an interesting wrinkle to the dialogue, however OSGEMEOS would not fundamentally change their mode of artistic production specifically for the purpose of aiding in this endeavor. If on the other hand, they would like to give OSGEMEOS another forum to put their creative world of *tritrez* into visual form, especially a forum that is protected and allows them to work on a scale and level of detail that is not possible in their unsanctioned productions, then the Pandolfo twins are more than willing to oblige. Márcia Fortes, of the Galeria Fortes Vilaça, told Rafael Cariello in the *Folha de S.Paulo* that "OSGEMEOS fell into our hands because we had been saying for two or three years to everyone: We want new painters. Someone

developing a universe and a pictorial imagery"[12] (Cariello, 2006: E1). Galeria Fortes Vilaça thus presents itself as a viable partner for OSGEMEOS because there is no pretense of wanting to delve into the problematic relationship of street art and the confines of institutional walls. Private art galleries may have the luxury of not being forced to address such issues. Although maintaining a certain level of artistic integrity is essential for them, market forces and trends in the interests of their collectors are likely to be more influential factors than solving paradoxes in the art world. (As Gonçalves noted in his critique, the market value for their work is indeed present.) Furthermore, even the host of the "Vertigem" exhibition, MAB-FAAP, with its focus on local Brazilian art and culture, can be excused for steering the audience's attention towards OSGEMEOS' representations of Brazilian life in the periphery and folkloric influences, rather than addressing the more global issues surrounding the institutionalization of street art. However, when major international art institutions choose to engage street artists, some attempt must be made to grapple with these issues curatorially and theoretically.

3. OSGEMEOS at the Edge of the White Cube

In 2008, on the northern façade of the Tate Modern in London, at the edge of the quintessential white cube, six murals were commissioned to be produced by artists who built their reputation by creating unsanctioned works in the streets. This exhibition, titled "Street Art," featured OSGEMEOS, Blu, Faile, JR, Sixeart, and Nunca. The piece by OSGEMEOS depicted one of their quintessential yellow figures with all of the hallmark features: almond-shaped eyes, bony limbs, boxy torso, and a somewhat awkward pose. The giant figure, although mostly nude, still incorporates certain street art "tropes" (cf. Bengtsen, 2014: 76) such as the concealed face and the presence of CCTV surveillance cameras, which in this case are bundled together and dangling from the giant's hand by their cables.

Based on its title alone, the Tate "Street Art" exhibition, in contrast to the two OSGEMEOS exhibitions discussed in the previous section, had at least some intention of representing the current state of street art and all of its sociopolitical and cultural implications. Yet the paradox of displacing a site-specific art form is partially sidestepped by the Tate's decision to keep the work outside the museum on its northern façade. The significance of this strategy was not lost on the Brazilian art critics for the *Folha de S.Paulo*. Pedro Dias Leite and Bruna Bittencourt write:

"Different than other shows with the name 'street art,' the Tate preferred not to transport the production of these artists to its interior – on the façade, it is visible to a larger number of people. They also created a tour to show the graffiti on the premises of the museum, in an effort to stay true to the original scenario."[13] (Dias Leite & Bittencourt, 2008: E1)

The reviewers refrain from approaching the question of whether this effort is successful, meaning that the strategy was at least effective enough to allay the suspicions of the critics at the *Folha*, which had published the harsher reviews cited previously.

The location and the commissioning of OSGEMEOS' giant, which shares a title with the Tate exhibition, *Street Art*, represent a gray zone between the worlds of street art and fine art. On the one hand, their work on the Tate façade is a painting that was executed legally and commissioned by a major contemporary art institution. The space was provided and permitted rather than sought out and seized. Even the curator, Cedar Lewisohn, admitted: "Since museums are often funded by the government, we have to consider them as voices of the state" (Lewisohn, 2008: 127). Therefore, OSGEMEOS' participation in such an exhibition could easily be interpreted as yet another example of the institutionalization, appropriation, or co-opting of *grafite*, as outlined by Neil Schlecht in his article "Resistance and appropriation in Brazil: How the media and 'official culture' institutionalized São Paulo's Grafite" from 1995 (Schlecht, 1995), however, this time on an international scale. On the other hand, the Tate piece not only clearly belongs to an "urban aesthetic" (cf. Bengtsen, 2014) or "street art aesthetic," (cf. Kuttner, 2015) but it also embodies some of the central characteristics and ideals of the street art movement.

First of all, the work exists in a public space and is accessible to and thus able to be enjoyed by a diverse range of viewers. Here the decision to use the northern façade, facing the Thames river, and also the scale of the works are both significant, in that both aspects allow the works to be seen from a long distance with little obstruction, thus reaching a large audience and not necessarily those

who have gone to seek out art, i.e. the museum-goers of the Tate. Secondly, the work is ephemeral; like most street art or graffiti writing produced throughout the world, it was created with the knowledge that one day it will be destroyed. The difference, of course, in this situation is that the date for the removal was set before the commission was given. Nevertheless, by choosing not to preserve this work, it avoids the trap of museumification. The work exists in physical form only within its own contemporaneity; what remains are only the fragments, memories, and traces of the piece, through various forms of medial documentation. This also may have been a factor in the decision not to create a traditional catalogue for this exhibition.

Perhaps more important than these first two aspects, however, is the fact that the modification of the industrial architecture of the Tate Modern's drab brown brick façade with OSGEMEOS' bright palette and fantastic imagery is in itself an intervention in the public realm that has a significant, albeit impermanent, impact on the urban landscape. An analysis of the impact of OSGEMEOS' work in the streets of São Paulo in terms of spatial theory is provided in "Os Gêmeos & São Paulo: Reappropriating Public Space in a 'City of Walls'" (Kuttner, 2014). When extrapolating that analysis to their work on the Tate façade, although the setting does not fit the description of a non-place, the imposing walls of the Bankside Power Station could be seen as having a similar effect as the fortified enclaves of São Paulo that OSGEMEOS and their peers have been transforming with their street art over several decades. Granted, the socio-cultural significance is quite different in London, but if one considers the possibility that the area between the Tate and the riverbanks may have been turned into a "void" of public space (cf. Caldeira, 2000) through the fortress-like industrial architecture of the former power station, then commissioning these street artists to paint the walls could be seen as a highly effective way of restoring social interaction to that space. One can see from various visitor photographs of this work that the space at the feet of OSGEMEOS' giant became a place where people would congregate not only to look up and observe the artwork as traditionally is the case with exhibited art, but also just to interact with one another.

Nevertheless, one must not forget that OSGEMEOS' *Street Art* giant is a commissioned work, even though it retains some of the essential aspects of OSGEMEOS' work in the streets, including style, subject matter, public visibility, ephemerality, and certain effects on the surrounding urban landscape. Graffiti began as an anti-discourse, an anti-institutional force with the potential to upend concepts of public space and make people reconsider what exactly freedom of speech entails. Without the forcible appropriation of a space that does not legally belong to the artist, one essential characteristic of graffiti is lost. One could make the argument, on the other hand, that the act of commissioning autodidacts who emerge from a countercultural artistic scene that began as an anti-discourse to modify the Tate, with little or no restrictions about how and what they create, is to some extent inviting an aesthetic attack on the codes and value systems of the "fine art" world contained within the building. Thus, one might still be able to consider the *Street Art* piece as a more subtle or subdued form of semiotic attack in that OSGEMEOS utilize the same codes and visual language of the streets despite the setting. However, this does not appear to be the main intention of the artists, nor the curator, Cedar Lewisohn, who agrees that the exhibition itself cannot attain the same level of critical impact as uncommissioned street art:

"The best street art and graffiti are illegal. This is because the illegal works have political and ethical connotations that are lost in sanctioned works. […] That's not to say that these works should never be shown in museums; it's just that when they are, we have to realise, as Blek le Rat says, that we're 'looking at the shadow of the real thing.'" (Lewisohn, 2008: 127)

Furthermore, it is telling that two of the six large-scale works commissioned by the Tate were created by Brazilian artists, since Manco et al. state:

"Brazilian writers also tend not to get as hung up on the distinction between legal and illegal work as their North American and European counterparts. While writers elsewhere knock each other for 'only doing legals', it isn't something you often hear in Brazil." (Manco et al., 2005: 46)

This position, combined with the relatively early institutionalization process in São Paulo described by Neil Schlecht in 1995, indicates that it is neither frowned upon nor unusual for Brazilian street artists to create art within institutional contexts, especially in the case of OSGEMEOS.

For street artists who were not invited to participate in the Tate exhibition or those who might refuse to work within an institutional framework, there was an alternative event hosted by Banksy several weeks before the Tate's opening. Forty street artists participated in the event, called the Cans Festival, which took place in a London railway tunnel just walking distance from the Tate and drew large crowds according to *The Guardian*. In that newspaper, Alice Fisher states that it is "hard not to see the Cans Festival as a spoiler to Tate Modern's exhibition" (Fisher, 2008). Since this event was organized by the most famous street artist in the world, not a major publicly-funded museum, it clearly was perceived as having more "street cred" than the Tate exhibition, compounded by the fact that it took place within a more natural habitat for street artists, a train tunnel. Yet not all participants were critical of those who received Tate commissions. The group Faile participated in both events and was quoted by Fisher defending the museum's decision to put on their "Street Art" exhibition: "At least it's no longer undermined as something on the street, something without value. Money fuels interest - it's an injection in the butt that fires people up and makes them realise they should pay attention" (Fisher, 2008).

Despite Faile's comments, the issue of money is a delicate topic when dealing with contemporary street art and it is almost always mixed into the discussion of institutionalization and co-opting. One of the aspects which cultural theorists were so captivated by during the early days of modern graffiti writing and street art was the fact that teenagers and young adults were risking arrest (and in some cases their lives) en masse, without pay or any sort of reward other than fame within a particular subculture, in order to express themselves visually, to create art. So when money, especially large amounts of money for major commissions, enters the equation, critics are often skeptical, not only because of the potential conflict of interests between the institution and supposedly anti-institutional art forms, but also because of the loss of this romanticized ideal of the artists' pure will to express themselves and make a visual impact at any cost. It may then be no coincidence that OSGEMEOS have been the main Brazilian *grafiteiros* contacted for projects like these, seeing as their dreamlike subject matter and the influence of folkloric imagery give the impression of preserving this almost mystical aura of the street artist as the autodidact with a pure will to express him or herself artistically, unaffected by institutional forces

or financial markets, much like the folk artist. Lewisohn also sees the connection to folk art in the institutional perception of street art, but he intuits the opposite result:

"In the eyes of the art world, both street art and graffiti are akin to folk art or 'popular' art. Classifying them in this way, even subconsciously, has made it far easier for mainstream arts organisations to dismiss or ignore them." (Lewisohn, 2008: 130)

However, it is hard to see this as having a negative impact on the institutional recognition of OSGEMEOS, because their connection to Brazilian folklore, and by extension folk art as well, has been a major talking point in every exhibition catalogue and in most commentary on their works commissioned outside of Brazil. If anything, this has helped drive their international success by showing that their art, although it belongs to a distinctly contemporary street art counterculture, is anchored in the Brazilian cultural heritage. The actual validity of this perception, however, may be open to discussion, considering OSGEMEOS were born and raised in the megacity São Paulo, a far cry rural northeastern Brazil. Regardless of whether or not they have benefited from these associations with folk art, it is clear from their participation in the Tate event that OSGEMEOS are willing participants in the art market and not strongly concerned with the risk of their work being co-opted by dominant culture institutions.

The problematics of sponsoring and promoting street art are addressed to some extent by Lewisohn. Overall he sees it as an inevitable but positive development, although he expresses some reservations:

"A market for artworks is something that is difficult to avoid, no matter what the genre, and is largely a good thing, since artists deserve to make a living from their work. The problems come with speculative buyers looking to make quick profits, who have little interest in the actual work. […] Artists who use working on the street as a springboard into the commercial sector, then completely leave the street scene behind, can harm the reputations of other artists."(Lewisohn, 2008: 130)

Lewisohn describes it as a delicate balance for both parties involved. On the one hand, from the institutional side, gallerists, collectors, or sponsors should promote street art for the right reasons, i.e. based on the quality and merit of the works, not as an investment in a fleeting cultural trend. On the other hand, street artists who enter institutional

settings must retain a connection to the streets with ongoing uncommissioned and unsanctioned interventions in public spaces, or else their work becomes simply a hollow representation of the street art aesthetic. That is why it is of critical importance that OSGEMEOS continue to produce illegal works worldwide in a variety of forms, from their characters to bubble-letter pieces, combinations of both, and even pichação as well. The repopulation of urban public space in São Paulo with their yellow figures is the foundation upon which their commissioned giants stand.

Nevertheless, despite OSGEMEOS' continuing strong connection to the street art scene, despite the Tate mural's ephemerality and its location outside institutional walls, and despite its effects on the urban environment, the initiative of the Tate to acknowledge these street artists can be seen as an act of domestication or cultural appropriation in that it neutralizes its oppositional character and recontextualizes the art as an accepted part of hegemonic culture. This paradox seems inevitable indeed, but it is one that has entered public consciousness and certainly becomes a more prominent part of public discourse with major events like the Tate Modern's "Street Art" exhibition. However, the cultural transformation is a two-way street. Through the cultural appropriation of street art, which in its current international manifestation OSGEMEOS have been a major part of, hegemonic culture and the institutions that engage in this process are not left unadulterated. On a superficial level, there is the popularity and omnipresence of the street art aesthetic itself, which has permeated both high and low culture through the media, fashion, and art has become ingrained within a worldwide urban visual culture and is now internationally legible. Furthermore, as pop art did so effectively in the decades before street art's genesis, street art culture has once again challenged people's perceptions of high and low culture, mainstream culture and counterculture, and provoked a more in-depth discourse on the conflicting nature of these issues and disrupting the status-quo. Institutions that want to avoid obsolescence are once again – as has happened several times over the course of art history – forced to relinquish their non-oppositional character and support a form of artistic production that emerged from an anti-institutional counterculture. It seems that these forces, dominant culture and street art culture, are at once parasitic and symbiotic. They feed off one another, gaining strength from each other yet compromising their own structural integrity at the same time.

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Notes

1 - Original text in Portuguese: "No território da arte visual urbana, os códigos não são os mesmos do circuito de arte. Obras à mostra numa galeria estabelecida de arte contemporânea se expõem necessariamente a um confronto com a história e com critérios de consagração específicos – mesmo que elas tenham sido produzidas com a intenção de ignorá-los ou contestá-los."

2 - Original text in Portuguese: "O hype dos Gêmeos, em meio ao renovado interesse pelo grafite, encerra uma aposta num trabalho que poderia transcender o universo ilustrativo urbano e adquirir valor aos olhos de colecionadores –gente disposta a pagar R$ 41 mil para ter, em telas, os artistas famosos em muros. O interesse comercial, ao que se vê, existe – mas ele não é suficiente para estabelecer se a produção dos Gêmeos conseguirá ultrapassar o plano da curiosidade e do caráter decorativo."

3 - Original text in Portuguese: "A mostra reúne obras que traduzem o sensível olhar da dupla sobre o cotidiano brasileiro, da periferia urbana ao folclore nordestino, em imagens surrealistas que remontam uma atmosfera de sonho, por meio de cores alegres e personagens melancólicos."

4 - Original text in Portuguese: "Contudo, a 'instalação', que mais parecia a atração de um parque de diversões, situava-se no campo do entretenimento e não agregou nada ao debate de como levar um trabalho transgressor feito na rua para o cubo branco de uma galeria de arte."

5 - Original text in Portuguese: "O problema é que, enquanto na rua essa tensão é autêntica, dentro de um espaço museológico as imagens desses miseráveis são mera ilustração e, pior, apropriação rasa de um estado de indigência típico das metrópoles latino-americanas. [...] Pois Osgêmeos realizam com 'Vertigem' uma 'cosmética da pobreza', já que tornam a miséria um produto de consumo fácil, caindo, novamente, no campo do entretenimento."

6 - Original text in Portuguese: "No debate sobre a transposição da arte de rua para o museu, 'Vertigem' não tem nada a declarar."

7 - Original text in Portuguese: "Na real [...] a gente separa o mundo da rua e o mundo da galeria."

8 - Original transcript in Portuguese: ""galeria é outra história [...] A rua é uma coisa única, não se compara a um museu. Você sair para fazer grafite na rua não tem nada a ver com um museu."

9 - Original text in Portuguese: "Grafite pra gente é na rua, não dá pra levar a galeria alguma. Aqui dentro é outro suporte. Podem chamar de arte contemporânea, do que quiserem, mas acreditamos na arte atemporal."

10 - Somewhat ironically, however, Baudrillard to some extent also recuperates the movement by interpreting graffiti writing in a way that fits his own narrative of semiotics, presenting it as an anti-discourse attacking the contemporary semiocracy.

11 - Original text in Portuguese: "Todos podem desfrutar da nossa arte, do colecionador ao mendigo que mora embaixo do viaduto do Glicério."

12 - Original text in Portuguese: ""Os Gêmeos caíram nas nossas mãos porque a gente estava há uns dois ou três anos falando para todo mundo: Queremos novos pintores. Alguém desenvolvendo um universo e um imaginário pictórico."

13 - Original text in Portuguese: "Diferentemente de outras mostras com nomes da 'street art', a Tate preferiu não transpor a produção desses artistas para o seu interior – na fachada, é vista por um número maior de pessoas. Criou ainda um tour para mostrar grafites nas redondezas do museu, em um esforço para manter a vertente em seu cenário original."

A City-wide Art Gallery

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Abstract

In Tehran, the capital of Iran, billboards bear two parallel responsibilities with, of course, different directions. Some of them have commercial functions, while others transmit moral messages and religious and political slogans. In the spring of 2015, billboards in Tehran suddenly transmitted a new message. A new urban project, called "A City-wide Art Gallery", converted Tehran into a gallery using billboards. For many people, this was "a city-wide coincidence". This was the first time that the municipality of Tehran allocated billboards to a topic that followed neither a commercial nor an ideological purpose. The change that the project brought about in the city's landscape has sparked debates among citizens and experts. The present study investigates the relationship of citizens with the images displayed in this project and compares this urban-scaled movement to people's reference to art galleries and museums. Data for this study are collected using questionnaires and interviews. According to the results, the respondents were generally satisfied with the selection of artworks and their layouts. However, the size of the artworks and the size of the subtitle letters of the images were criticized. Data analysis also shows that this program has been able to partially create a discursive space among citizens and encourage people to visit museums and art galleries.

Keywords: Billboards, Tehran, Gallery

1. Introduction

The functionality of image in conceptualizing urban space can be analyzed from the point of view of its external efficiency in design disciplines (Soderstrom, 2000). Mitchell believes that "visual culture is not limited to the study of images or media, but extends to everyday practices of seeing and showing, especially those that we take to be immediate or unmediated" (Mitchell, 2005). Images can express controversial meanings and power relations by contributing to shape a specific vision of the world. Visual materials displayed on city walls are cultural products containing commercial advertisement or political propaganda and reflecting the dominant context in the urban space.

"A City-wide Art Gallery" was a two-week long urban project run by the Beautification department of the municipality of Tehran in April 2015 and 2016. During these two weeks, the

billboards of the city that normally hold advertisements as well as religious and social awareness mottos were transformed to host images of artworks. About 1600 artworks including paintings, handicrafts, calligraphy pieces, and sculptures by domestic and international artists have been represented in the project. From its incepetion, the project has received a vast feedback by social media inside and abroad. However, the performance of this project as an extensive urban art activity has not been yet investigated.

This study therefore aims to investigate "A City-wide Art Gallery" as a project that through its duration has been controversial, in order to offer a critique of the projects strengths and weaknesses. To do this, data has been collected through questionnaires, printed documents, and conversations with the respective authorities.

2. The challenge of using the image in Tehran

In Iran, from the viewpoint of ownership, the city walls are considered «public property» (Mirshahi,2003). The simplest idea of this interpretation is that anyone can stick adverts or posters to the walls (Rahbarnia,2006). In the years before the Islamic Revolution, the use of images in Tehran was commercial. Paintings on the walls at large scale, usually in busy places, was seen in every corner of the city. For example, we can point out wall paintings and billboards to advertise goods like Pepsi or large neon boards on the roof of the shops or at the marginal areas of main squares of the city (Figure 1a). During the years after the Islamic Revolution (1978-1979) and the eight-year Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), the city's images included slogans related to revolution, sacred defense, martyrdom, and Islamic messages (Figure 1b). There were no billboards for commercial uses around the city in these years (Rahbarnia, 2006).

The gradual trend of commercial advertisings began in 1989, largely due to the "necessity for the reconstruction of the country". Therefore, the intermediary sector began introducing commodities. Reference to official news and events published by the country's newspapers is indicative of events that are directly related to commercial advertising. After the Iran-Iraq war, the government omitted grants to the municipality and finding revenue sources became critical for municipality of Tehran (Kamran, 2006). The municipality of Tehran prepared some programs such as land sale and land use change to provide financial requirements for city management. In the beginning, a small part of the municipality's revenue came from urban advertising. In the same period, the beautician organization of the municipality of Tehran was formed in 1991 (Asadollahi, 2010). As the first advertising experience, the organization started installing cement stations in different shapes around the city. These stations were places to attach free ads to preserve the walls and buildings from adhesives and paints. Wall boards, cement and metal stations, 8, 15, 48 and 72-meter length billboards, digital boards and video walls were among the methods that gradually began to be used since 1990s in Tehran. In this period, about 250 boards were installed at crossings, intersections and sidewalks in urban areas of the city (Mirshahi, 2002).

3. A new plan for presenting the image in the city

At the beginning of a new plan, 48 and 72-meter length billboards were installed along the highways, which were visible from the distance by car passengers. This way, the owners of the goods and capital, would take advantage of the visual space of the city for a certain period of time to advertise their products graphically by paying money. Advertisements for products like salt crackers, South Korean television sets, or bank and insurance services occupied most of the city's advertising space. The billboards which were installed on the city walls since the fall of 1990, were a new move. On many billboards, small and large banners and posters were glued together, so that underneath any poster or advertisement, a corner of the previous poster or advertisement was visible. However, the city walls were never empty of advertising (Soghrati, 2016), and in the early 2000's, the use of billboards began as a government podium. These billboards have ever since changed in different periods and occasions, due to the political situations (Nejadsalari, 2016).

4. Placing billboards

According to the municipality of Tehran, there are about 20,000 square meters of billboards in Tehran, with 5,000 square meters for cultural advertising and 15,000 square meters for commercial advertising. Most of the urban advertising billboards are installed in the highways of Tehran and its suburbs. Tehran's highway network, apart from the central part, is scattered across the city, and as Figure 2 shows, the highest density of highways is in the northern regions of Tehran. Meanwhile, the width of the highways in the northern and western parts of Tehran is greater and, on the other hand, the owners of the companies tend to advertise their products in the northern regions of the city. The dispersion of these billboards is higher in the city's main and secondary streets (Nejadsalari, 2016). Cultural billboards are intended to convey cultural-social messages or, according to national, cultural or religious events, such as Nowruz and the beginning of the academic year to communicate messages relevant to these events.

Figure 1 - Left image a billboard for advertising Pepsi before the Islamic Revolution,
right image a billboard with anti-western concepts after the Islamic Revolution
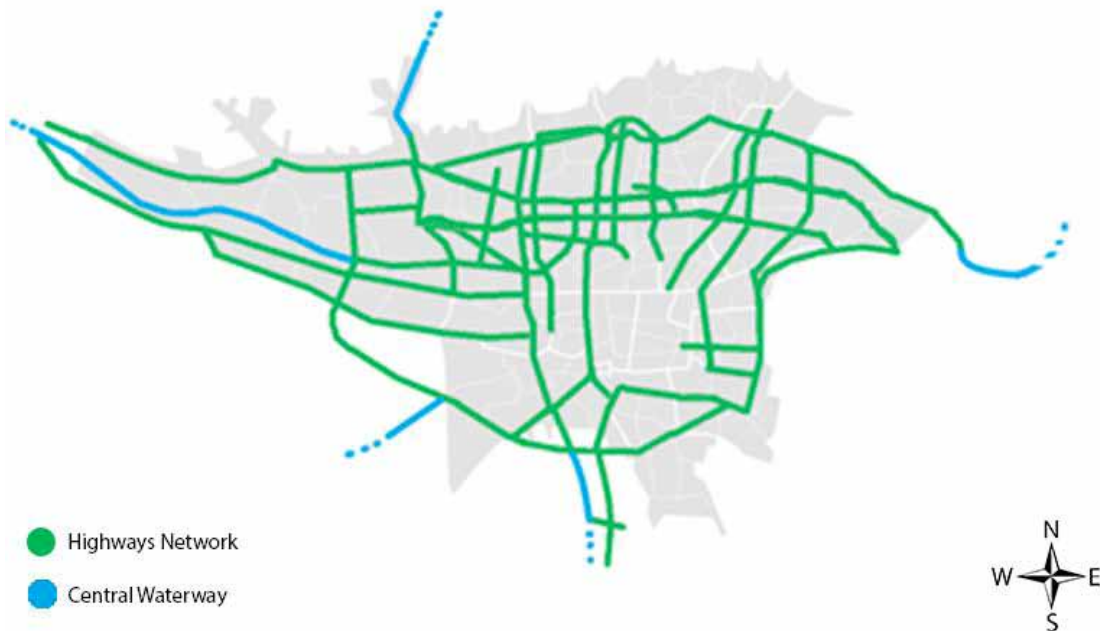

Figure 2 - A schematic map of the highways of Tehran (source: http://sdi.tehran.ir/)

5. Cultural action of "A City-wide Art Gallery"

In April 2015, for the first time, billboards in Tehran became an art gallery. These advertising mediums in the city all began showcasing artworks. This project is considered to be the most important cultural project in Iran after the Islamic Revolution. In this project, 1800 billboards were dedicated to visual arts. Although billboards of Tehran were usually kept for propaganda, religious quotations or anti-American slogans, the project turned the city into a great gallery using these billboards. Paintings by Pablo Picasso, René Magritte, Faramarz Pilaram, John Sargent, Jazeh Tabatabai, Reza Mafi, Sohrab Sepehri and many other national and international painters were printed on billboards in Tehran. (Vakilemelat, 2017) The gallery kept running for 2 weeks and was titled as "A City-wide Art Gallery". During this time, all commercial advertisements, ethical advices and political slogans were cleared from the city to make way for the project.

The purpose of this project was to promote cultural level and to encourage various social classes to visit museums. According to interviews with the executive section of the project, it was found that the majority of these images were gathered from the treasures of the museums, such as Malek Museum, the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the Carpet Museum and a number of collectors and visual books. The intention of Tehran municipality was to provide citizens with incentives to value visual arts. The project was implemented in two stages. The first step was the fast formation of a policy council and selection of artworks. One element of the Council's decision-making included efforts to introduce the rich artworks of Iran and the world, using the artworks established in the history of Iranian art and the world, allocating 70% of the contribution to the works of Iranian artists and 30% to foreign artists, and to bear the trusteeship by mentioning the location of the original works (Jamal Kamyab, pers. Comm., 2017). Collecting appropriate images of selected Iranian and world artworks was the most important executive action in the second phase, and this was carried out through consultation with museums and cultural centers. For this reason, consulting with museums such as the Malek Museum, the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, the Carpet Museum, the Niavaran Cultural Center, Tandis and Herfe Honarmand professional art journals, Nazar Publication, and some professional photographers holding an archive was done in the second phase. These

centers and individuals worked collaboratively in the interest of the project and in order to achieve the overall approval of the plan (Seyed Mojtaba Moosavi, Pers. Comm., 2017).

6. Socio-geographic conditions of Tehran: the distribution factor of the project artworks

The geographical separation of social classes in Tehran is based on the social gap between the north and the south of Tehran. The three waves of immigration to Tehran were eastward, westward and to the marginal east-west areas. As shown in Figure 4, Tehran is divided into twenty-two urban areas with areas 1 to 3 being the northernmost parts of Tehran located in the hillside of Alborz mountains. According to the distribution map of artworks in the city, there was no balance in distributing artworks across the city. Due to the extensive economic activity in the northern parts of the city, most billboards are installed on highways in the northern regions of Tehran. Hence, in northern Tehran, higher volume of artwork was seen, and since advertising billboards in the southern and southeast parts of the city are limited, most of these works were installed on pedestrian bridges and, consequently, the amount of installed works was less. In the northern part of the city, due to the natural beauty of the scenery, there was a better opportunity to see these works. According to the organizers, the program has been trying to provide the opportunity to watch these artworks by car passengers at speeds up to 50 km/h.

Figure 3 - Some of highway billboards expressing artworks in the "A City-wide Art Gallery"

7. The questionnaire and procedure of data analysis

The main research hypothesis of this study is twofold:
Hypothesis 1 (H01): the performance of the municipality in organizing "A City-wide Art Gallery" was acceptable;
Hypothesis 2 (H02): the citizens were interested in "A City-wide Art Gallery" held by Tehran municipality.

Demographic variables such as age, gender, education level, job, monthly income, and daily presence in public spaces are important in explaining variation in attention to the project in general. These variables have been considered as independent variables in this study. The dependent variables are based on the satisfaction level of the citizens on the project as an urban art project. In this study, a survey method was developed to evaluate the research hypothesis. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the raw data. The survey was undertaken after in June 2016.

Dependent questions consist of several sections as follows: (1) the respondents' level of attraction to the artworks, (2) the effects of artworks on promoting the cultural level of citizens; (3) the effects of artworks on encouraging citizens to visit art galleries.

For the ordinal variables, 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the intensity of respondents' opinions on a variety of indicator statements. Statements were selected as neutrally as possible.

Table 1 shows the independent and dependent variables of the questionnaire. A number of 150 respondents were randomly selected from citizens with different demographic information. Respondents filled in the questionnaire, guided by the interviewer. Among the gathered questionnaires, 22 copies of questionnaire were not completely filled by the respondents and were removed from the gathered data. Multivariate regression analysis is performed to analyze the

Variable No.	Description	Variable levels
V1	Age	young to old
V2	Gender	female and male
V3	education level	very low to very high
V4	relationship between the job and art	very low to very high
V5	monthly income	very low to very high
V6	daily presence in public places	very low to very high
V7	number of observed artworks	very low to very high
V8	level of satisfaction on the selection of artworks	very low to very high
V9	level of satisfaction on the layout of artworks	very low to very high
V10	level of satisfaction on the size of artworks	very low to very high
V11	level of satisfaction on the annotation of artworks	very low to very high
V12	level of artworks becoming the subject of talking	very low to very high
V13	level of artworks becoming a way to get familiar with other artworks	very low to very high
V14	level of artworks becoming a way to encourage visiting art galleries	very low to very high
V15	level of satisfaction on the duration of the project	very low to very high
V16	level of agreement with organizing similar events	very low to very high

Table 1 - The independent and dependent variables of the questionnaire

raw data of the gathered questionnaires. Table 2 shows the results of linear regression analysis for collinearity diagnostics between variables. Multi-collinearity occurs when two or more of the independent variables are highly correlated and the effect of some variables might be underestimated. The collinearity diagnostics function in SPSS was used, giving two values, tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF).

Tolerance indicates how much of each independent variable that is not explained by the other independent variables in the model. All the independent variables included in the analyses scored higher than the threshold 0.2 on the diagnostic measure of tolerance. VIF is an index measuring how much the variance of a coefficient is increased because of collinearity. Typically, a VIF value greater than 10 is of concern which all of our explanatory factors had lower VIF values.

8. Results and Discussion

This study is based on analysis of the impact of a large cultural event on the cultural sustainable development of the city by using interviews and distributing questionnaires to gather statistical data.

9. Results of interview analysis

The important starting point in developing a concept for any public art project is to identify the talents and assets within the community. In any community, there are people who can provide historical perspective, valuable insights into how urban art functions, and an understanding of the critical issues and what is meaningful to people.

According to the interviews with the researchers in the field of image, the artworks of the project had been installed on urban highways, in which the speed of car passengers is high. In the design of the billboards, which includes artwork and its related descriptions, the scale proportions should be maintained. Furthermore, text descriptions and annotations of the artworks should be written in such a way that they can be seen and understood by the drivers so that they would not face problems driving on the highways. Many of the artworks lacked enough light, especially at night, so nothing was seen at night except for a vague image. According to the experts, placement of some of the works was not suitable. For example, on the body of several pedestrian bridges, at least three artworks were installed which were not visible by drivers due to their small size.

If there was the possibility of replacing images on certain paths during the two weeks of presenting the artworks, citizens who routinely traveled everyday could see more works. Color quality and clarity of some artworks were not desirable. In addition, organizers of this project had been less mindful of the pedestrians. In fact, this project is not intended for pedestrians, and due to the high speed of motorways on highways, these works could certainly not be seen in detail by drivers. The artworks installed on pedestrian bridges, two works were usually displayed side by side, which were completely different in terms of style. The shape of these billboards has diminished the size of the works displayed, and it was not easy to see the details in the works. However, the white background for all the works has contributed to the

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF
V1	0.664	1.506
V2	0.920	1.088
V3	0.901	1.110
V4	0.872	1.147
V5	0.704	1.421
V6	0.848	1.179

Table 2 - Linear regression analysis for collinearity diagnostics

unity of their presentation. But in some boards, the volume of this white background was so large that the painting was almost lost, and in some works, because of the size of the billboards, this background was so small that the drawing was merged into the texture of the urban space and it was not readily visible.

10. Results of statistical analysis

Demographic analysis of respondents indicated that 41% of them were under 30 years old whilst 44% of them were between 31 and 45 years old. The remaining 15% were older than 46. Furthermore, 49% of respondents were women and the remaining were men. In terms of education, more than 44% of respondents had a bachelor›s degree who have the highest frequency and then, 26% had a master's degree. In terms of employment, the job of 13% and 52% of respondents had high and low relationships with art, respectively. In addition, 40% of respondents had an income less than 300 USD, 5% more than 2000 USD, and the remaining had incomes between 300 to 2000 USD.

In terms of daily presence in public places, 42% of respondents spent lower than 2 hours in public places every day whilst 45% of them spent between 2 and 4 hours in public space. 13% of the respondents spent more than 4 hours in public space every day.

Table 3 shows the comments of the respondents about different aspects of "A City-wide Art Gallery" project. According to the table, although the respondents were

generally satisfied with the choice of artwork and their layouts, the size of the artworks and the size of the subtitle letters of the images were the ones that were criticized. Due to the location of the artworks (streets, highways, and pedestrian bridges), the size of the letters used for the subtitles of the images was not large enough and the audience needed to be precise and focused to read them.

"A City-wide Art Gallery" project was highly accessible due to the fact that it was implemented across the city. Data analysis shows that this program has been able to partially create a discursive space among citizens. According to the results, more than 50% of the respondents have discussed the project with others. Many people saw this project as a step towards getting acquainted with the rich artistic works of Iran and the world, which can determine the importance of the project for people from moderate and lower social classes. Table 4 also shows that the project has encouraged people to visit museums and art galleries.

The respondents were not satisfied with the duration of the project, which indicates that the project could last for more than 2 weeks. If the organizers periodically replaced the boards installed in the project, the visitor's consent would certainly increase. Finally, a large number of respondents advocated the idea of re-implementing this project and similar events.

Table 4 shows the results of logistic regression analyses of the feedback of respondents about the project. As shown in

Variable	Percentage %				
	very low	low	moderate	high	very high
V8	8	4	28	56	4
V9	17	8	27	48	0
V10	21	50	24	5	0
V11	5	61	23	10	1
V12	7	23	19	48	3
V13	4	14	24	49	9
V14	3	9	26	51	11
V15	32	30	23	15	0
V16	0	35	23	42	0

Table 3 - Comments of the respondents about different aspects of "A City-wide Art Gallery"

this table, there was no significant differences among people with different demographic parameters in the number of observed artworks. The age of respondents had a negative, significant effect on artworks becoming the subject of talking. This means that younger respondents have converted the project to a subject of talking more than older respondents. Men were more often in agreement on the selection of artworks by the organizers and the size of their annotation more in comparison to women who preferred the size of the artworks more than men. Furthermore, the project has encouraged men more than women to visit the museums and art galleries.

There was a positive, significant relationship between the education level of respondents and level of satisfaction on the layout of artworks in general. However, people with lower education levels talked about the project with other citizens more than respondents with higher education levels. Furthermore, respondents with lower education level wanted to increase the duration of the project.

Respondents who had art-related jobs commented on the appropriate selection and annotation of the artworks more than people with jobs not relating to art. Finally, respondents who spent time in the public spaces were encouraged to visit museums and art galleries more than respondents who spent lower time.

Dependent	Constant	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
V7	2.704 $(0.364)^a$	-0.062 (0.066)	-0.131 (0.089)	0.006 (0.047)	0.056 (0.041)	-0.016 (0.046)	-0.038 (0.053)
V8	2.220 $(0.594)^a$	-0.088 (0.107)	0.350 $(0.115)^b$	0.041 (0.077)	0.191 $(0.072)^b$	0.072 (0.075)	0.078 (0.087)
V9	1.151 (0.778)	-0.109 (0.140)	-0.006 (0.190)	0.297 $(0.100)^b$	0.046 (0.088)	0.100 (0.098)	-0.091 (0.114)
V10	1.872 (0.769)	0.031 (0.139)	-0.405 $(0.128)^a$	-0.120 $(0.049)^a$	0.058 (0.087)	0.087 (0.096)	0.025 (0.112)
V11	2.660 $(0.774)^a$	0.148 (0.140)	0.231 $(0.119)^b$	-0.143 (0.100)	0.141 $(0.067)^c$	0.036 (0.097)	0.002 (0.113)
V12	4.801 $(0.870)^a$	-0.311 $(0.107)^a$	-0.132 (0.213)	-0.323 $(0.112)^b$	0.089 (0.098)	0.174 (0.109)	-0.023 (0.127)
V13	3.052 $(0.948)^a$	-0.169 (0.171)	-0.295 (0.232)	0.071 (0.122)	-0.003 (0.107)	-0.023 (0.119)	-0.038 (0.139)
V14	2.133 $(0.846)^b$	-0.063 (0.153)	0.645 $(0.207)^a$	-0.030 (0.109)	0.058 (0.095)	0.074 (0.106)	0.184 $(0.064)^c$
V15	3.240 $(1.051)^a$	-0.082 (0.189)	0.318 (0.257)	-0.250 $(0.106)^b$	0.054 (0.118)	0.007 (0.132)	-0.069 (0.154)
V16	2.402 $(0.801)^a$	-0.121 (0.144)	0.073 (0.196)	-0.107 (0.103)	-0.006 (0.090)	0.075 (0.100)	-0.071 (0.117)

Table 4 - The logistic regression analyses of questionnaire raw data

Conclusion

According to the results of interviews with art experts and statistical analysis of questionnaires filled by citizens, to evaluate "A City-wide Art Gallery" project, we should not forget the courage to implement such a plan in this volume of 1,600 environmental structures.

In addition to its availability, visiting the artworks presented in "A City-wide Art Gallery" did not impose any costs to the citizens, on the contrary, the project facilitated art experiences for those who could not afford visiting the artworks in galleries and museums. In fact, in this project, art was not only accessible to a particular economic class, but to all others, meaning that individuals with unequal economic conditions were equally capable of enjoying this project.

Although the acceleration in the implementation of the idea has led the organizers to implement the project only in environmental advertising boards to achieve the goal of familiarizing and reconciling people with artworks, this urban art project with its strengths and weaknesses was a privileged experience in the cultural activities of the municipality of Tehran. Furthermore, this project gained the admiration of many experts and the media both inside and outside the country followed by requests from the Beautification organization to repeat the project annually, although the organization announced not planning for any repetitions after the second year of the project was run. The project has left the lasting effect of more public appreciation for art in Tehran's urban space. Nevertheless, considering Tehran as the capital city to which other cities look up to as a pattern of development, the repetition of the project could have paved the way towards developing similar cultural urban activities, thereby potentially spreading the art appreciation effect in other parts of the country. Further benefits of such project are stylizing city space, the improvement of the city's quality, the familiarity of the community with the artistic treasures of Iran and the world, encouraging people to visit museums and galleries and other cultural achievements. Finally, two further benefits can be mentioned for such projects: to create a sense of peace and sympathy among Iran's citizens who had seen the rich art of Iran and the world in front of their eyes in their boring and repetitive days. The second is the creation of an exciting reason for people in taxis or on buses, as a sum of different classes, to talk about art and culture.

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The Pixed City / Xarpi and the Body-Landscape

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Abstract

With the theme PiXação, subject Xarpi and object racism, the article talks about the enigmatic sense of risk of life, which accompanies the "being" of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Through the piXador / Xarpi crime, the analysis focuses on judgments, somehow, on the existing capital punishment in the logic of living another city, where the landscape becomes the body of the city.

Keywords: piXação / Xarpi, city of the colonized and racism, body-landscape

1.1 - Introduction - Pichada / piXada / Xarpi landscape and the city of the colonized

The "postcards" of the cities present a diverse landscape, in natural and urban beauties, that mix in the constructions of the senses of being of a place. In the city of Rio de Janeiro, the slums, for example, it is a result of these senses, next to a "romantic utopia," which reveals desires of living in "purgatory of beauty and chaos" during a brumada landscape aesthetic, abstract feature symbolic and anti-symbol, which tends to conceal a part of this landscape.

For the geographer Jorge Luiz Barbosa (2012), the anti-symbols face the symbols, and reveal conflicts given in the socio-cultural and economic differences:

> The hills, plains, mangroves and banks of rivers and ponds inhabited by popular communities have historically gained very different meanings from those attributed to the wonderful city. They represent a landscape to be denied, something that marbles the cult of the wonderful landscape of Rio. The signs of stylized nature and the places of unequal society meet and face each other: they are symbols and anti-symbols, dueling in the urban landscape, revealing distinctions of socio-cultural and economic. (BARBOSA, 2012, p. 31).

Those who live in a place of aesthetic landscaping meanings such as the South Zone of the respective city, for example, benefit and assist to the detriment of the other regions of the same city, that is, it creates a dualism South Zone versus "the rest of Rio". The fact that people from all over the city attend the beaches of the South Zone, brings discomfort to the inhabitants of this place, who, often, criminalize these subjects, as if they were forbidden to be frequenting that space.[1]

Another action involving matches networks and connections at the same time present in opposing areas of the landscape, so involved in symbolic and antisimbólicos phenomena is the practice of marking the surfaces of cities (e.g. a fence, wall, building, home, public transport, viaduct, bridge, footbridge, etc.). For example, the writings that appeared in the student movements in Europe and the protests against the military dictatorship in Latin America, in the 1960s, the tags initiated by Gangs of New York in 1930, and that stylize with the highest proportion in the Hip-Hop culture years of 1970/80. Any of these or other griffins, regardless of locality and area / surfaces, whether private, public (which also stand in private conceptions) or natural (e.g. rocks), made with brushes, paints, some sharp bridge object, or any other material that it marks, seems to exhibit a certain characteristic present especially in large cities: the distant necessity of the human being to "scribble" the places, by means of old and / or new linguistic and literary formations.

Figure 1 - Plate and Pifil in the Center. Source: photo
registered by the author himself, in August 2017.

Figure 2 - PiXação on a corner of Ver-O-Peso.Source:
photo registered by the author himself.

Still in the provocations with the Carioca landscape, I now bring to this discussion the symbolic / anti-symbolic involvement, one of these practices / graphic brands present in the city of Rio de Janeiro, and also in other Brazilian cities. Without discussing the "right", the "wrong", or the "why" of the word idea that is able to put the rounded part of the right side of the letter "p" to the left side, or the "! is transformed into "i" upside down, offer the graffiti as an authentic phenomenon, existing a little more than four decades, from various exhibitors signs of originality, sociability, among other movements that give grounds for reinterpretation in each territory, be it a state, a municipality, a region, a neighborhood, a street or any other enclosure. With its own aesthetic, an individual, which is understood in the collective of those who are subject or interested in practice, graffiti happens in experiences among the various generations, through an audience that is independent of class, creed, ethnicity or gender. Manifested on a variety of surfaces, the act of scouring primarily involves a characteristic with the juvenile and the popular, by bodies crossed by the absence of definition - for example, people who, despite having passed the official age as "young", show a strong following relationship in their lives, through phenomena such as graffiti[2].

The public relation pichadora is fruitful, and occurs at all times, including in the writing of the name of the phenomenon. As the reader may have already noticed, "graffiti" is written in this text with "ch", as officially the word was recorded. But, presently, a purposive grammatical error will be made in this text, since most punters seem to write the word graffiti with the letter "x", not with "ch". Yes, there are spellers who write the same word with "ch". However, by asking for permission for the scribblers, I notice in my act of reading them, and I venture to say, that most practitioners of this phenomenon write the word with the letter "x".

My invocation is also in the case of writing the letter "X", in order to offer my empathy with the book "Lets the Boy's Play", doctoral record in Education of Gustavo Coelho, when, in his intellectual effort with the phenomenon of piXação, is submitted to the respective orthography inspired by the Italian anthropologist Massimo Canevacci, in the book "Cultures eXtremas" (2005). Thus, all words that involve piXação and its derivatives - piXador, piXar, etc. - will be written, at this moment, with the letter "X". Verbalization of the form of writing made, with a purpose: my work is tune in the core of the conjuncture Xarpi, nomenclature as the phenomenon in focus is based in the state of Rio de Ja-

neiro, from its capital. Xarpi is the language used among the piXadores to identify their practices and their practitioners, that is, Xarpi is the piXação, and to be Xarpi is to be piXador, always in the singular.

1.2 – The body-landscape and piXação as a tattoo

Anti-black racism is another phenomenon of symbolic and anti-symbolic treatment, which provides the landscape of a city. Traumatizing, but still with its existence treated doubtfully, distrust determined from a relationship that does not see Western at the epicenter, such racialization is commonly perceived as something of the past, well resolved by a civilized way, through developments, for example, of the processes of language. To think about such topics is to think of the logics of storage, the accumulation of information: what happens from exclusive adjectives, creators of a tension, determined by the relations of the reason of those who have privileges, the centralization of the sense of reason, appreciated by a starting point, the white man.

In Part 4 of the book "Pode O Subalterno Falar?", Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2010) asks a question, apparently without the pretense of getting a fixed answer: "What should the elite do to be attentive to the continuous construction of the subaltern? "(SPIVAK, 2010, p.110). This question is one of the necessary provocations to think of the colonial constraint of anti-black racism, since in order to exist the need for men and women of nonwhite skin, to be similar and / or pleasing to the whims of whiteness, in order to survive to the world, is something (still) emergency to be reflected. To think this question of Spivak, in my view, is to think about the genocide, especially the racist, given the data released in 2015, explaining that the highest homicide rate in Brazil happens to young people (12 to 29 years), poor, male and black, as I stated here, in footnote, during the summary of the respective text.

For the French philosopher and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, to feel this racism, to try to understand it, is to feel shame, something that happens before any racist action:

> To make people ashamed of their own existence ... Yes, to make them aware of the opportunities they have wasted, of the passivity they have shown in situations, where, precisely, it would have been necessary, just like a thorn, in the heart of the world, to force, if need be, the rhythm of the heart of the world, to displace, if necessary, the system of command; in

any case, it would be necessary, with determination, to face the world. (FANON, 2008, p. 80).

It is in this shame that Fanon's object of study is defined: "to allow man of color to understand, with the help of precise examples, the psychological causes that can alienate his fellow men." (Fanon, 2008, p.81). The mirror game spoken by Mbembe and thought by others (and others), is the means of achieving this shame, or rather, when it comes to accepting it or not. When accepted, the anguish caused by it (shame) can be transformed into embarrassment, a process that, by having a continuous acceptance, ends up bringing the point that undermines the other. But in his denial, the anguish of shame, even if it comes to embarrassment, since without the continuation of his consideration, such shameful feeling stands as a disdain. During his provocations through a thought that continues to accompany shame as something inconstant, through a central goal, that of "making possible a healthy encounter between black and white" (Fanon, p. 81, 2008), Fanon manifests idea that such a meeting could also be thought of in any colonial relation, a conflicting commitment that occurs through the relational processes with language, as I did at the beginning of the text when I spoke of the mixed basis. If speaking is to exist absolutely for the other, in the condition of "assuming a culture" and "bearing the weight of a civilization," man, possessor of language, in possessing it, also possesses, "on the other hand, the world that this language expresses and that is implicit to it " (Fanon, 2008, p. 33).

The act of speaking, acquiring a language, for Fanon, is one of the commitments of the "city of the colonized" (Fanon, 1968). When we speak, the language is that of the settler, and to accept this language, somehow, is to accept its world, its attributes, the logics that are part of the senses of that language. The racism of color, as I am already trying to provoke, happens, happens to exist, in the disdain of a language that does not accept the dialect not recognized by this language, even if it occurs in the form of language. Who is black and has never felt embarrassment at some point in their own city? Who is black and has never heard (or felt) in this moment of shame, phrases like "I'm just doing my job."? Who is black and, in this kind of shame, felt so alone, that he preferred to "let it go"? The city of the colonized is that place of the "let go" feeling, carried out by what Fanon calls the "black abandone", which would be the annulment of racism among the racialized, by logics carried out "precisely"

because it is a "black. For it is not possible not to dislike it. " (Fanon, 2008, p. 81).

Interested in what happens in the constraint of the construction of the "other," which does not show the proper language for the colonial ranges, I have focused my thinking on racism with the Xarpi, a practice that is involved in conflict with the interests of the State, and therefore, I believe, inspired by Fanon, that the phenomenon, the phenomenon of the popular present in the Brazilian cities, invites the people to feel desire of annihilation, therefore carries "blood in the air." (Fanon, 1968, p.52). First and foremost, piXação is seen as disgusting in society, and its treatment, although it is shown with a "light sentence", since it is officially a crime, crossed by intensively violent markings.

According to Fanon (1968), in moments of social collapse, the people admit their revolutionary capacity in the conflicts arising from collective life. This collective life would be what many readings of the social sciences reduced from "mass", the place where the people are, that is, the place of the worker, who is treated as a bandit, same place as the bandit, "one who, in singular combat, succumbs after killing four or five policemen, the one who commits suicide in order not to denounce his accomplice", the treaty as "public enemy number 1", "thief" "Debauchery," the "depraved," who acts "exclusively against a colonial person or good," and are to the people the "heroes," for with them the "identification process is automatic". (FANON, 1968, p. 52 - 53).

Between crime and criminalizer, rational everyday life (hoisting) takes place. The good. The bad. The beautiful. The ugly. The enjoyed. The depreciated. The right. The wrong. Reason judges, and brings a problematic called by Fanon as "truth":

The problem of truth must also hold our attention. Within the people, truth always belongs to nationals. No absolute truth, no discourse on the transparency of the soul can crush this position. The lie of the colonized colonial situation responds with an equal lie. (FANON, 1968, pp. 37-38).

Within this set of issues, I provoke a truth about piXação: it is more criminal than an environmental disaster that wipes out a city and kills 19 people. About this truth: no person from Samarco was arrested and a prisoner has been imprisoned for more than 6 months, for having defiled the

Pampulha Church - I speak of Mariana, Belo Horizonte, and the state of Minas Gerais. Still, following this reading, I say that it is true that, in only one wall in the city of Rio de Janeiro, there are several spellings that should not be there. But it is also true that we did not know (until now) of anyone who caught up with having put "Only Jesus expels the demons of the people", or something. (COELHO, 2016). The only one that is penalized, within law enforcement or not, for marking / smudging outside walls, is the piXador, since, when this happened to graffiti artists, they would have been mistaken for piXadores. I realize that in this case the graffiti artists mistaken for Xarpi, an action took place that operated primarily through the Judgment, where young people were framed in action, say, homicidal, through the moralistic standard of the "justiceiro" that is often seen in cities, especially in the cases of the circulation of a certain exhibition of this "justice".

When I accompanied the Xarpi to the processes of these and other readings, one of them, Duck, brought some "bandit truths", or rather, those initiatives accepted out of the ordinary. He comments that one becomes Xarpi when the practice is done in high quantity on the level of other practitioners of piXação to recognize the action; he also explains that this high amount is fomented by the risk of life, since those who are subject to piXação may end up dying: - "PiXo since 2007 ... but I will only become Xarpi in 2017. (...) now the boys recognize what I do. (...) "; - "(...) you can end up dying (...) falling from a building (...) and even with a shot ...".

So, I remember again the truth in Fanon when he writes that:

> The behavior is frank with the nationals, twisted and illegible with the settlers. Authentic is all that precipitates the collapse of the colonial regime, which favors the emergence of the nation. Authentic is what protects the natives and ruins the foreigners. In the colonial context there is no real conduct. And good is simply what harms the settler. (Fanon, 1968, p. 37 - 38).

The PiXação / Xarpi can be seen as a "scrawl" of authentic literacy, since it annuls a grafocentric society, by means of a tongue twisted and illegible for the settlers. To be incomprehensible to the settler is to expose the so-called "vain" that disregards the harmony of certainty, in favor of

another species of man, which seeks the end of the absolute agreement of the colonizing actions.

By means of an "own rhythm" that provokes a "new language", which receives no legitimacy from anyone, not even from those who are willing to use this new language (Fanon, 1968), decolonization is the disposition of an action prepared for violence and violence. An unbridled action, because it somehow confronts the position of the "intermediary", the one who "brings violence to the house and brain of the colonized", when "does not mitigate oppression" through the "good conscience of the forces of order "Decolonization appeals to the reason of the colonized," who "make a just inversion of things" through derision, "when those values are invoked in their presence," or (Fanon 1968, p.28) "even if he knows that the prosecutor can be killed, he then puts the moment of practical practice, because, no, it is the realization of a decolonized attitude, because, at the end, he insults them and vomits them with all his forces "(Fanon, 1968, p.32). To act with derision, in the decolonization of Xarpi, for example, is to be an admirer of a person who has been honored in the form of a statue, but nevertheless to follow with the will to want the scorn said by Fanon seems to show at that moment that everia be of doubt, but, before being doubt, happens, that is, wants and does. "What will they think of me?" Change places with "I'll do it and fuck".

> I dream that I take a leap, that I swim, that I run, that I rise. I dream that I burst out laughing, that I transpose the river with a kick, that I am persecuted by a band of vehicles that never catch me. During colonization, the colonized does not cease to free itself between nine o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning. (FANON, 1968, p. 39)

This dream idea in Fanon is broad, complex, but for now, it referred to one of the lines I got in my field: - "Zumbi was a revolutionary guy from the time of enslavement. (...) my intention was only to go, not to turn, and to leave in the newspapers. (...) But I have nothing against Zumbi. (...) Just like the comrade of the suca, who, for a change, is black. " (Xarpi Cúka, in an interview in Olaria, neighborhood of the North Zone of the city of Rio de Janeiro, RJ, in August 2017). It is violent to think swastikas in any representation of Zumbi, or of any other representation that favors us, the blacks. But this violence, which causes shame, also exposes the racist anguish of living in a frankly genocidal city, which has in this

kind of scorn, the outrage of any colonial disdain. In other words, the settler's city has the clean, perfect and harmonious face of Zombie. The head, however, would be the city of the colonized, a frankly racist city. But why not another head, bust, finally statue? With so many of her for Carioca songs, because Zumbi? Cuká well explained the reason, the period that the "spotlights" appear in that place, in that period. In any other statue, so many racist people who have already won statues, are left in the city, and there is little routine to draw attention to them, compared to what happens with the Monument to Zumbi in November. Statues in Rio de Janeiro are "all the same," except for some of those who were somehow considered bandits.

> (...) city flattened, scraped by the lack of common sense, inert, suffocated under the geometrical burden of eternally present crosses, restless in the face of fate, mute, contradicted in every possible way, unable to thrive with the juice of earth, perplexed, pruned, reduced, devoid of fauna and flora. (FANON apud CÉSAIRE, 2008, p. 31).

In "Return notebook for the country", Aimé Césaire served something to think of the "indigenous", "black", "city of the colonized": where one is born and dies anywhere, and shows hunger for bread, meat, shoe, coal, light and what else exists. (Fanon, 1968, p.29). In Rio de Janeiro, the carioca being, who is the Brazilian being, is founded in this sense of "being of the city". According to Abdias Nascimento, one of these foundations is contained in the ideas of the term "Racial Democracy", which would be a "concrete relationship in the dynamics of Brazilian society: that blacks and whites coexist harmoniously, enjoying equal opportunities of existence, without no interference in this game of social parity, of their racial or ethnic origins. " (Nascimento, 1978, p. 41). According to Abdias, "Racial Democracy" is one of the "colonialistic illusions" (Nascimento, 1978: 43), which is seen only in Brazil; in other words, "racial democracy" is characteristic of the city of the Brazilian settler. The "fomentation of the myth of the free African" (Nascimento, 1978, pp. 65-66), those who made (and still do, why not) the war on behalf of whites, who promised such freedom, if survived such a war. The free African would be one of the first inhabitants of the city of the Brazilian colonized, the protagonist of the "black spot" that needed to be whitewashed, to realize the

Figure 3 - Cuka na cabeça de Zumbi. Source: Empresa Brasil de Comunicação website (EBC)).

formation of a "clean" civilization, contemplating the rationalization of the white being, of mixed blood "(Nascimento, 1978, 69) - the mulatto, the brown, the brown, etc. According to Abdias, this disdain introduced in Brazilian institutions is given by a genocidal tool, apparently (apparently) supported by all, including the Catholic Church, who considered the Negro as "an infected blood" (Nascimento, 1978, p. 70).

1.3 - Conclusions

After all this complex delimitation, I return to the landscaping subject of Rio de Janeiro, again with Barbosa (2012), when he problematizes the landscape as the epidermis of the city:

> The landscape is the epidermis of the city. We perceive the urban life through its mantle. Even if their perspectives are misleading and all their visible faces hide other, undesirable faces. The landscape is the 'skin' of the city and translates the ground of the lives of our daily lives. In it are expressions our dreams and fears, our secrets and exiles, our hopes and our dramas. Thus, full of life, the landscape is the concrete experience of living with the other, even if its rules are absurd. Therefore, the 'skin' expresses the diversity and plurality of our 'being in the world'. (BARBOSA, 2012, p. 32).

When it offers this reading of urban life, which intends the landscape in the existence of desires and disinterest, understanding that the action of varnishing, of covering with a mantle, the idea of hiding some in the relation with the other, Barbosa shows a manifestation of the plurality which seems to say recognizing the diverse, but still does not accept it. The idea of the landscape as the "skin" of the city brought by the geographer seems to escape, or even perhaps ignore the dreams, fears, secrets, hopes, or any drama and happiness of the variation of being in the world, why not?) to be more intermediated if the landscape were to be considered the "body" of the city. In order to do so, I will follow the empiria of the action as a kind of tattooing activity of the city, which "draws" stylized poetic acts, representative of the intentionality of individuals and / or groups that "appropriate" the spaces of the city, an environment that I consider to have the subjectivity of the body-landscape.

Getting a tattoo, tattooing the skin, is, say, marking the body's natural armor. Marking the skin occurs in the first instance as a record of intentionality, whether by individual or collective need. To think about it, I bring the book "Tattoos Theories - Tattooed Body: An Analysis of the Stoppa Tattoo Stone Shop", a result of a PhD research in Communication and Semiotics by Célia Maria Antonacci Ramos, who elaborates a thought about tattoo writing as one of the earliest manifestations of cultural space and time. Ramos (2001) Says:

> Recent discoveries of paleontologists attest to the presence of inscriptions engraved on bodies already in very ancient periods. Victoria Lautman records in her book The New Tattoo that in 1991 a hunter discovered in Similaun Glacier in the Italian Alps a five-thousand-and-hundred-year-old corpse with tattooed inscriptions on the back and knee. The author also points out the discovery of Egyptian female mummies with lines and dots tattooed on the body and a circle emphasizing the abdomen. (RAMOS, 2001, p. 26–27)

"Re-treated" in "idealizations, deformations, schematizations," "dress or nude," whether it was "drawn" by painters or "carved" by "sculptors," the body was, in the West, only a " pre) text, "a" stimulus, "not a" message. " The drawings and any form on the body were performed outside of it. (Ramos, 2001, p.57). In modernity, this portrait is done in the body, when, for example, it is touched by the tattoo. It is inscribed and transformed. Mute. He undergoes metamorphosis. It goes from "unbranded" to "branded"; or from "marked" to "most marked". Transmigra, because it appropriates definitively. Appropriation worn in the body, as much as punishment, to depart, discriminate, deny something, as to be costume, habit, model, ethnic brand. Tattooing is, in some way, to mark an identification, positively or negatively, by touch. The beating with some pointed instrument, such as needles or similar (bones, sticks, tapas), used in many different rituals, within various purposes and acceptances. Today, "we record the return of this practice as much as socio-cultural ethnic exclusion, as in the Nazi camps, as aggregation or individualization ornamentation."(Ramos, 2001, p. 85).

From this basic notion about tattoo or tattoo artist, I come back to comment on the skin: unique place of the tattoo, it is the one that dresses and coats, runs and penetrates, the whole body. "We blush with shame and sweat of

fear and emotion. We recoil from cold, but from commotion too" (Ramos, 2001, p.91). The skin keeps the organs connected, and gives the border between the inside and the outside. It hides and shows, through an ambivalence that shows itself as smooth and rough, seen in a close or distant way, in parts that cause pleasures or afflictions, with bitter or sweet flavors, causing love and / or hate. The recording on the skin goes beyond writing, which is ephemeral as it can be erased. I say this, thinking that the remote is in the act of "recording" the skin, which happens before the mark is "eternalized", in a preservation of that eternal through memory. It is the memory that makes the tattoo irrevocably infested, even when it is erased. Ramos (2001) explains something of the kind, saying that:

> The tattoo artist breaks the skin tissues and introduces the paint into the epidermis, the deeper layer of the skin, that is, inside the body. In fact, with the tattoo, the memory lives in us. The body is a living support, committed to biological transformations and especially to cultural impositions. (Ramos, 2001, p. 92).

Returning to the subject of the body, "living sculpture" of skin / "armor," which "subscribes-tensions and wilts," a kind of "becoming" that which "once was," exhibits features perceptually agreed upon by a certain compound, encompasses the sensitive, culture, eroticism, inconsistency, affection, pain, in synthesis, the feeling present in time and space. The body as "a constant cultural construction, subject to the laws and fantasies of the culture in which one live.. (Ramos, 2001, p. 92-93).

Continuing with the geographer Milton Santos, for him, the landscape is a set of real-concrete objects, in a characteristic "transtemporal", out of time, junction of the past with the present, vertical construction, crossed. Each landscape is characterized by a given distribution of object-forms, full of specific technical contents. A material system created in different historical moments of the past, coexisting with the now, "The landscape is frozen history, but it participates in living histor." (Santos, 2012, p.107). It is just an idea, despite its material concreteness. "All that we see, what our vision does not reach, is the landscape (...). Not only formed of volumes, but also of colors, movements, odors, sounds, etc. " (Santos, 2012, p. 61).

I believe in the idle power of these unformatted combinations, realized in the desires and / or the desired detachments, the diversity of being and being, as enigmatically offers the graffiti / piXação / Xarpi.

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Endnotes

1 - Link with example of this type of situation: https://extra.globo.com/casos-de-policia/jovens-da-zona-sul-formam-gangues-em-rede-social-cercam-onibus-na-saida-da-praia-de-copacabana-rv1-1-17551814.html.

2 - I'm talking about other Carioca puberty phenomena, popular in the traditional context, not in the same order, or even without a complete separation. The memories and relationships of Galera's Funks Dances, the Movements of the Organized Twists and the outings of the Bate-Ball Classes, are examples of other initiatives that intertwine with the graffiti. (COELHO, 2016).

Aesthetics of Change
Multiculturalism and the street art of Footscray

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Abstract

Street art is considered by many as a cultural practice, which like all cultures, has its diversity within it. Through the analysis of three case studies, this article demonstrates the value in using multiculturalism as a framework for developing street art. This study is situated in the Melbourne suburb of Footscray in Australia, from 2014 – 2018 which has been undergoing urban development and gentrification. Each case study features artists that have created a street art piece in the suburb during the research period. There are varied opinions about what constitutes street art and how to define a street artist. In order to contain our research, the article focuses on artists who create legal murals. Through an exploration of their work, techniques and intent behind their art, the article presents an understanding of the diversity that exists within the street art community. Culture and multiculturalism have broad interpretations and this research suggests understanding multiple perspectives from a lived experience to political forms of management and integration. Theoretical literature, are reviewed to explore how they are at work in contemporary discourses of government, arts and community. The setting for this research, Footscray, is known as a culturally diverse inner-city suburb, that has been reportedly going through the process of gentrification. We examine gentrification's impact on social diversity and also explore the role of street artists as both gentrifies and activists against gentrification. This article intends to prove that the application of multicultural theory to street art projects can create community resilience during times of urban transition. Through this research, we investigate street art as a manifestation of the cultural diversity of the community. As such, it demonstrates how an understanding of multiculturalism from different perspectives, can provide a framework for the development of future street art projects by artists, communities and organisations.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Gentrification, Community, Culture, Street Art

Introduction

Since 2014, street art has changed the landscape of the Melbourne suburb of Footscray in Australia. One such work was my own street art project, the Footscray Animated Wall Mural project. However, most were created through participation in the local council's street art program, StreetWORKS. Footscray is often described as a multicultural suburb that is undergoing gentrification (Brown, Hunt, 2014). The definition of multiculturalism is explored through multiple perspectives from the lived experience of the Footscray community to the management approach used by government organisations. This article examines three case studies of street artists who have created work in Footscray. They are Rosie Kilvert, Larissa MacFarlane and artistic duo, Creature Creature. An understanding of the suburb's history, urban development and current demographic is presented to give context to where the works are situated. Then, multicultural theories such as recognition, self-determination and egalitarianism are applied for analysis of these artists and their works. Through this analysis, this article will demonstrate the understanding different approaches to multiculturalism to develop sustainable street art projects that not only enhance but also strengthen the community.

1. Street Art

Defining street art is complex due to the blurred line between criminality and art. Consent, style and intent of the practitioner, all play a part in whether a work is considered art or vandalism. In order to limit the scope of what this article refers to as 'street art,' the following approaches are used:

(1) The works in this article only cover street art murals, where a mural is defined as a piece of work created on a wall. This could be a painting, paste-up or other form of art.

(2) The terminology of the artist or creator is used. For example, if a practitioner calls themselves an artist and their work as art, then those are the terms used by this article.

(3) For ethical purposes, all the works in this article were created with permission or were commissioned works. Therefore, there is no issues regarding criminality.

Before undertaking an analysis of Footscray's street art, a knowledge of its history is required. This history provides a basis of understanding the artists and works in the case studies of this article.

2. Footscray

2.1 A History of Footscray

Footscray is an inner-city suburb in Melbourne, Australia, which lies within the municipality of Maribyrnong along the Maribyrnong river. It lies only 5 km from the Melbourne CBD and has a major train station that provides access to the western suburbs. In 1803 the first European settlers came to the area ('Footscray, Victoria,' 2018). According to the Maribyrnong Council website, the Footscray area was home to the, "Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung tribes of the Kulin nation for more than 40,000 years" (Maribyrnong Council Website, 2017). The Kulin nation represent the first people of this area and comprises of five Indigenous Australian Tribes.

The current population of Footscray is the result of the movement of migrant groups into the suburb since European settlement. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2016) census data of Footscray reveal that, "The most common ancestries in Footscray (Western Metropolitan) (State Electoral Divisions) were Vietnamese 13.3%, English 12.9%, Australian 11.6%, Chinese 8.3% and Irish 5.1%." When responding to the question of ancestry, respondents were given the option of choosing two. Under half its residents were born in Australia at 45% and only 20.9% reported that both parents were born in Australia. English speaker who don't speak a second language at home consisted of 39.7% of the population (ABS, 2016).

2.2 Footscray and Gentrification

Gentrification is a term made popular by, Ruth Glass, who defined it as the displacement of working class due to urban development and an increase in property prices. Footscray has been reported in the media as going through the process of gentrification. This has been observed by the rising cost of property in the area (realestate.com.au, 2018) and even the rising price of a bowl of Vietnamese pho soup (Hinchliffe, 2018).

A 2011 Australian study on gentrification and displacement investigated its impact on community members using Maribyrnong, Footscay's municipality, as one of its locations for analysis. Some of the effects found by the study were a reduction of social diversity and community infrastructure for those who stay, and access to employees, employment and education due to high rent and displacement (Atkinson, Wulff, Reynolds, Spinney, 2011).

In his article, *Complexity, Aesthetics and Gentrification: Redfern/ Waterloo Tour of Beauty*, Lucas Ihlein (2009) describes the role artist play in this process. "Artists are seen as key gentrifies. We are able to invest energy into architectural waste structures, creating a connection between beauty and utility where there previously seemed to be none." This in turn, "allows the broader property market to wake up to their potential for intensified commodification."

Part of the gentrification of Footscray has been the buffing of illegal street art, particularly from 2015. Also, many new commissioned works were created through the local council programs by professional artists during this time. Our case studies will further explore how street art has contributed to the suburb's change but also can be a form of resilience for the existing community.

3. Multiculturalism

Before conducting an analysis of multiculturalism, an understanding of its root word, culture, is required. Culture is a complex term that has been used to describe shared characteristics such as ethnicity, race, gender and religion. Kymlicka (1996) writes, "If culture refers to the 'civilization' of a people, then virtually all modern societies share the same culture." Parekh (2006) describes culture as a, "system of

beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of human beings understand, regulate and structure their individual and collective lives".

Multiculturalism as the plural of culture, is a word that has been used by politicians and theorists to describe a range of societal interactions. According to Kenan Malik (2012), multiculturalism has, "come to have two meanings that are all too rarely distinguished. The first is what I call the lived experience of diversity. The second is multiculturalism as a political process, the aim of which is to manage that diversity."

By examining the history of multiculturalism in Australia, one can find examples of Malik's (2012) two meanings. The, "political process," is evident in how Australia's laws for Indigenous Australians and migrants have changed over the years. When the first European settlers arrived in 1788, Australia was considered *terra nullius* or unoccupied land. Until the High Court's decision in the Mabo case of 1993, Australian law failed to acknowledge the Indigenous peoples and their cultures (Augoustinos, 1999). The *Immigration Restriction Act* of 1901, or the *White Australia Policy*, limited immigration from non-European countries. It specifically targeted Asian migrants, and those that were already in the country were, "expected to assimilate into this white, British society," (Mann 2016). "Australia adopted a multicultural policy in the late 1970s to replace integration as the basis of its approach to migrants," (Mann, 2016). The aim of this shift in policy was to improve social cohesion.

The introduction of multicultural policies would have had an impact on what Malik (2012) described as the, "lived experience," of multiculturalism. Over the last few decades, many new migrants have come to Australia to escape war, find work, undertake studies or to just start a new life. According to Healey (2016), multiculturalism in contemporary Australia is, "simply a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity." The Scanlon Foundation's studies on social cohesion found that 83%-86% of survey respondents in the across the years 2013 – 2017 consistently agreed that, 'multiculturalism has been good for Australia.' Since these studies were conducted across a national sample of Australian residents, these results can be interpreted as their collective, "lived experience," of the country's diversity.

Multiculturalism across the world is still contentious. European politicians such as UK former Prime Minister David Cameron (Taylor, Wright, 2011) and Germany's Chancellor, Angela Merkel (Weaver, 2010) state that multiculturalism has, "failed," in their respective countries. They both talked about the need for immigrants to integrate into the majority culture. One of the problems of this approach of integration is that it ignores the complexities of identity. These complexities can be further examined through interculturalist and intersectionality theory.

3.1 Interculturalist and Intersectionality

According to Charles Taylor (2012) multiculturalism is the recognition of difference whereas interculturalist focuses more on integration. He believes Quebec has an intercultural story because of its long line of ancestry and integration of its two languages, French and English. However, Taylor (2012) describes the rest of Canada as more multicultural where there is a recognition of difference. This recognition addresses the complexity of identity, whereas integration policies can ignore these complexities, for example being part of the majority ethnicity but having minority religion.

Intersectionality theory can be used to understand the connections between gender, race, class and religion. For example, Hancock (2016) explored intersectionality through a, "black feminist approach." Werbner (2013) observed that, "Intersectionality has become an increasingly important framework for analysing multiple forms of disadvantage." She argues that this intersectionality creates negative identities, and explores the counter idea of, "*multiple identities* as a positive politics of recognition." This idea of multiple identities aligns with multicultural theory in that there is recognition of diverse cultures within individuals and society.

The following case studies further investigate multicultural theory and identity through the stories of three artists who created work in Footscray. Through this study, this research presents a link between the development of street art and multicultural theory, and to some extent, social cohesion and resilience.

4. Case Studies

Figure 1: Part of the *Footscray Animated Wall Mural* showing the story of Bunjil by Rosie Kalina Kilvert.

4.1 Case Study 1 : Rosie Kalina Kilvert

As the author of this article, I want to acknowledge that I am not of Indigenous Australian heritage so I needed to be aware of Rosie⊠s culture and beliefs as well as that of her mentor, Uncle Larry Walsh. The reason why she is introduced first in this article, is to pay respect to the fact that they are the first peoples of Australia. Also, as the researcher, I acknowledge the literature used in this research is by non-Indigenous theorists.   However, as an artist who creates work on Indigenous land, this article seeks to provide insight into the process of working with Indigenous communities.

Kilvert is of Indigenous Australian (Wemba Wemba and Gunditjmara) and European heritage and was selected to participate in this study through her involvement in my project, the *Footscray Animated Wall Mural,* a stop motion street art project along a 67 metre wall. The project was a collaborative community one and most of the contributors were community members with little or no experience with street art.   The project was created over 9 months in 2014 and Kilvert designed a portion of the wall as a young Indigenous representative of the Kulin Nation. With guidance

from Indigenous elder, Uncle Larry Walsh, she animated the story of Bunjil the eagle, the creator of the land, rules, people and animals.

Uncle Larry Walsh is the Elder in Residence at the Footscray Community Arts Centre.   His contribution to the wall mural proved invaluable to Kilvert as a young Indigenous representative.   Kilvert did not want the responsibility of representing the Indigenous community, so it was also important to have an elder that supported her. He narrated the Bunjil story over the stop motion footage.

At the same time that Kilvert was painting her Bunjil, another Bunjil was being painted only a few streets away by a non-Indigenous artist who was commissioned to create the piece by the local council. The artist involved in the second Bunjil is a professional street artist.   His work was created at a greater height and incorporated elements of graffiti writing at the bottom. The design of the work and the fact that it was a council commissioned piece, protected it from vandalism and it still remains at the time of writing this article.

However, our project was mainly on ground level, and

over the 12 months after the project completed, there was significant tagging over the work. It was around this time that the council buffed (painted over with solid colour) the wall clean of the mural. For Kilvert, the destruction of our mural without notice, and the fact that the other Bunjil, commissioned by council, is well maintained, represents the continual fight by her community since colonisation.

During the interview, Rosie and myself made the decision not to name any other artists directly as she did not want to direct blame away from the council.   Instead she used her interview as an opportunity to express frustration at a government system that does not allow her and members of her community to express themselves their way. She also saw the act of removing the mural as an example of gentrification.   As she said in her interview (Widiarto, 2018), "the council prefers one aesthetic to the other."

In a separate interview with Uncle Larry, he recalled his experience with another street art project in Footscray. The local council had commissioned a non-indigenous artist commissioned to create a mural representing the Indigenous community. This was initiated without consultation from the local Indigenous community and the image that was selected was of a desert child.   Uncle Larry and other Indigenous community members felt this image was not suitable for an urban landscape as urban Indigenous people do not resemble that representation (Widiarto, 2018).

According to Duncan Ivison (2008), while some countries may use the term, 'multicultural,' to include their Indigenous societies, it is not usually used to apply to Indigenous Australians due to the conflict over, "the legitimacy of the state." This is evident in Kilvert's belief that urban development in Australia was constructed without permission as, "there has been no treaty." Another example of the debate around the legitimacy of state is the argument surrounding Australia Day. The current date, 26th of January, marks the arrival of the first fleet from Britain on Australian shores in 1788. It is considered a day of mourning by many Indigenous Australians and continuing to celebrate Australia Day on this date is seen by many as a disregard of the injustices that Indigenous Australians have faced since that time (Roe, 2018).

However, Ivison believes that this conflict can be overcome

through some form of reparation such as recognition of those injustices.   Enabling Indigenous Artists to mark spaces by creating street art can be a form of reparation. Rosie argues for more street art to be employed by the Indigenous Australian community to decolonize urban spaces, such as the 'no pride in genocide' tags. In the Justice for Elijah march in Melbourne, she observed that political statements such as the red paint spilled on the ground, are met with arrests. This conflict of space and ownership still exists because of the lack of atonement for historic injustices. "Whether it be a small tag, an engraving of the Aboriginal flag in wet concrete, or a large-scale mural cascading down the side of a city building, it will always be a reminder to the viewer that they are on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land, that sovereignty was never ceded, and we always have and will continue to fight" (Mokak, 2017). Indigenous Australians have employed street art and graffiti techniques to decolonize, such as the, 'no pride in genocide,' tags seen around Sydney in the lead up to Australia Day in 2017 (Mokak, 2017).

However, there can be further issues where the reparation comes solely from the governing body.   In Uncle Larry Walsh's story of the commissioned mural was a form of recognition for the Indigenous Australians. However, the recognition came from a government body without any consultation, and therefore can be interpreted as a form of oppression. Citing the case study of the Dene people of Canada, Glen Coultard argues for self-determination as a way to empower people of Indigenous cultures. Self-determination is recognition that comes from within the group, and is acknowledged by the dominant authority such as a government body. If the dominant culture is to one to determine how a culture is recognized, this can be seen as another form of oppression.   Coulthard examined the politics of recognition through the case study of the Dene peoples of Canada in their *Agreement in Principle between the Dene Nation and Her Majesty the Queen, in Right of Canada, 1976*.   In this agreement, they outlined a set of principles for recognition, self-determination and self-governance over their land, economy and way of life (Helm et. al, 2000). Coulthard uses Fanon's view of self-determination to argue, "the colonized must initiate the process of decolonization by first recognizing themselves as free, dignified and distinct contributors to humanity," (Coulthard, 2007). By instigating the recognition in themselves first, this empowers them to demand recognition in others.

These theories for reparation, recognition and self-determination can already be seen within Maribyrnong's policies. Within their Indigenous Policy (2013), there is a strong focus on participation and self-determination. Within 'Relationships,' one point is to, "Encourage Indigenous Australians to participate in public consultations". In the section for 'Opportunities,' several points start with, "Support Indigenous Australians to express and share their culture....". These points reflect to the self-recognition that the Dene people of Canada asked for. As with the Indigenous Policy (2013), The Reconciliation Action Plan (2016) states as one of its points, "Increase participation and representation by Indigenous people on Council committees and other decision-making structures". However, in order for these policies to be effective, the council must ensure that they are actively applied to all components of their governance, including the development of public art.

4.2 Case Study 2 : Larissa MacFarlane

Multiculturalism often refers to ethno-cultures but in Larissa MacFarlane's case, she talks about creating a, "culture of disability," (Widiarto, 2018). Her work as a disability artist and activist started after she overcame a brain injury after a car accident.

Her work is based on her handstand practice, which she developed as part of her recovery process. By transforming her handstands into street art paste-ups, she felt she was creating safe spaces for herself that she could share with others in the community.

She further developed her practice through her community paste-up project, *Snapshots of Seddon,* developed from her desire to give an identity to those whom she felt were unseen by the community. Seddon is the neighbouring suburb of Footscray and is also located within Maribyrnong. The project was a photography contest by local residents of all ages, genders and abilities. She more recently turned the project into a street art exhibition, posting large paste ups

Figure 2: *Disability Pride* paste up wall project by Larissa MacFarlane before it was removed.

of past entries onto walls around Seddon. The idea behind the project was to provide a means for any person to engage in street art despite their ability.   She identified the need for this recognition after failing to see any for the disability community in the local *Seddon Festival*.

MacFarlane also had an artist residency in 2017 at Footscray Community Arts Centre in 2017.   As part of her residency, she put together a collaborative wall of paste ups called, *Disability Pride*, as part of the, *One Night in Footscray*, arts event. The event was sponsored by the Maribyrnong Council and the work was created to celebrate International Day of People with a Disability (IDPD).   The work was created in collaboration with about forty people, most of which identified as disabled. Most of them were not professional artists, and this was a way for them to express themselves in a public space. However, *Disability Pride* was removed by council graffiti removal contractors within a few days. It is unclear if it lasted until IDPD which was a few days after the paste ups were installed. The Maribyrnong Council has since apologized for the mistake. MacFarlane has used the media to bring attention to this incident. In doing so, she puts a spotlight on the lack of visibility by councils to recognize the disability community.

In his work, "*Multiculturalism: examining the politics of recognition,* Taylor (1994) discusses the theory of recognition. According to Taylor, in cases of oppression, "misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need," Taylor (1994). This recognition gives them a sense of value or worth. It enables them to demand rights and equal treatment from their oppressors by recognising in themselves, that they are worthy of such equality. He also identifies different forms of recognition such as group recognition and self-recognition.

Misrecognition is one of the driving forces behind MacFarlane's work. In her interview, she talks about how people with a disability are often misrepresented in modern Australian society. She wants society to recognize, "There are many ways to be disabled." MacFarlane's self-expression is through her ability to do handstands that she is able to self-recognize. With each handstand, her resilience to recover from her brain industry grows. Her 'Disability Pride'

wall and 'Snapshots of Seddon' project reflected her desire to give an identity to the disability community who she felt were unseen by the community.   This aligns with the need for recognition for her community. She identified the need for this recognition after failing to see any representation for the disability community in her local Seddon Festival. She also sees this self-recognition as a way of understanding her interaction with others. Her practice allows her to reflexively understand her own disability identity as well as her identity as part of her disability community.

In his critique of multiculturalism, Barry (2001) believed that looking at multiculturalism through a process of political management and policy would, "only benefit those who benefit most from the status quo." Instead he suggests an egalitarian approach to multiculturalism where the goal is freedom, equality and liberty (Barry, 2001). Applying Barry's egalitarian approach to the art world, Young (2013) believes that street art and graffiti are egalitarian in nature where the artist may be trying to, "avoid the often exclusive institutions of the art world."

Macfarlane has referred to egalitarianism as one of the reasons they moved from gallery spaces to the street. She said that by exhibiting on the streets, her costs to install the work are lower and she can also share her work with a greater audience on the street. However, while Barry's referred to class systems, MacFarlane's work also transcends both physical and mental ability. Using her skills as an artist, she has enabled people of all abilities to take part in street art. In this way, MacFarlane is also trying to build resilience within her community by standing up for her peers.

4.3 Case Study 3: Creature Creature

Chanel Tang and Ambrose Rehorek who form the artistic duo, Creature Creature, were involved in Maribyrnong Council's StreetWORKS in its third year.   They are the only artists who have not lived in Footscray and are also not originally from Victoria.   Rehorek moved to Melbourne from South Australia and Tang came from New Zealand.   Rehorek's sister started a gallery space in Footscray and the pair had an artist residency and studio space there for a time. Being a partnership, one of the key themes of their work is dualism and the balance between opposite forces.   They talked

about wanting to explore this theme more in their work.

When developing their work *Nest*, for StreetWORKS, Tang and Rehorek were asked by council to acknowledge the community in their concept design. Initially they did come up with an idea involving images of residents of different backgrounds. However, after some consultation with council, they decided to go with the more abstract concept of 'migration,' represented through several foreign birds being drawn to a waratah flower. This is because they viewed migration as one of the factors that developed the community. The group of birds juxtaposed around the flower also reflects their concept of duality.

This piece, *Nest,* was created on the wall of the Milking Station Cafe. Overall the couple had a positive experience with many community members complimenting them on their work. Any tagging by graffiti vandals of StreetWORKS pieces has been removed by council cleaners but the

piece has also rarely been tagged. This may also be due to its proximity away from the Footscray CBD, whereas Kilvert and MacFarlane's work were both located within it.

Homi K, Bhabha (2012) wrote that art and literature can be used as an exploration of culture and difference and can be used to navigate that space between differences in a more fluid way. Bhabha (2012) believes the, "interstices of culture," is what fosters creative invention. That in-between of the classifications of race, religion and gender are being constantly redefined in modern day. His approach is the acknowledgement of our differences rather than our grouping. Trinh (2013) also sees difference as something that, "should be understood within the same culture, just as multiculturalism as an explicit condition of our times exists within every self."

Creature Creature's exploration of duality looks at that fluidity and difference between cultures described by Bhabha

Figure 3: *Nest* mural by Creature Creature, created as part of the StreetWORKS Program

(2012) and Trinh (2013). Their creativity comes from both within themselves, but also through their collective identity. Their inquiry into the space between cultures is evident in the subject and themes of their work where, east meets west and creatures come into conflict but also harmony.

The idea behind *Nest* is also a form of recognition. With gentrification being a risk to Footscray's diversity, this work is a celebration of how migration has shaped Footscray. In this example, the council was able to guide the artists to choose a better representation of the suburb over the initial suggestion of selecting certain faces. Although the birds they painted were from certain countries, they determine the countries based on migration statistics, and in doing so, provided an overall representation of the demographic of Footscray, rather than focusing on individuals. This work's success in recognising how the community has contributed to Footscray, may also build resilience as new residents move into the area.

Conclusion

Through the case studies presented in this article, this research argues for the value of using multicultural theory in the development of street art projects. The application of multicultural theory to these case studies has magnified their significance in a wider societal context. Kilvert's case study shows us how street art can be a form of reparation for past injustices. MacFarlane's case study demonstrated how an egalitarian approach has allowed her to develop a culture of disability that overcomes misrecognition. Also, Creature Creature's exploration of duality shows how art can explore that space between culture and be a celebration of multiculturalism through recognition.

As discussed, culture is intrinsically linked to so many aspects of our lives that multiculturalism as the plural of those cultures is part of our everyday reality. Understanding multiple perspectives of multiculturalism is needed to fully appreciate its value in the development of public art. The works presented in the film embody the role each artist plays within their culture as activists, educators and storytellers. Consequently, not only does street art contribute to the aesthetics of the neighbourhood, but they are also manifestations of the community's cultural diversity. This understanding of how multicultural theory can provide a framework for street art, can assist artists and organisations

to develop more meaningful work that engages, inspires and emboldens their community.

This article has shown how street art can build resilience through recognition, self-determination and community engagement. By applying multicultural theory, street art can provide a deeper understanding of the community beyond the aesthetic. As such, this research can also assist organisations in developing a community engaged framework for sustainable public art programs during times of social change. For arts facilitators and artists who are engaged in public art, this study provides an understanding of how different perceptions of culture and multiculturalism can affect how their art is received, interpreted and celebrated by the wider community.

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Sustainable Graffiti Management Solutions for Public Areas

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Abstract

Towards advancing sustainable graffiti management solutions for public areas, this article investigates the efficacy and socio-ecological effects of a range of contemporary graffiti management tactics. In addition to finding that reactive management tactics (e.g. painting over graffiti, chemical-based graffiti removal, and anti-graffiti coatings) are largely ineffective at deterring graffiti vandalism in public areas, it is shown that reactive management efforts also entail both short- and long-term environmental risks. Moreover, a comparison of reactive and proactive management tactics (e.g. landscaping techniques, green walls, community murals, legal graffiti spaces, and public art workshops) indicates that the cumulative environmental effects of reactive tactics are significantly more detrimental to human health and local ecosystems. Accordingly, it is recommended that local authorities focus on proactive graffiti management tactics for public areas. Finally, several best practice case studies of sustainable graffiti management are highlighted.

Keywords: Graffiti Management, Graffiti Countermeasures, Public Areas, Sustainable Urban Planning, Resource Efficiency

1. Introduction

As I write, graffiti are more universal and omnipresent than ever before. Observable in human settlements of all locations, shapes and sizes – along highway corridors and railways, covering trains and restrooms, within abandoned sites and war zones, deep underground and atop skyscrapers – graffiti know no borders. Yet, despite a substantial and growing prevalence, the majority of graffiti created over the past half century has been purged from the public view. Indeed, the graffiti we see today are merely "the latest layer in an ongoing urban palimpsest of spray paint and whitewash that hides away its own history." (Ferrell, 2016, p. xxxiii)

Fig.1 - Left: 'Corporate Slingshot' by Os Gemeos & 'Crown of Greed' by Blu. Lisbon, Portugal. 2014.
Photo by M. Aagaard. Right: Graffiti on a tram. Lisbon, Portugal. 2015. Photo by N. Nguyen.

Graffiti management involves a wide range of public, private, and third sector actors who collectively expend significant resources towards deterring, mitigating, and removing graffiti. Many cities have introduced so-called 'zero-tolerance' policies that obligate the removal of any unauthorized graffiti in the public view, believing that "rapid removal of graffiti is the most effective method to prevent future vandalism … because it nullifies the notoriety or 'fame' sought by taggers and shows taggers that the site is being watched." (Teng et al., 2016, p. 363) For example, the official website of the City of Vancouver claims "delays in removal tend to encourage graffiti vandals to expand the graffiti to adjacent properties. In this way, graffiti can act as a magnet and attract more graffiti to the area." (City of Vancouver, 2016)

Opponents of zero-tolerance policies note, however, that such tough-on-graffiti approaches generally fail to deter or reduce graffiti over the long-term "because they fail to address, and in fact often purposefully ignore, the reasons behind graffiti." (Gomez, 1993, p. 657) Rather, zero-tolerance policies and reactive graffiti management tactics may well have helped establish today's thriving graffiti scene and anti-graffiti industry. Furthermore, several studies indicate rapid graffiti removal efforts can have unintended consequences, such as "the proliferation of tags and other forms of graffiti that people tend to dislike the most." (Shobe & Banis, 2014, p. 586)

Alas, contemporary graffiti management is not merely costly and ineffective; it is also an often-overlooked environmental threat. Indeed, some of today's most widely used and promoted reactive management tactics, such as graffiti removal using pressure washer systems equipped with chemical paint removers or the application of anti-graffiti coatings on buildings, entail both short- and long-term adverse impacts on human health and local ecosystems, including water resources and air quality.

Towards uncovering more sustainable graffiti management solutions for public areas, this article considers the efficacy and socio-ecological effects of contemporary graffiti management tactics. It reveals that many reactive management tactics are significantly worse for health and ecosystems than a variety of proactive tactics, such as preventative landscaping techniques, green walls, community murals, legal spaces for graffiti, and public art workshops. Accordingly, it is argued that local authorities should focus on proactive graffiti management tactics for public areas. Several best practice cast studies of sustainable graffiti management are considered.

Fig. 2 - Left: Chemical-based graffiti management efforts on 5 September 2016. Right: New graffiti tags appear on 17 September 2016. Hamburg, Germany. Photos by D. Huntington.

2. Reactive Graffiti Management

Effective graffiti removal poses several challenges. First, the wide range of chemical and material ingredients in aerosol paints inhibits standardization of removal methods. Moreover, the reality that graffiti differs by size, color, and location influences factors such as ease of removal and degree of damage to the substrate. While removing graffiti from plastic, ceramic, and metal surfaces may be unproblematic, effective removal from porous (e.g. concrete) surfaces is often difficult, as aerosol paints easily infiltrate any pores. Additionally, some pigments cause darker staining than others, making it more difficult to clean certain colors, such as black, red, and silver, which just so happen to be a few of the most popular colors among writers. (Sanmartín et al., 2015)

Aside from simply painting over graffiti, other common reactive management tactics include chemical paint removal products and mechanical pressure washers. Alternatively, anti-graffiti coatings, which form a protective layer on the substrate and expedite any subsequent graffiti removal efforts, are increasingly used on public and private property in urban areas prone to graffiti. Alas, chemical paint removal products may penetrate and cause irreversible damage to a substrate. Likewise, the use of pressure washers in combination with water, a chemical solution, or abrasive materials (e.g. sand, ground rubber, carbon flint) may compromise the structural integrity of some substrates, particularly in the case of historic buildings or monuments. Without proper care, even the seemingly straightforward painting over of graffiti can have precarious results. More traditional methods, such as scalpel by hand, may be appropriate for removing graffiti under highly controlled conditions or from delicate surfaces; however, this process may be very time-consuming for larger graffiti and is thus generally neither efficient or economic. Novel methods, such as dry ice blasting or laser removal have demonstrated some potential environmental benefits over traditional methods; however, these tools are still in development and not without drawbacks. Notably, they may "alter the color of the substrate (e.g. inducing yellowing), remove some grains and produce craters, and they can also transform, melt and/or fracture the minerals." (Sanmartín et al., 2015, p. 295)

Fig.3 - Left: "Please No Tags! …Honestly!", Dresden, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington.
Right: Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington.

Most importantly, reactive management tactics are generally ineffective at preventing recurring acts of graffiti. Indeed, the effects of reactive management are generally temporary and may have unintended consequences, such as encouraging "quick and dirty forms of graffiti over more complex design works." (Haworth et al., 2013, p. 53)

2.1. Painting Over Graffiti

Painting over graffiti is relatively simple and inexpensive compared to most other management tactics; however, this method is generally only effective when restoring the appearance of a previously painted surface. Alternatively, painting over may be suitable for some smooth substrates, but only where color-matching is possible. Otherwise, painting over graffiti may have unintended consequences. For example, attempts to match the substrate's existing color often fall short, resulting in a telltale patchwork effect that may, in fact, attract more graffiti. Furthermore, repeated painting over can result in heavy paint buildup, which may inhibit the breathability or integrity of the substrate. (Sanmartín et al., 2014)

Notwithstanding the drawbacks of painting over graffiti, many local authorities rely on this approach regardless of the type of underlying substrate, particularly in cities with zero-tolerance policies that demand rapid removal. The ineffectiveness of this approach is perhaps best illustrated in *The Subconscious Art of Graffiti Removal*, a 2001 documentary film that satirically argues the municipal graffiti removal efforts of Portland, Oregon represent a distinctive movement in modern art rooted in the repressed artistic desires of its graffiti removal workers.

Fig. 4 - Left: An example of the 'patchwork effect'. Boston, Massachusetts. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington. Right: A new graffiti piece appears over paint over graffiti. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington.

Fig.5 - Left: Graffiti appears at a railway platform in February 2016. Hamburg, Germany. Photo by D. Huntington. Right: The graffiti is painted over in July 2016. Hamburg, Germany. Photo by D. Huntington.

Fig.6 - Most graffiti on public transport is removed by hand using chemical solvents. Germany. 2013. Photos by Die Welt.

While the immediate environmental impacts of painting over graffiti are relatively minor compared to most other chemical or mechanical graffiti management tactics, persistent use of paint to cover graffiti may have significant cumulative environmental effects. This reality is reflected in previous research, which estimated the use of paint to cover graffiti within the United States resulted in 1,936,839 kg of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in 2008, a magnitude nearly four times greater than VOC emissions from chemical graffiti removal products and ten times greater than VOC emissions from anti-graffiti coatings. (Leskys, 2010)

2.2. Chemical Paint Removers

Chemical-based paint removal products are generally intended for use in conjunction with other physical or mechanical means of graffiti removal (e.g. hand scrubbing, scalpel, pressure washer). Alternatively, some manufacturers sell larger quantities of chemical paint remover formulations to be applied using physical (e.g. paint rollers) or mechanical methods (e.g. pressure sprayer systems).

The chemical substances found in most graffiti removal products belong to two groups: alkalis and solvents. Common alkalis include sodium hydroxide, better known as caustic soda, and potassium hydroxide. Solvents are generally alcohol or hydrocarbon based VOCs, such as n-methyl pyrrolidone (NMP). (Craver et al., 2011) Previously, Leskys (2010) found chemical graffiti removal products released 537,053 kg of VOCs in the United States in 2008. It has also been estimated that, within the State of California, the use of consumer graffiti removal products release 171 kg of VOCs per day, or more than 62,000 kg annually circa 2005. (Wolf, 2014)

Notable health risks associated with the use of chemical graffiti removers include:

- ethylene glycol ethers: can damage sperm, cause birth defects, and harm the blood-forming system. It is easily absorbed through the skin and may cause nose or throat irritation

- limonene: can cause eye, nose, and throat irritation. May lead to skin allergies and dermatitis.

- methyl ethyl ketone (MEK): can cause eye, nose, and throat irritation, headache, loss of balance, and other brain effects.

- methylene chloride: a known carcinogen, which may cause eye, nose, throat, and skin irritation, headache, loss of balance, and other brain effects. Exposure at higher levels may lead to liver and kidney damage or changes in the blood's ability to carry oxygen.

- n-methyl pyrrolidone (NMP): a known carcinogen, which is also suspected of causing reproductive and developmental problems. Skin contact is known to cause swelling, blistering, and burning.

- toluene: can cause eye, nose, and throat irritation, skin irritation and dermatitis, headache, loss of balance, and other brain effects.

Improper use of chemical graffiti removers may result in hazardous residual substances from either the chemical remover itself or the paint being transported into watercourses or storm water systems. Accordingly, precaution should be taken to ensure all liquids are properly contained throughout graffiti removal and disposed of safely. Protecting any storm basins, drains, or water inlets with cloth, sandbags, or tarpaulin is advised. Additionally, any wastewater generated due to cleaning of equipment or tools (e.g. brushes, rollers, respirators, tarpaulin) should be contained and disposed of safely. (Weaver, 1995)

Fig. 7 - Chemical-based graffiti removal in a public area. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photos by D. Huntington.

The main drawback of many chemical removal products is a high potential for ineffective results. Incorrect application or use on incompatible substrates may cause permanent discoloring or staining. At times, poor results can make any remaining graffiti more challenging, or even impossible, to completely remove. (Weaver, 1995)

2.3. Protective Anti-Graffiti Coatings

Protective anti-graffiti coating products are designed to keep graffiti from penetrating a substrate, including porous surfaces. Such coatings have become favored by governments, schools, businesses, and many other actors for their unique ability to expatiate graffiti removal on buildings, infrastructure, monuments, trains, busses, signage, and other common targets of graffiti. (Teng et al., 2012)

Broadly speaking, protective coatings may be divided into sacrificial, semi-permanent, and permanent systems. Sacrificial coatings, often made from polymers such as

acrylates, biopolymers and waxes, form a clear, temporary barrier that is easily removed by chemicals or pressurized water (i.e. along with any graffiti removal efforts). The ease of removing sacrificial coatings is seen as a benefit in northern climates, where during spring and fall, "walls need to be able to breathe throughout the repeated cycle of frost and thaw." (European Cleaning Journal, 2012) Semi-permanent coatings and permanent coatings, on the other hand, are designed to withstand repeated cleanings. Today's most popular semi-permanent and permanent coatings are made of polysaccharides, polyurethanes, silicon resins, or fluorinated polymers.

Alas, many conservation experts do not recommend the use of semi-permanent or permanent coatings on culturally significant buildings or monuments as they may "cause chromatic variations on the treated stones, unacceptably altering the aesthetic appearance." (Sanmartín et al., 2015, p. 306) Rather, semi- and permanent protective coatings should be reserved for substrates with low porosity, such

Fig. 8 - Regardless of the substrate, chemical-based graffiti removal often produces poor results.
Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photos by D. Huntington.

as concrete or metals. Caution has also been advised with the use of coatings to protect public murals or artwork. For example, one evaluation of the appearance (color, clarity, sheen), performance (ease of application, ease and efficiency of graffiti removal, durability), and stability (color change and ageing) of eleven different anti-graffiti coatings (including sacrificial, semi-permanent, and permanent varieties) on two public murals in Los Angeles concluded none of the coatings exhibited all of the desired characteristics or necessary requirements for mural preservation. (Macdonald-Korth et al., 2015) It also seems, while anti-graffiti coatings may be effective in the case of some frequently targeted buildings, transport, or small sized infrastructure, in most

cases and especially with regard to large structures (e.g. bridges, underpasses, sound walls), coatings are generally not economical compared to alternative graffiti management methods. (Teng et al., 2016)

Anti-graffiti coatings are frequently made with nanomaterials due to their novel characteristics, such as increased strength or conductivity, compared to the same materials at a non-nano scale. (European Commission, 2016) Notwithstanding their unique ability to protect against future graffiti, however, the increasing use of permanent nanomaterial-based anti-graffiti coatings in public areas may pose latent environmental effects to ecosystems as well as chronic health risks to regularly exposed individuals. (Baalousha et al., 2016)

Nanomaterials may negatively affect the health of individuals and larger populations, and the structure and function of ecosystems. Unfortunately, there is little research into the environmental fate (uptake, localization, or toxicity) of nanomaterials in air, soils, waters, vegetation, and life forms. There is also very little understanding of the effects of nanomaterials at low doses over the long term. Moreover, the effects of any potential reactions with other materials and contaminants, such as metals and organics, are not well-known. (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016)

While few studies on the health effects of nanomaterials exist, there is good evidence of potential pathogenic or inflammatory effects on the lung. It has also been shown that some nanomaterials may enter the brain via the central nervous system following inhalation. (Khan, 2013)

2.4. Pressure Washer and Water-Jet Systems

A pressure (or power) washer is a mechanical tool capable of spraying liquids at low to high pressure. Pressure washers may be used to remove paint, mold, grime, dust, mud, and dirt from a variety of surfaces, such as brick, concrete, and vehicles. Alternatively, high-pressure water-jet systems have also been demonstrated to remove graffiti from marble surfaces under specific operational conditions. (Careddua & Akkoyunb, 2016)

Pressure washer and water-jet systems, which are typically classified according to the type of fuel/energy they consume (e.g. electric, diesel, and petrol gas), can be resource-intensive and generate large volumes of residual waste during graffiti removal operations. Variables that affect the resource demands and residual waste of these systems include pressure rate (usually between 500 and 3000 psi), flow rate, nozzle design, water temperature, spray angle, and distance from target. (Craver et al., 2011)

Fig.9 - The City of Chicago offers free graffiti removal on public and private property using pressure washer systems. Chicago, Illinois. 2013. Photo by A. Podgorski.

Moreover, while some high-pressure systems are capable of removing freshly made graffiti with hot water or steam alone, effective removal of most aerosol paints with a pressure washer usually requires the addition of a chemical solvent to achieve desirable results. Thus many pressure washers are equipped with a chemical injector mechanism.

Pressure washer or water-jet systems may produce a contaminated effluent comprised of the chemical solvent as well as suspended paint particles. In order to prevent this effluent from harming nearby natural environments, it is important to consider a mitigation strategy prior to any pressure washing. This is particularly true of graffiti located near aquatic environments or busy public areas, which are considered the most sensitive to contamination. (Craver et al., 2011)

2.5. Blasting Systems

Graffiti may be removed using a pressure blasting system (e.g. air compressor, mechanical sprayer) combined with an abrasive blasting media, such as sand, pulverized coal, sodium bicarbonate, ground rubber, carbon flint, or corn cobs; however, these systems are usually best left for hard surfaces, as abrasive media easily causes damage to softer materials, including most types of masonry. (Sanmartín et al., 2014)

Recently, some local authorities have experimented blasting recycled crushed glass in the form of heated wet slurry to remove graffiti. According to one study, crushed glass is capable of removing many types of graffiti that cannot be removed using sodium bicarbonate. (Wolf, 2014) Alternatively, the blasting of dry ice (i.e. solid CO_2) seeks to avoid the waste-generation drawbacks of pressure washers and abrasive media blasting, as pellets of dry ice will instantly sublimate (transform directly from a solid to gas) on contact with the targeted surface. Therefore, dry ice blasting causes minimal abrasion to the substrate and creates no additional chemical residue. (Craver et al., 2011)

In a sign that some anti-graffiti stakeholders are considering the environmental impact of graffiti removal, the Omnipole *Tornado ACS*, advertised as a "revolutionary 100% environmentally friendly graffiti removal solution" (Omnipole, 2016), is a dual mobile-jet and vacuum device capable of high-pressure spraying of abrasive media (e.g. ground walnut or macadamia shells) as well as capturing and filtering any resulting waste in its closed-loop system.

Unfortunately, graffiti removal with the Tornado ACS is relatively time consuming and it may not be possible to remove graffiti from hard-to-reach places due to the device's limited suction hose (4.5 m), bulky size (126 x 69 x 63 cm), and weight (41 kg). (Omnipole, 2016)

Fig.10 - *Tornado ACS* demonstration. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photo by L. Hansen

Most blasting systems generate wastes that risk contaminating surrounding ecosystems. (Wolf, 2014) Furthermore, blasting systems may be inherently time-, resource-, and energy-intensive. The Tornado ACS, for example, requires 10 minutes to assemble and disassemble, as well as approximately 30 minutes to remove one square meter of graffiti. (Hansen, 2016)

Blasting systems may cause excessive noise pollution. For example, the *Tornado ACS,* rated at 75 decibels, produces noise levels equivalent to a power lawn mower or heavy urban traffic. (Omnipole, 2016) This is a cause for concern, especially when removing graffiti in public areas, given the well-documented negative effects of noise on auditory and non-auditory health (e.g. sleeping problems, hypertension and cardiovascular disease, and impaired cognitive performance). (Basner et al., 2014)

2.6. Laser Systems

Laser systems were introduced in the 1990s as an effective means of graffiti removal, especially when applied to historic buildings or porous structures. Since then, several types of lasers (e.g. CO_2, Nd:YAG, $Nd:YVO_4$, excimer, exciplex, and high-power diode) have been used to remove graffiti from different substrates (e.g. mortar, glass, polymers, metals, and wood) with varying results. While the use of laser systems to remove graffiti is rare compared to traditional methods, studies of laser-based techniques in the literature are abundant. Some benefits of laser removal systems include their noncontact nature, control of application, selectivity, and repeatability of treatment. (Sanmartín et al., 2014)

Laser graffiti removal is typically costly and time-consuming. Indeed, total costs may be upwards of 20 times more expensive than conventional methods and complete removal of one square meter of paint may take anywhere between ten minutes to several hours depending on the type of paint and substrate. At the extreme end, use of a Nd:YAG laser to remove black paint from the Avebury Stone Circle in Wiltshire, England required several weeks to complete. While the laser managed to remove most graffiti from the sandstone, its most porous zones responded negatively to the treatment and thus required further cleaning with methylene dichloride. Moreover, the effectiveness of most laser removal systems depends on the type and color of paint, as well as the substrate material. It has been observed that metallic paints (e.g. gold, silver, bronze) are generally

more difficult to remove with laser systems than black, blue, or red paints due to differences in their chemical composition. Regarding the substrate, it has been demonstrated that CO_2 laser removal systems perform better on materials with lower thermal conductivity. Thus, removing paint from brick or concrete is easier and faster than removing paint from steel or aluminum. (Sanmartín et al., 2014)

The level of expertise required for laser removal systems is another barrier to their use. Lasers require appropriate selection of various parameters for effective graffiti removal, as imprecise settings may cause damage to the substrates, such as discoloration or melting of softer materials. Lastly, it should be noted that laser graffiti removal efforts could be resource-intensive depending on the type of equipment, as well as the location and magnitude of graffiti. Beyond energy demands, laser removal may also necessitate significant water demands, as water is often applied to the substrate in order to increase the treatment's effectiveness. (Sanmartín et al., 2014)

2.7. Bioremediation

Given the numerous drawbacks and environmental impacts of traditional physical, chemical, and mechanical approaches to graffiti removal, there is a compelling need to develop new, effective and ecologically safer methods. Using bioremediation for graffiti removal, although still in development, is one promising possibility. Bioremediation involves use of microorganisms, such as culturable bacteria and fungi, to remove graffiti without affecting the substrate. To date, several microorganisms have demonstrated good potential to degrade acrylic-based aerosol paints; however, further investigation into other microorganisms and nitrocellulose degradation is needed in order to develop more effective bioremediation techniques. (Sanmartín et al., 2015)

2.8. Criminal Law, Security and Surveillance

Generally speaking, unauthorized graffiti are illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment in the eyes of the law just about everywhere, although varying degrees of enforcement and penalties are practiced from one region to another. For instance, in Canada, the federal criminal law considers any unauthorized graffiti as a summary or indictable offence of property damage and criminal mischief, which can result in a maximum sentence of 2 years in the case of personal property, or 10 years if the damage is deemed cultural,

religious or in relation to computer data. (Canada Criminal Code, 1985)

Common schemes to enforce laws against graffiti include police or private security patrol efforts as well as a wide range of surveillance technologies, including closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance, thermal or low-light cameras, sound or motion detectors, trip alarms, and automated drone cameras. (Flammini et al., 2016) Guard or attack dogs may also be relied on to catch or deter graffitists, particularly in rail yards or restricted areas. (Marr, 2015)

Many local police services maintain a graffiti database, which may include photos, measurements, and location details of reported graffiti, as well as any known information on graffitists. For example, the Halifax Regional Police service managed to assemble a database of more than 6,000 photos of graffiti, 377 tag names, and 48 graffiti crews between 2009 and 2014. According to Constable Gerry Murney, head of the anti-graffiti unit, the service also had a second list of graffiti-related charges with 206 names; however, the majority of these charges were sentenced to serve community service or participate in a restorative justice program, while only one charge resulted in a conviction. (Lawrynuik, 2014)

Although relatively expensive, surveillance cameras connected to a CCTV system that allows real-time observation are one of the most common methods of graffiti (and crime) prevention in public areas. CCTV systems may also be equipped with facial recognition software, thermal cameras, speakers, and audio or visual sensors. (Tomàs et al., 2014) Despite the popularity of CCTV systems, however, there are no reliable studies supporting their effectiveness at preventing graffiti. Moreover, several have found CCTV is not a cost-effective method of graffiti management (Carr, 2016), including one recent evaluation of surveillance cameras on the Stockholm subway that concluded the cost of preventing a single crime was approximately €1,875. (Priks, 2015) Additionally, it has been noted graffitists can effectively avoid identification by simply covering their faces, and that cameras may become the target for graffiti or further damage. (Teng et al., 2016)

In 2015, the German railway company *Deutsche Bahn* announced it would test drones equipped with high-resolution thermal imaging cameras to patrol rail yards at night. (Deutsche Welle, 2013) Germany's Federal Police have also reportedly used helicopters and thermal imaging cameras to fight graffiti. (MDR, 2016)

Fig.11 - Left: The Eurocopter 155 with four thermal imaging cameras. Right: The thermal imaging cameras can spot individuals from several kilometers away at night. Chemnitz, Germany. 2015. Photos by M. Unger.

Fig. 12 - Real-time display from thermal imaging cameras on the Eurocopter 155 at night. Chemnitz, Germany. 2015.

Alas, the effectiveness of the criminal law, police enforcement, and private or community security at preventing graffiti is generally poor and very few graffitists are deterred or caught this way. (Tomàs et al., 2014) Furthermore, the arrest, prosecution, or imprisonment of graffitists may have unintended consequences for cities. Consider, for instance, the ten-week jail term handed to graffitist Charlie Silver of Oxford, England in 2015, which led to a near 400 percent increase in the amount of graffiti over the next two years, and caused Oxford City Council to rethink their zero-tolerance approach and ultimately open the city's first legal graffiti walls. (BBC News, 2015; 2016)

3. Proactive Graffiti Management

Proactive graffiti management efforts have been shown to mitigate undesirable graffiti by changing the surrounding environment or engaging with graffitists and communities. Some examples of promising proactive management tactics include landscaping techniques, vegetation, green walls, public art or community murals, legal spaces for graffiti, public art programs, and urban art workshops.

3.1. Environmental Design and Landscaping

As early as 1961, Jane Jacobs pioneered the concept that environmental design influences criminal activity by identifying aspects of the physical environment that may encourage or hinder crime or vandalism. (Jacobs, 1961) In the context of graffiti, this approach suggests the arrangement or presence of certain elements of the built environment, such as street lighting, fences, walls, and vegetation, correlate to the frequency and magnitude of graffiti.

Enhancing the lighting of areas is often recommended under the assumption that graffitists prefer to work after standard business hours and especially at night. (Willcocks et al., 2014) However, it has been demonstrated that increased lighting does not necessarily help to deter all graffiti, but perhaps only certain types of graffiti. For example, one study of the spatial distribution of graffiti in Bristol (Parno, 2010) found:

> *"areas of lower access with light traffic and decreased public visibility would contain higher quantities of more detailed graffiti (e.g. pieces, stencils, and throw-ups), whereas areas of greater access with heavy traffic and increased public visibility would contain smaller quantities of detailed graffiti and greater quantities of quickly produced graffiti types (e.g. tags and stickers)."* (Crisp et al., 2014, p. 84)

Furthermore, the use of lighting in isolated or remote locations may actually attract graffiti by shedding a spotlight on it. (Weisel, 2009)

Regarding physical barriers such as fences or walls, the City of Montréal's official Tricks-and-Tips Guide to graffiti management advises residents and businesses install wire mesh fencing around the perimeter of any area affected by graffiti. Apparently, the mesh should be closely woven, and at least 1.8 to 2.4 meters high to discourage climbers. (City

of Montreal, n.d.)

Strategic landscaping of public spaces and well-thought-out positioning of plants and vegetation (e.g. vines, bushes, shrubs, and trees) can be an effective approach to graffiti management by making areas inaccessible to graffiti writers as well as improving the aesthetic appeal of public spaces, transport infrastructure, or buildings. (Kuo & Sullivan, 2001) Stamen (1993) surveyed 31 urban sites in a California neighborhood and found 90 percent of aerosol paint graffiti occurred in areas without plantings, while only 10 percent was located in landscaped areas. Similarly, Brunson et al. (2001) found both physical and social incivilities in outdoor public housing spaces with grass and trees were systematically lower than in comparable, more barren spaces.

In the Netherlands, the 'greenery against graffiti' approach has been successfully implemented in numerous public spaces, on public and private buildings, as well as along transport corridors. The most effective plants include self-clinging climbers, such as Boston ivy or Virginia creeper, which grow well in confined spaces, require little to no maintenance, and will not harm concrete or brick. Plants capable of forming a natural wall and thorny shrubs are also advised. (Mir, 2011)

Additional benefits of greening public areas include air quality improvements and helping to mitigate the urban heat island effect. (Pugh et al., 2012) Green facades and roofs may also improve the energy efficiency of buildings as well as offer an additional layer of defense against outdoor sources of noise pollution. Moreover, vegetation can help protect and extend the life of facades or other infrastructure by acting as a shield against weathering and sunlight. (Pérez et al., 2014)

One hitch with going 'green against graffiti' is that some plants or trees need years to completely cover a wall or prevent access to an area. It has also been noted that certain plants may cause damage to a substrate (e.g. if roots are capable of penetrating the material). (Mir, 2011)

Fig. 13 - Green facade. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington

Fig. 14 - Going 'green against graffiti' on retaining walls. Zwolle, Netherlands. 2016. Photo by Mobilane.

Fig. 15 - Patrick Blanc's Vertical Garden, as seen in October 2006, March 2007, and April 2008.
Madrid, Spain. Photos by P. Blanc.

3.2. Murals and Public Art

Painted murals, whether on buildings, bridges, underpasses or utility boxes, help deter graffiti due to an informal observance within the graffiti community that existing graffiti and certain types of public art should not be covered with new graffiti out of a sign of respect for the artist. (van Loon, 2014)

One of the earliest public mural and art programs to effectively deter undesirable graffiti is the City of Philadelphia's *Mural Arts Program*. Since its beginnings in 1986 as a division of the *Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network*, the *Mural Arts Program* has organized the creation of over 3,600 murals, "which have become a cherished part of the civic landscape and a great source of inspiration to the millions of residents and visitors who encounter them each year." (Global Philadelphia Association, 2016) In light of the program's effectiveness against graffiti, it is no surprise that it has grown to become one of the city's largest employers of artists, working with hundreds of creative types, including many prosecuted graffitists, to bring new murals to the streets of Philadelphia each year. (Mural Arts Philadelphia, 2016)

As another example, in 1993, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), a governmental agency that operates mass transit in Chicago, in cooperation with the city-run youth art program *Gallery 37* and the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, commissioned art teacher Francisco Mendoza to create a public mural at 18th Street Station in Pilsen, which was facing "a serious graffiti problem." (Wisniewski, 2016) Mendoza gathered youth from the *Gallery 37* program, along with anyone else from the neighborhood who was interested, to help paint the mural. Describing the process, Mendoza said, "it was like having a jazz session ... artists would come up and say, 'I can paint, I have an idea,' and I would give them the colors they needed." (Jyoti, 2011)

In April 2016, more than two decades after the 18th Street Station mural was first painted, CTA President Dorval Carter noted, "the [18th Street Station] art piece was so respected by the community that they didn't graffiti it, [and this] has withstood the test of time." (Wisniewski, 2016) Over time, the CTA has added more than 60 unique artworks to over 50 stations, including mosaics, sculptures, and paintings by nationally and internationally acclaimed artists. Carter, in support of this policy, feels, "If I can put a smile in a customer's face because they see an interesting and whimsical piece of art, or an interesting sculpture, in addition to getting to work or school, it's a positive for the CTA." (Wisniewski, 2016)

Fig. 16 - A bus passenger admires 'Our Lady of Grace' by A'shop. Montréal, Canada. 2011. Photo by P. McCabe.

Fig.17 - A mural is painted over graffiti. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photos by D. Huntington

Fig. 18 - Left: Graffiti throw-ups cover a fire station. Hamburg, Germany. 2013. Photo by Google Maps. Right: A mural appears. Hamburg, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington

Notwithstanding the CTA's success using murals and public art to deter graffiti, there are some limitations of this proactive management tactic. First, murals only engage with certain types of people and they may be unlikely to earn the support of graffitists who are driven by the thrill of illegal behavior. Secondly, while murals might effectively prevent graffiti in a specific location, they do not necessary reduce the overall amount of graffiti in the surrounding area or within a city. Lastly, although completed murals are generally left untouched by other graffiti, there are numerous instances of authorized or commissioned murals being tagged. (Thompson et al., 2012)

Street-level traffic signal control or utility boxes are one of the most common locations for graffiti in public areas. In recent years, however, many local authorities and utility companies have begun to incorporate art on these easily accessible targets in an aim to prevent unauthorized graffiti. (BVE, 2015) One popular technique is to implement artworks that make these targets for graffiti blend into their surrounding environment. (Callaghan, 2004)

Typically looking to cooperate with local artists, many cities have organized competitions, request for proposals, as well as partnered with community art groups or schools. The City of Toronto, for example, as a part of its annual *Outside the Box* program, publishes the dimensions of its traffic signal cabinets online for artists to submit design proposals. (City of Toronto, 2016)

Fig. 19 - Left: A private security guard keeps watch during the painting of a public mural. Right: Within three weeks, the mural has been tagged. New York City. 2016. Photos by Elie.

Fig. 20 - Painted utility boxes in Kiel and Münster, Germany. 2015/2016. Photos by D. Huntington.
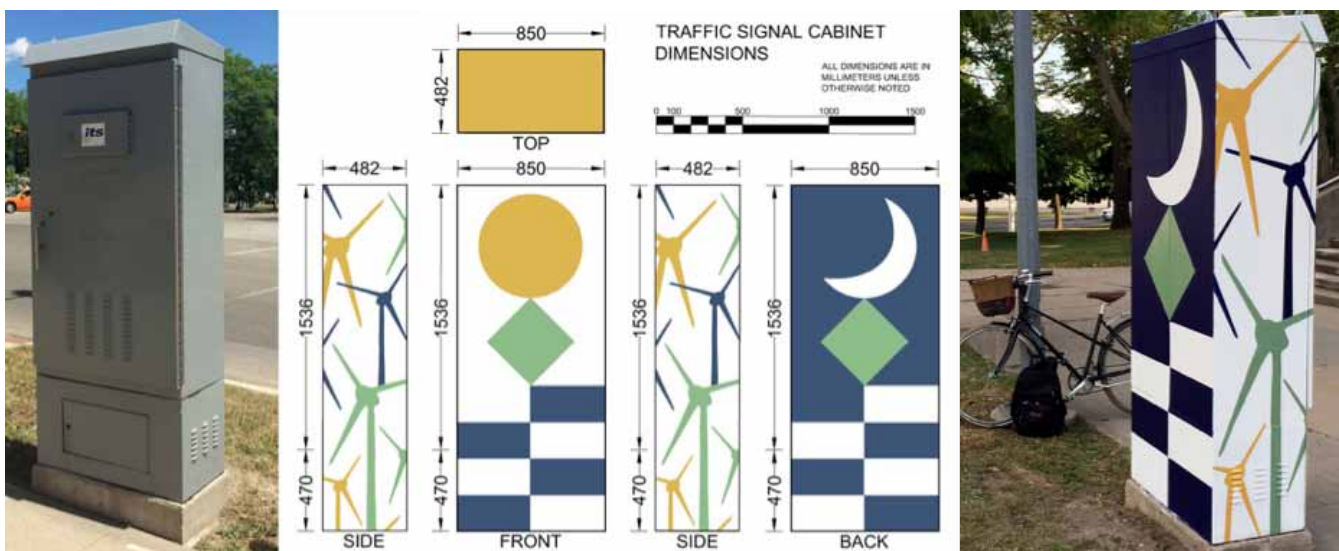

Fig. 21 - Left: Traffic signal cabinet dimensions provided by the City of Toronto feat. R. Wilmshurst's design.
Right: A painted traffic signal box. Toronto, Canada. 2015. Photo by R. Wilmshurst.

Beyond graffiti murals, there are many other types of public art that might help deter graffiti from public areas. For example, between 2013 and 2014, sculptor Tobias Rehberger converted eleven utility boxes across Münster, Germany into unique works of art. Known for his colorful clashes of art and architecture, Rehberger "transformed the grey cubes into highly imaginative seating arrangements [that] invite the passerby to take a seat, rest in the middle of the city´s buzz, to wonder or simply enjoy." (Indechs, 2015) The use of public art to deter graffiti is cautioned, however, as in the case of graffitists whose primary motivation is name recognition, some works of public art might attract graffiti given their popularity with the general public and tourists.

3.3. Legal Spaces for Graffiti

Legally permitted spaces or walls for graffiti, sometimes referred to as 'free walls', are areas that explicitly permit graffiti, and which may require registration prior to use. Legal spaces for graffiti may be an effective strategy for reducing graffiti vandalism in cities, with the added benefit of enhancing public areas both aesthetically and culturally. (Fox, 2014) As Snyder notes, "legal walls have become essential to the progression of the art form [because they] allow writers to take their time, and this results in some really good art." (Snyder, 2011, p. 97)

Vienna's legal graffiti spaces are an interesting example, as it was one of the first European cities to offer legally sanctioned spaces for graffiti. Following the conviction of several young graffitists in the 1980s, a community organization known as the Graffiti Union reached an agreement with the local government to permit graffiti in certain places in the city. Subsequently, in 2004, due to growing demand for legal graffiti spaces, a task force was established to seek out appropriate locations as well as design a symbol to represent the city's legal graffiti sites, known as *WienerWand* ("ViennaWall"). The task force ultimately decided on a logo in the form of a dove to represent the *WienerWand* project and designate public areas for legal graffiti. (Tomàs et al., 2014)

Elsewhere, the ground floor facade of one building in Dresden has been transformed into a public chalkboard. The idea behind this "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach is to deter graffiti by inviting passersby to create their own chalk art.

Fig. 22 - HOPE Outdoor Gallery, or Graffiti Park at Castle Hill. Austin, Texas. 2014. Photo by B. Breeze.

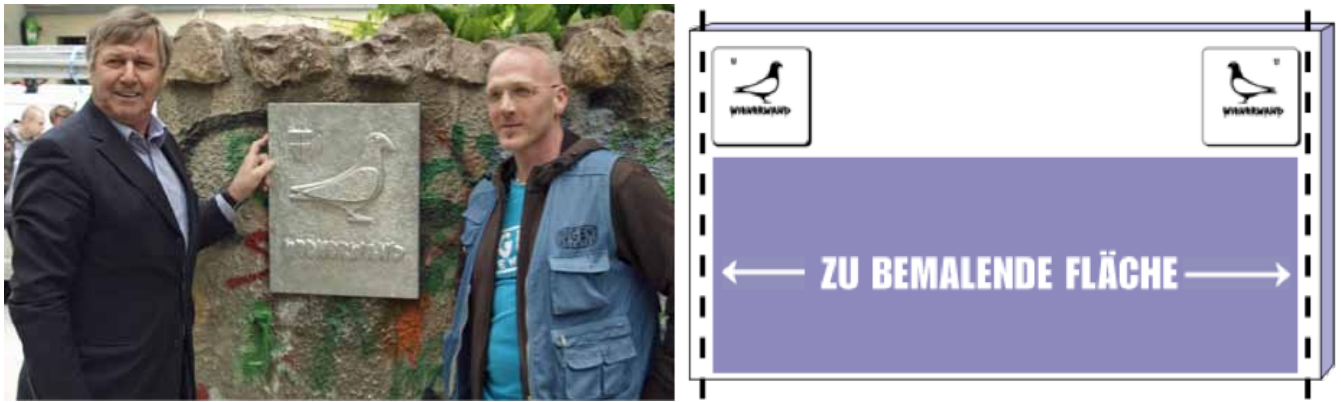Fig. 23 - Left: Opening of a 'WienerWand' legal graffiti wall. Vienna, Austria. 2014. Photo by [Unknown]. Right: Illustration of permitted area for graffiti at WienerWand locations in Vienna, Austria. (Wiener Bildungsserver, 2016)
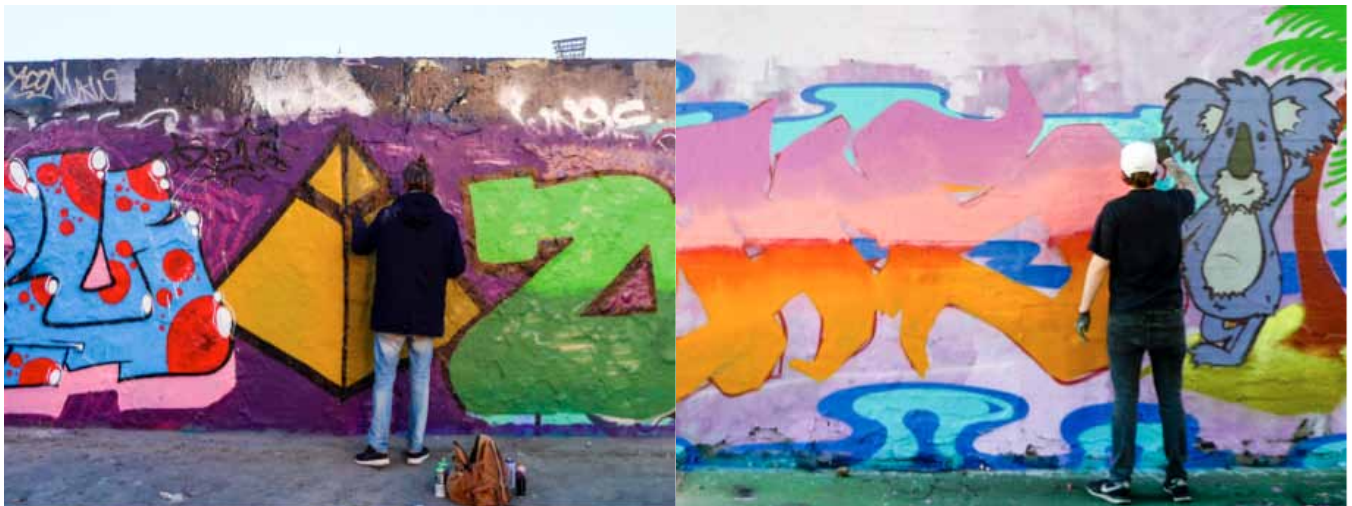
Fig. 24 - Graffitists paint legal walls in Berlin (left) and Hamburg (right), Germany. 2016. Photos by D. Huntington

Fig. 25 - Public chalkboard. Dresden, Germany. 2016. Photo by D. Huntington

Not all graffitists will be interested in legal walls, however, since the allure to create graffiti among many stems from its illegality. (Thompson et al., 2012; Ferrell, 1996) Additionally, legal spaces for graffiti may cause an increase of unauthorized graffiti in surrounding areas. (Ernstes, 2016) According to Police Constable and Graffiti Investigator Chris Fader, graffitists "might work [on] the free wall to practice or whatever. But they're still going to go out into the community and do graffiti because that's what their goal is." (Bartlett, 2015) On the flip side, increasing legalization of graffiti could, in fact, be "a form of anarchic resistance. Thus, increased tolerance of graffiti may actually demotivate some people from writing it in the first place." (Shobe & Banis, 2014, p. 586)

3.4. Virtual Graffiti

In 2016, after years of cleaning graffiti from the walls of Giotto's bell tower monument in Florence, Italy, officials decided to test a proactive graffiti management approach with the help of three tablet computers. The concept is to deter graffiti from the monument's walls by offering visitors an opportunity to create virtual graffiti that may be uploaded and shared online. With the virtual graffiti application, visitors can select from different substrates found in the monument (e.g. wood, marble, iron, plaster) and from several different marker types, ranging from aerosol paint to lip stick. (Pianigiani, 2016)

Fig. 26 - Left: The virtual graffiti tablet computer in Giotto's bell tower.
Right: Tourists leave their mark with the virtual graffiti app. Florence, Italy. 2016. Photos by A. Grassani.

3.5. Public Awareness Initiatives

Public awareness initiatives regarding the potential adverse effects of graffiti are another proactive management tactic. This approach aims to instill a sense of community pride and responsibility in citizens, with a particular focus on reducing the likelihood of youth to engage in graffiti. Public schools may, for example, lecture students on vandalism's social and economic consequences. Alas, the effectiveness of such in-school anti-graffiti programs is debatable, with some studies suggesting they may even be a source of inspiration for graffitists. (Teng et al., 2012)

Many governments have also employed anti-graffiti advertising campaigns. During the 1970s in New York City, a public-service program entitled *Make Your Mark In Society, Not On Society* featured billboards, subway ads, and television spots of professional baseball players,

professional boxers, and actress and singer-songwriter Irene Cara stating that "doing graffiti was bad." (Ross, 2016, p.398) In 1997, the City of Los Angeles published a children's coloring book, titled *Kyle the Graffiti Fighting Bear*, which informed families both how to report graffiti via a newly opened graffiti reporting hotline and of potential rewards for their help towards successful prosecution of any graffitists. (Ross, 2016) Similarly, as a part of the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County's SCRUB (*Stop Crime and Reduce Urban Blight*) project, an anti-graffiti coloring book featuring *Neighborhoodasaurus* was offered to residents and schools in 1997. (Black, 1997) In keeping with the times, in 2008, the City of Tucson produced *Knock Out Graffiti in Tucson with Mr. Tuffy*, a free downloadable coloring book that aims to familiarize elementary school-age children with the crime of graffiti vandalism. (Tucson Citizen, 2008)

Fig. 27 - Excerpts from the City of Tucson's 'Knock Out Graffiti in Tucson with Mr. Tuffy' coloring book. (City of Tucson, 2016)

3.6. Public Art Programs

Due to the futility of anti-graffiti awareness initiatives, many cities have begun organizing public art programs for graffiti and street art. These programs or workshops are thought to help deter graffiti from public spaces by offering graffitists an alternative creative outlet. For example, a *Street Art School* In Hamburg, Germany offers youth the opportunity to make graffiti and street art with the help of experienced writers and artists. In addition to regular art classes during the summer, the *Street Art School* participates in community festivals, hosts art exhibitions, and organizes special events for refugees. (Street Art School, 2015)

4. Best Practices in Sustainable Graffiti Management

Rather than relying on a cookie-cutter solution to graffiti management, such as a zero-tolerance policy that necessitates tireless reactive graffiti management efforts to keep public areas free of graffiti, an increasing number of cities around the world are pursuing more strategic and targeted approaches to graffiti management.

Indeed, many neighborhoods and communities are decidedly tolerant of unauthorized graffiti, acknowledging that graffiti are an "unavoidable visual element of the urban landscape," (Duncan, 2016, p. 129) not unlike outdoor advertising.

Elsewhere, graffiti and other forms of street or urban art are viewed in a more positive light, especially where these art forms show potential to revitalize "an otherwise drab or austere part of a city ... with a sense of cultural uniqueness." (Ross, 2016, p. 393)

Such cities tend to acknowledge the ineffectiveness of citywide reactive graffiti management efforts and rather focus on various proactive management tactics to mitigate unauthorized graffiti in public areas.

4.1. Toronto, Canada

In the wake of a citywide crackdown on graffiti led by former Mayor Rob Ford, (Flack, 2011) the City of Toronto introduced its national prize-winning *Graffiti Management Plan* in 2013, which distinguishes 'graffiti vandalism' from 'graffiti art'. (Barry, 2015) The latter are exempt from removal by either property owners or the public service; however, all graffiti art must be either commissioned and sanctioned via municipal permit or, approved by the Graffiti Panel, a group of appointed officials who determine the value of graffiti in question. (City of Toronto, 2016)

According to Elyse Parker, Director of the Public Realm, a basis of the plan was recognizing "from the outset that [the City of Toronto] would not be able to eliminate graffiti vandalism." (Archer, 2015) Therefore, Toronto
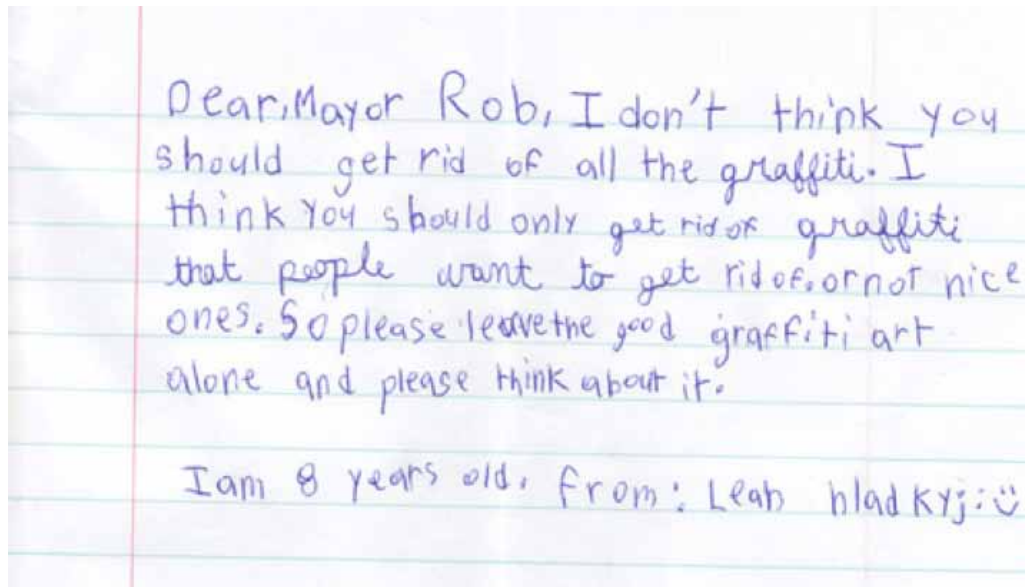
Fig. 28 - Letter to the Mayor of Toronto re: graffiti management from Leah Hladkyj, age 8. (Hogan, 2011)

seeks to proactively discourage graffiti vandalism via its *StreetARTToronto* (StART), *StART Underpass Program* (StART UP), and *Outside the Box* programs.

An integral part of the *Graffiti Management Plan, StART* assists private property owners who are experiencing graffiti vandalism by purchasing the materials required to install a mural. *StART* also engages with local artists to find commissioned graffiti art and mural opportunities throughout the city. While *StART* creates artworks on both private and public property, *StART UP* is tailored to give artists an opportunity to create graffiti or street art on the city's publicly owned underpasses and tunnels. Last but not least, the *Outside the Box* program gives artists a chance to contribute "to the vitality and attractiveness of the streetscape" (City of Toronto, 2016) by creating art on the city's traffic signal boxes. Between 2013 and 2016, 120 boxes were "hand-painted by local artists and transformed into extraordinary works of art." (City of Toronto, 2016)

Fig. 29 - 'Stand Together' by SPUD, a mural funded by the City of Toronto. Toronto, Canada. 2015. Photo by M. Crandall.

Additionally, in 2015, the City of Toronto passed legislation requiring all construction sites encroaching on the public realm to incorporate public artwork on at least 50 percent of hoarding walls. Working alongside builders to make Toronto's construction sites less of an eyesore, a social enterprise known as PATCH has established an online directory of local graffitists and street artists, connects artists with new construction sites, arranges community art events, and provides custom artwork, light, or sound installations. (The PATCH Project, 2016)

Toronto also features a block-long alley where graffiti and street art are "legal and lauded." (VOGUE, 2014) According to *The New York Times,*

> "*the most concentrated display is along Rush Lane, a stretch just south of Queen Street West, between Spadina and Portland, known as Graffiti Alley. Stylistically, the works are by turns macabre (elaborate skulls), whimsical (cartoon characters) and fantastical (an undersea array that covers most of a building) - and most are stunning. You'll never look at a can of spray paint the same way again*." (Egner, 2016)

Notwithstanding these examples of proactive approaches to graffiti management, unauthorized graffiti remains illegal throughout Toronto and is actively monitored and removed, including over 18,580 square meters in 2014 alone. (Archer, 2015) Moreover, since 2005, property owners have been legally obligated to remove any unsanctioned graffiti from their property at their own expense. If reported graffiti are not removed in a timely manner, local authorities will arrange removal and charge the property owner for any incurred costs. (Beaton & Todd, 2016)

4.2. Stockholm, Sweden

In 2007, the City Council of Stockholm passed a zero-tolerance policy stating the city "shall not engage in or support activities that promote graffiti and other vandalism." (Berglund, 2014) The effects of this policy included the shutdown of several local art programs, including graffiti workshops organized by local schools and the City Museum's street art tour, as well as an outright prohibition against legal spaces for graffiti. Moreover, the policy gave police a reason to strip search young people, or place them under arrest for suspicion of having painted graffiti. (Berglund, 2014)

In the years to follow, City Council faced harsh criticism from the public for upholding a policy that censored art and was,

according to the Green Party, "highly misplaced in a modern democratic society." (Berglund, 2014) Additionally, an annual conference, *Art of the Streets*, was organized by numerous graffitists from Stockholm and abroad to protest for policy change. Protests finally paid off in 2014 when, following the election of a new social democratic government, legislation was introduced that scraped the city's zero-tolerance policy and aimed to transform Stockholm into the city with the most legal spaces for graffiti in Europe. (ArtSlant, 2014)

4.3. Melbourne, Australia

During the City of Melbourne's development of an updated graffiti policy, one proposal went beyond the typical cookie-cutter approach to graffiti management by recommending the designation of three different zones in the city, including zero-tolerance zones, limited tolerance zones, and community regulated zones. (Young, 2010) This non-uniform management approach rejected "the monolithic tenets of the broken windows theory and focuses abatement in areas where there is overt community concern." (Shobe & Banis, 2014, p. 586) Moreover, it offers a possible pathway towards policies that recognize "a new ecology of urban becoming - one that makes room for graffiti as neither publicly sanctioned art nor crime." (Halsey & Pederick, 2010, p. 97)

Despite broad community support, the City of Melbourne ultimately decided (behind closed doors) to pass on the proposal, illustrating that, while nuanced approaches to graffiti management are possible, they may be politically difficult to realize. The challenge of hierarchy in public policy development is echoed by Chomsky, who argues many "people in power … firmly believe that [citizens] should not have revolutionary popular art in which people participate." (Chomsky, 2013)

4.4. Bogotá, Colombia

In 2011, the City of Bogotá decriminalized graffiti on public property following the unjust killing of 16-year-old graffitist Diego Felipe Becerra by law enforcement officers. (Brodzinsky, 2013) Indeed, although graffiti remains prohibited on culturally significant buildings, monuments, and private property without explicit permission of the owner, most of the city's publicly accessible spaces, including those along main thoroughfares, are now open canvases for graffitists and street artists. (World Cities Culture Forum, 2016)

The freedom to make graffiti in public areas, combined with the mayor's approval of graffiti "as a form of artistic and

Fig. 30 - Graffitists paint public infrastructure in the light of day. Bogotá, Colombia. 2015. Photo by Mike.

cultural expression," (Brodzinsky, 2013) has transformed Bogotá's formerly grey urban cityscape into a sea of large colorful murals. (Suarez, 2013) Moreover, with over 4,500 graffitists now living in Bogotá, graffiti has become "a legitimate professional and artistic practice for many, and the stance of the city encourages the most talented to stay and ply their trade." (World Cities Culture Forum, 2016) Bogotá's graffiti policy, drafted throughout regular discussions between local authorities and more than 50 local graffitists, has also affected perceptions towards graffiti among the general public and police. Indeed, according to one Bogota-based graffitist:

> *"Personally, I have never been fined for painting prohibited walls in Bogotá. The worst that has happened is I have been politely asked if I had permission by the police, and to move on if I did not. I have even had one of the younger officers ask me to stop but to, 'please come back after 6pm to finish the mural' because he really liked it and wanted to see it finished but would get in trouble from his senior if he let me continue."* (Crisp, 2015)

4.5. Berlin, Germany

Although graffiti are illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment in Berlin, it has been widely reported that local authorities do not have the financial or human resources to effectively police or manage graffiti across the entire city. Consequently, graffiti proliferates in public areas due to a vibrant local scene and persistent flow of visiting graffitists.

The City of Berlin's laid-back approach to graffiti management has undoubtedly played a role in the city's status as "graffiti capital of Europe," (Tzortis, 2008) a "graffiti Mecca of the urban art world," (Trice, in Arms, 2011) and "a world leading cultural tourism destination." (Evans, 2016, p. 168) Most recently, *The New York Times*, in a special Europe issue of its travel section, recommended Berlin's graffiti and street art scene, "where elaborate murals … and images by sprayers and stencilers pop up everywhere." (Bradley, in Ferrell, 2016, p. xxxv) Even Berlin's police force has expressed tolerance for graffiti in the city, stating, "mere announcements, declarations of love, and political expressions or symbols are not considered [illegal forms of] graffiti." (Samutina & Zaporozhets, 2015)

4.6. Valparaíso, Chile

Although graffiti are illegal in most of Chile, there is no current legislation that explicitly forbids graffiti on private or public property within the coastal city of Valparaíso. (Addis, 2016) According to one report, graffiti and street art are governed by an unwritten law that gives graffitists and urban artists a de facto right to paint the streets as they wish, as well as make a legitimate living via commissioned work. In light of this laid-back approach to graffiti management, graffiti and street art flourish in Valparaíso as far as the eye can see. (Jess, 2014)

4.7. Halle (Saale), Germany

The persistent and growing legitimization of graffiti following numerous bottom-up endeavors and programs is one indication the days of zero-tolerance policies and incessant reactive graffiti management efforts may be numbered. Consider, for example, the quarter of Freiimfelde in Halle (Saale), which was completely transformed by a grassroots urban art project that would have made Hundertwasser proud. Indeed, since the launch of the *FreiRaumGalerie* ("OpenSpaceGallery") project in 2012 and its contribution of more than 20,000 square meters of urban art and ample legal graffiti wall space, a vibrant community and tourist destination has emerged from the ashes of this formerly run-down and underutilized area. (Postkult e.V., 2015) From the outset, the *FreiRaumGalerie* project sought to address two concerns. First, it was recognized that Freiimfelde was suffering from abandoned buildings and a high vacancy rate, which was reportedly greater than 60 percent in 2011. Second, due to a lively local graffiti scene, local authorities were facing an increasing number of complaints from residents regarding unauthorized graffiti within the city. In order to address both concerns at once, the *FreiRaumGalerie* project thought to transform this once "forgotten district into an urban canvas." (Postkult e.V., 2015) Towards this objective, the project team organized numerous events, such as its annual *All You Can Paint Festival*, which invited local and international artists, local residents, and especially young people, to help revitalize Freiimfelde. Thanks to the *FreiRaumGalerie* project's efforts, the quarter of Freiimfelde experienced a rapid population growth of 24 percent, or 550 residents, between 2011 and 2014, as numerous vacant buildings were filled with creative types, students, and new families. (Postkult e.V., 2015b)

Fig. 31 - Map of FreiRaumGalerie murals and legal graffiti walls. Freiimfelde, Halle (Saale), Germany. (Postkult e.V., 2015c)

5. Conclusion

Within public areas, graffiti may be condemned and eradicated or promoted and enhanced. In either case, policy and management decisions are usually grounded in assumptions about the economic or social effects of graffiti. Often overlooked, however, are the latent environmental risks of different graffiti management tactics.

Beyond finding that zero-tolerance policies and reactive graffiti management efforts are ineffective at deterring undesirable graffiti in public areas, this article has revealed that many reactive graffiti management tactics also pose significant short- and long-term risks to human health and local ecosystems due to inefficient use of scarce resources and the release of hazardous substances into the environment.

Accordingly, in order to move towards more sustainable graffiti management solutions for public areas, local authorities must once and for all acknowledge graffiti are unlikely to be impeded by tireless reactive management tactics. Authorities should rather focus on proactive tactics, including environmental design (e.g. landscaping techniques and greenery) and public art programs (e.g. community murals, legal spaces for graffiti, art workshops) to manage graffiti in public areas, thus avoiding the need for reactive management efforts from the outset.

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Graffiti, street art and Copyright

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Abstract
This short note examines whether street and graffiti art can and should be protected by copyright. Indeed, cases where corporations have used these forms of art to promote their products are increasingly common, which shows that these artworks are particularly vulnerable to misappropriation. In addition to expanding on whether tags and throw-ups can be considered original enough to attract copyright, I will focus on whether unsanctioned street and graffiti art deserve such legal protection and in general on artists and writers' attitude towards copyright. The note also draws from semi-structured interviews I've recently conducted with several street artists and writers.

Keywords: graffiti, street art, copyright

1. Is it worth it?

The interviews I've done so far reveal that more and more street artists and writers are potentially interested in taking legal action against individuals or corporations that try to commercially exploit their works. Many artists and writers I have talked to have confirmed they may try to rely on copyright laws to react against whoever uses their art for economic advantage and recover damages wherever it's possible, especially if they had money and time to invest in a lawsuit.

But would it be convenient for street artists and writers to sue appropriators of their art when the pieces have been created illegally, namely without the authorisation of the owner of the surface upon which they are placed? One indeed may note that coming out for a legal action would put street artists and writers at risk as it would mean revealing their identity and being exposed to serious legal consequences, including jail. Yet, it would be much less risky if a copyright suit was brought after the piece has been created, especially after the statute of limitations expires: in these circumstances, artists or even their heirs could be determined to sue infringers who try to free-ride on their creativity. This is exactly what the partner of the deceased New York writer Dash Snow (who used to write SACE with the IRAK crew) did when the fast food giant McDonald's reproduced Snow's lettering art on the walls of some of its restaurants.[1]

On the other hand, what emerges from my interviews is that street artists and writers have no interest whatsoever in suing other artists that "bite" their pieces with no economic motivation. In these cases, if there is a reaction by the artist whose piece has been copied, it remains outside the courtrooms and lawyers' offices. It is a non-judicial, self-defense based form of complaint, that may take different shapes. It could consist of painting over the piece which has glaringly imitated the piece of the artist who complains; or publicising the imitation through social media platforms with a view to causing an aura of disapproval amongst the public and triggering shame-provoking feelings in the imitating artist or writer.

2. Tags and throw-ups

To be copyrightable, works must be original. While most street and graffiti artworks are without any doubt original,

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1 - *Jade Berreau v McDonald's Corporation*, complaint filed on 3 October 2016 at the US District Court Central District of California, Western Division. The legal action, however, was not successful on procedural grounds.

members of the public may note that tags and throw-ups lack sufficient level of originality, and in general are too trivial to attract copyright protection. Often considered to be mere scrawling that visually pollute our cities and require expensive cleaning by local councils, tags and throw-ups are also disliked by many because they are ubiquitous, sometimes associated with gangsterism, and (to the eyes of people outside the subculture) indecipherable. Such a belief is reinforced by the assumption that tags and throw-ups seem easy to paint, or are the product of mischievousness rather than artistic ability. It does not come as a big surprise that in the 80s the graffiti-style words *Skate Key* devised by Bronx legend Tracy 168 were denied registration by the US copyright office.[2]

But if originality is assessed by people inside the graffiti subculture, it is likely that many tags and throw-ups may eventually be considered original for copyright purposes. As is known, writers develop and perfect over the years their own lettering style: a style which derives from countless hours of perfecting the image, even if the final image may appear to members of the general public less than perfect.[3] Even tags and throw-ups that to an untrained eye and outside the graffiti scene happen to seem as banal, meaningless and always similar may be considered sufficiently original instead. And in copyright law originality should be assessed considering a specialized audience,[4] namely the graffiti communities whose members are able to distinguish and appreciate differences and peculiarities, what people outside these circles and without knowledge of subcultural artistic processes cannot do.

Also, the support on which tags and throw-ups are inserted and viewed (for example, a shop shutter or a rubbish bin) may influence the assessment of their originality. Instinctively,

2 - As reminded by Judge Mukasey in *Tracy v. Skate Key, Inc.*, 697 F. Supp. 748 (S.D.N.Y. 1988).

3 - Mark Halsey & Alison Young, "Our Desires Are Ungovernable": Writing Graffiti in Urban Space, 10 Theoretical Criminology 275, 294 (2006).

4 - Marta Iljadica, *Copyright Beyond Law – Regulating Creativity in the Graffiti Subculture* (2016) Hart Publishing, p. 152.

and perhaps wrongly, one may be more inclined to recognize the same graffiti signature as being artistic if he or she sees it on a canvas or a print. Yet, such an assessment would be biased as it would be based on a prejudice, namely because only certain objects can be the support of artistic outputs. This is not correct also taking into consideration that the medium on which works are placed is not, and should not be, conclusive for the purposes of copyright subsistence.

The famous Banksy's tag – which has been painted by the British artist on many urban surfaces - could also be brought as an example. One may arguably claim it is very unique, and therefore eligible for copyright protection (even though Banksy would not probably assert it as he believes that "copyright is for losers").[5] The upright back of the capital letter "B" is missing; the letter "k" needs the "n" for a support; the top of the letter "s" is slightly disappearing and the final "y" looks semi-dwarf.[6] Tags are clearly far from simply written words they are also images.

Fig. 1 - Anthony Devlin/PA Archive

Invoking copyright to protect tags and throw-ups therefore does not seem so unthinkable. After all, when taking legal action against McDonald's, Dash Snow's partner tried to rely in copyright to stop the food chain giant to commercially exploit the artist's throw-up, and also registered it with the US Copyright Office.[7]

5 - Banksy, *Wall and Piece* (London: Century, The Random House Group, 1996).

6 - Will Ellsworth-Jones, *Banksy: The Man Behind the Wall* (New York: Aurum Press Ltd, 2013), p. 60.

7 - Registration No VAu001269764, filed on 17 September 2016.

3. Unsanctioned street and graffiti art and the "unclean hands" doctrine

As mentioned, creating artworks in the street without authorization from the property owner can expose artists to grave legal consequences. Although nowadays artists increasingly seek and obtain permission to place their pieces in urban environments, much street art and graffiti are still created illegally.

Whether illegally produced artworks can be considered copyrightable, or whether any existing copyright could be enforced in court, is not entirely clear. This is still a grey area of the (copyright) law in several jurisdictions, including US and UK. Having said that, in some cases related to street and graffiti art judges did not really bother to enquiry whether the work had been produced without the property owner's consent. In *Reece v Marc Ecko Unlimited*, for example, the court did not refer to any illegality-related issue when rejecting the copyright infringement case brought by Reece against the producer of a graffiti-inspired game which had incorporated some bits of his graffiti art. Another interesting case is *Mager v Brand New School*.[8] Stylish eyeball stickers had been placed by an artist named Damien Mager of billboards of New York City. The stickers also appeared on a TV commercial for a few seconds, without the authorisation of the artist. Mager took action and asked for compensation, with the court accepting that the stickers could have been placed on the streets without authorisation. Although damages were not awarded as the copyright had been registered after the alleged infringement occurred, the judge did not focus on, nor was interested in, any illegality-related aspect of the artworks when deciding the case.[9]

It is also worthwhile mentioning the British case *Creative Foundation v Dreamland*,[10] the first decision by a British judge to expressly consider ownership of walls on which artworks are placed. The judge held that the mural "Art Buff" painted by Banksy in the English town of Folkestone and cut from the wall by a tenant was a chattel that belonged to the landlord. Yet, he also noted obiter that there is no doubt the copyright belongs to Banksy. The judge stressed this point despite recognizing that the artwork had been created without the prior knowledge nor the consent of the leaseholder and tenant (although Creative Foundation, that in the meantime had acquired the rights into the piece, later impliedly approved the work). It thus seems that the judge was not bothered with whether the work had been created legally or not.

The issue of copyright protection of illegally produced street artworks was also tangentially dealt with by a US court in *Villa v. Pearson Education*.[11] Hiram Villa, a Chicago-based artist known by its pseudonym Unone, took legal action against a publisher for publishing a picture of his mural in its strategy guide for a videogame without the artist's permission. The defendant asked to dismiss the complaint, arguing that the work could not be protected by copyright because the piece had been placed illegally. The court denied the motion, yet it also noted that the claim that the work was not copyrightable due to its illicit origin would require investigating the circumstances under which the work was created (the case was then settled out of court). This obiter led some commentators to argue that judges may value an argument based on the artwork's illegality as a defense to copyright infringement or anyway as a factor which affects its copyrightability.

This defense may be considered as a specific application of the so-called *unclean hands* doctrine, an equitable defense in which the defendant claims that the plaintiff should not obtain a remedy and profit when the latter has acted unethically or in bad faith, or has anyway carried out an illegal activity. This doctrine is quite popular amongst defendants accused to appropriate and profit from street artworks that have been created without the authorization of the property owner. It was recently raised by H&M against graffiti writer Revok after the lawyer for the latter issued a

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8 - *Mager v Brand New School*, 78 USPQ 2d 1389 (2004).

9 - See also Danwill D. Schwender, Does Copyright Law Protect Graffiti and Street Art?, in Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art 456 (Jeffrey Ian Ross ed., 2016).

10 - *Creative Foundation v Dreamland & Others* [2015] EWCH 2556 (Ch), 11 September 2015.

11 - *Villa v Pearson Educ., Inc.*, 2003 WL 22922178 (N.D. Ill. Dec. 9, 2003).

cease-and-desist letter asking the Swedish fashion retailer to remove an advertising campaign for its latest sportswear line which used imagery and videos that incorporated one of Revok's artworks. The campaign featured a model on a handball court posing in front of the Revok piece. Revok maintained this was a case of copyright infringement, unfair competition and negligence – and that the association with the H&M brand was causing him reputational damage.[12] The case was later abandoned.

The same defense was also raised by the fashion company Moschino in *Joseph Tierney v. Moschino*, a copyright infringement case started by the graffiti artist Rime as he claimed that various elements of his Detroit mural *Vandal Eyes* had been copied on to a Moschino dress which was subsequently worn by the pop-star Katy Perry at a 2015 glamorous event.[13]

I'm not a fan of the 'unclean hands' doctrine. What makes this doctrine particularly unsuitable to govern cases of misappropriation of street and graffiti art is the lack of connection between the illegal act committed by the artist (e.g., painting an unauthorised mural on a wall) and the merit of these disputes, namely the reproduction, adaptation and (often) communication and making available to the public of the work by third parties, frequently for commercial purposes. In simpler words, the illegal behaviour of the street or graffiti artist does not have a negative impact on the individual or organisation which has misappropriated the illegally placed art (it instead negatively affects the owner of the property upon which the work is placed, who however is not party to the proceeding).

Another reason why copyright should be available for unsanctioned street and graffiti artworks lies in the fact that here the illegal aspects do not even concern the content of the work - they regard the processes of creation of the piece instead. Yet, the way (legal or illegal) art is created should

not affect the analysis related to copyright subsistence and enforceability. The copyright system should be neutral towards,[14] and blind about,[15] the way eligible subject matter is produced. After all, this is what a German court found in a copyright-related case involving an artwork painted on the Berlin Wall: it is not in principle relevant   that the way in which it [the artwork] was produced is evidently unlawful⬜n this case by virtue of an act of damage to property subject to civil and criminal sanctions.[16] This argument sounds logic to me. If I steal a pen which I then use to draw a wonderful piece of art, why should I be denied the right to enforce the copyright and tolerate that someone else copies and takes economic advantage of my work? It is simply unfair to allow persons other than the artist to rely on the illegal nature of a street artwork to copy and exploit it for their own commercial purposes, for example by using it in advertising messages or as a decoration element of fashion products. Denying copyright to illegal street and graffiti art would have the effect of making the misappropriating of it legal, but not its very creation.[17] This result would also be absurd as it would reward blatant imitations by individuals or corporations that have nothing to do with either the perpetrator of the illegal act (the artist) or the victim (the owner of the property).

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12 - Enrico Bonadio, Big brands ripping off street art is not cool: why illegal graffiti should be protected by copyright (16 March 2018) The Conversation.

13 - *Joseph Tierney v. Moschino S.p.A. et al*, Docket No. 2:15-cv-05900 (C.D. Cal. Aug 05, 2015), Court Docket. The case was later settled out of court.

14 - Celia Lerman, Protecting Artistic Vandalism: Graffiti and Copyright Law, 2 NYU J. Intell. Prop. & Ent. L. 295, 316 (2013).

15 - Owen Morgan, Graffiti—Who Owns the Rights?, Univ. of Auckland Bus. Sch.Working Paper 5, 16, 21 (2006).

16 - *Re Pictures on the Berlin Wall* (Case I ZR 68/93) [1997] ECC 553.

17 - Jamison Davies, Art Crimes?: Theoretical Perspectives on Copyright Protection for Illegally-Created Graffiti Art, 65 Me. L. Rev. 27, 51 (2013).

4 . Concluding remarks

The prospect of relying on copyright is never the motivation pushing artists to place works in the street, as has also been confirmed to me in almost all interviews I have conducted thus far. While copyright does not play any role in triggering the decision to create art in the public environment, many street and graffiti artists develop an interest in some forms of legal protection after creating their pieces, and even more strongly after someone commercially exploits them. The growing number of legal actions and objections by street and graffiti artists against corporations that appropriate their artworks reinforce this point.

It seems to me that making copyright protection and enforcement available for street artists and writers makes sense. What marketing and communication experts from these companies may think is: "these murals are placed on the streets, are also often illegal and therefore can be freely reproduced". That is wrong. The fact that artworks are placed in the public environment for everybody to enjoy does not entail that they can be exploited by anyone without the artists' consent. And the fact that a piece has been created illegally should not be relied on by third parties to exploit it without the artist's authorisation. I hope judges will explicitly clarify soon this issue as it would be just and fair *vis-à-vis* artists who put efforts in creating artworks and at the same time send a warning signal to whoever may feel it's acceptable to misappropriate them.

It has also been argued that as graffiti and street artists are often anti-establishment and driven by non-economic purposes (for example, wanting to leave a mark on the city; or to give a gift to the local community), they would not be interested in copyright protection. This argument is unconvincing. The (often) anti-establishment and anti-consumerist nature of these forms of art does not mean that street artists aren't annoyed by others commercially exploiting their work. Actually, when their artworks are misused for commercial purposes, most of them are really unhappy. On the contrary, copyright could exactly be the tool to keep the message that artists want to convey an anti-establishment and anti-consumerist one, if they so wish. Indeed, copyright allows them to object to (and try to prevent) uses of their works that they do not approve. Copyright laws, by making available injunctions and other effective remedies against unauthorized exploitations of the works (for example, in connection with fashion products or in advertising messages), could be the right instrument of reaction. After all, this is the legal tool Revok, Dash Snow, Rime as well as Reyes, Steel and (again) Revok[18] have invoked to try to stop their art being associated with a kind of commercial world they didn't want to be linked to.

Yet, copyright may also serve as a means of commercial exploitation should artists and writers decide to extract profits out of their activity and passion, for example by allowing galleries that represent them or other entities to show and sell screen prints derived from their street artworks (these products have been labelled "street art souvenirs" or "street art flavored" works),[19] or licensing out their creations for merchandising purposes. Many have actually done and do so. Also, differently from selling out and making profits, several street and graffiti artists may decide to authorize charities organizations or other public bodies to use their works for social purposes, and keep control over the way their pieces are used. This is for example what London artist Stik does when authorizing the British National Health Service or other public interest focused entities to use his iconic figures in connection with awareness campaigns. It is the copyright regime which allows artists to do all the above.

The copyright system is therefore flexible enough to allow street artists and writers to pursue their own artistic, cultural and (why not?) commercial agenda, if they so wish.

As copyright is capable of regulating, and indeed already regulates, street and graffiti art, artists within these communities obviously need to accept all the rules of the game. That means they may lose the copyright infringement cases they bring against alleged infringers. This happened for example in 2011 in *Seltzer v Green Day, Inc.*,[20] where the

18 - *Jason Williams et al v. Roberto Cavalli, S.p.A. et al*, Docket No. 2:14-cv-06659 (C.D. Cal. Aug 25, 2014). The case was then settled out of court.

19 - Jim Carey's interview with Banksy, "Creative Vandalism", Squall Magazine (30 May 2002).

20 - *Seltzer v. Green Day, Inc.*, 725 F.3d 1170, 1173-74 (9th Cir. 2013).

artist Seltzer took legal action against the pop band Green Day as the latter had incorporated in a video backdrop (used at live concerts) an adapted version of a Seltzer□ poster placed on a Los Angeles wall. The Californian federal district and Circuit judges rejected the artist□ claims as the use of the artwork was found to be transformative and not overly commercial and therefore fair.

Street and graffiti artists may also be condemned for copyright infringement. This occurred for instance in *Morris v. Guetta*, where the judge ruled that seven of Guetta's works (including a mural), based on photographer Dennis Morris' iconic 1977 picture of Sid Vicious, deceased lead singer of punk band The Sex Pistols, was not protected by fair use as it was not transformative.[21] A similar fate would have probably awaited Shepard Fairey, if he had not reached a settlement agreement with Associated Press, which he sued as it had accused him of copyright infringement. Fairey had argued that his use of imagery depicting Barack Obama (that resulted in the iconic poster Hope which came to represent the former US president presidential campaign) was fair use and did not constitute copyright infringement. an argument which would have been probably be rejected by the judge.

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21 - *Dennis Morris v. Thierry Guetta, et al.* - No. LA CV12–00684. See also *Friedman v. Guetta*, No. CV 10-00014 DDP (C.D. Cal. May 27, 2011), a case started in 2011 by photographer Glen Friedman against Thierry Guetta. The Central District of California granted summary judgment for Friedman, finding that Guetta's work (in this case, not a street artwork, but a canvas) was substantially similar to Friedman's famous photograph of the rap group Run DMC, and that Guetta's use of the photograph could not be considered fair use.

With, On and Against Street Signs
On Art Made out of Street Signs

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Abstract

In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980), Michel de Certeau suggests the idea of a city in which there are, on one side, strategies of information, surveillance, control and infrastructure design laid out by the system and, on the other one, tactics defining the *how-to-do* of the users with regards to that system, that is, the operations by which they adapt them to align their own interests and needs. The texts allows us to examine the interventions of urban artists as a tactic characterized, as defined by De Certeau, as the harnessing of the system's resources (*making do*). This is more specifically translated into adaptability, development on a space they do not own, identification and utilization of the occasion (time) and the inventiveness of diverting time and resources (*shortcut* and *la perruque*).

In this work, we will take traffic signs of restriction and prohibition as one of the urban components that highlight the normativization of public spaces through the direct message of "NO" (not doing). Many artists have, in previous years, developed an interest in the artistic and symbolic possibilities of these signs and have developed works (tactics) as their response to them. Dan Witz (Chicago, 1957), Clet (Bretagne, 1966), Brad Dowey (Louisville, 1980) or DosJotas (Madrid, 1982) are good examples of this.

Key words: De Certeau, strategies, tactics, street signs, Dan Witz, Clet, Brad Dowley, DosJotas

Fig. 1 - Trenado, T. (Ed): NO Signs. Un ensayo foto-gráfico sobre el impacto de las señales de de restricción y prohibición (NO Signs. A Photo-Graphic Essay on the Impact of Restriction and Prohibition Street Signs), 2015

The present working paper picks up from a project led by Toño Trenado in 2015 as part of his Master´s thesis on Art Books Publishing. The project consisted of the production of a book entitled *NO Signs. A Photo-Graphic Essay on the Impact of Restriction and Prohibition Street Signs*, and it was composed of photographs of street signs and public posters that included a negative order ("NO"/DON´T). Along with the photographs, there were three essays that addressed the nature of the mentioned written message from different perspectives. As an art historian, I worked on the aesthetic side of these public writings as well as their function and reception in the city space («Señales del NO en el espacio urbano: estrategias de prohibición y tácticas creativas de resistencia», «NO Signs in urban space: strategies of prohibition and creative tactics of resistance»). A few book samples were finished but the project was never brought to market nor was it distributed in any way since the texts arrived only into the hands of the four co-authors. This paper aims to be a review, extension and continuation of the text that was once part of this unreleased book. Most of the photographs were taken in Madrid, Paris, Lisbon

and New York by the main author. Other photographs were downloaded from the Internet. The lack of time to incorporate more self-made photographs or to request permission for publication before the submission deadline, along with the lack of financial aid, caused the project to remain unreleased.

1. Introduction. The City´s Textscape

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*[1] (1980), the French philosopher Michel De Certeau conceives the urban space as a written text in which citizens carry out their daily routines. This narrative has the shape of a grid projected from above («a grid/net of discipline and vigilance», passim De Certeau), over which significant places unfold and develop. This leads the city to be used in a specific, determined way that allows for a series of correlated power relations to develop. The authors of this narrative, argues De Certeau, have been the cultural tradition of the past and, later, in modernity, the technocrats – also known as writers and producers – who design the urban space by means of informative and normative devices to regulate its use: «today, this text no longer comes from a tradition. It is imposed by the generation of a productivist technocracy. It is no longer a referential book, but a whole society made into a book, into the writing of the anonymous law of production» (XXII).

The concept of the city proposed by De Certeau has some similarities with the theories of other authors of his time, such as Jean Baudrillard or Guy Debord[2]. Although in different ways, the three authors had witnessed the events of May'68[3] and, as a result, they are probably responding to a concept of the city as a polarized space of confrontation for

class struggle: «The tactics of consumption, the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, thus lend a political dimension to everyday practices» (XVIII).

In this way, as opposed to the aforementioned technocrats-writers-producers, it situates the user-readers-consumers who, respectively, use, read and consume the city's artefacts and facilities[4]. However, despite the recurrent use of opposing pairs to explain his theories, De Certeau does not turn his attention to confrontations within urban space so often as he prefers to recreate himself in the observation and interpretation of intermediate places and actions. And this is where De Certeau's theories take on relevance; although a priori consumers - supposedly condemned to passivity and discipline - can be attributed a role of submission, what the author defends is precisely the opposite: in everyday life practice, the activities of using-reading-consuming (walking, working, using spaces, etc.) are a constant exercise of readjustment and negotiation for their own benefit. In other words, the ordinary man (like the artist) - to whom De Certeau dedicates his work and for whom he expresses deep admiration[5] - is an active agent who, taking advantage of the *room for manoeuvre* left by the system, does not only not submit docilely to the structures of power, but also subverts them through small daily creative ruses.

In actual fact, the idea of the city developed by

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1 - [Figure 1] The Spanish and English editions of De Certeau publications were used for this work, as indicated in references. Quotes are taken from the English version. All quotes where only the page number is specified belong to *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980/1984.

2 - Guy Debord, leader of The Situationist International (1957–72) claimed: «Urbanism is the mode of appropriation of the natural and human environment by capitalism, which, true to its logical development toward absolute domination, can (and now must) refashion the totality of space into its own peculiar decor»; «The ruler's chief weapon was the written word […]» (Debord Pars. 169 and 131).

3 - Debord as the direct instigator, Baudrillard as a participant and De Certeau as one of the first theorists analyzing the situation in *The Capture of Speech*, 1968.

4 - As previously pointed out, Baudrillard also shares this understanding of a modern city, as well as the approach of binary pairs related to reading: «The Factory, as the model of socialization through capital, has not disappeared today but, in line with the general strategy, has been replaced by the entire city as the space of the code […]. The city is no longer the politico-industrial zone that it was in the nineteenth century, it is the zone of signs, the media and the code. […] It is the ghetto of television and advertising, the ghetto of consumers and the consumed, of readers read in advance, encoded decoders of every message, those circulating in, and circulated by, the subway, leisure-time entertainers and the entertained, etc.» (Baudrillard 28-29)

5 - «To the ordinary man. To a common hero, a ubiquitous character, walking in countless thousands on the streets. In invoking here at the outset of my narratives the absent figure who provides both their beginning and their necessity, I inquire into the desire whose impossible object he represents. What are we asking this oracle whose voice is almost indistinguishable from the rumble of history to license us, to authorize us to say, when we dedicate to him the writing that one formerly offered in praise of the gods or the inspiring muses?» (V).

De Certeau can serve as a framework for the analysis of all artistic practices developed in urban space because they imply a certain degree of their own use (customization) and exploitation (appropriation and recycling) of resources. For this study, however, we will focus on the signs, specifically those that carry a restrictive or prohibitive message because they represent by themselves the rigidity of the system. Perhaps for this reason, and because of their visual appeal, in recent years they have often been a point of interest in artistic practices that use them to question the order and management of public space through operations with, on and against them.

2. Strategies and Tactics

One of the axes around which the entire text of Certeau revolves is the concepts of strategy and tactics. By "strategy" he refers to the planning of actions by the authority to carry out a specific objective: «I call a "strategy" the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an "environment." A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* (propre) and thus serves as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, "clienteles," "targets," or "objects" of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model» (XIX).

In order to be effective, the planning aims at the visual conquest of space by imposing itself and integrating itself into the environment in order to become recognizable. According to this definition, the prohibitive and restrictive signaling plan of the administrations would correspond to this type of strategy by which the authority makes itself present in space by launching its set of noes from previously thought-out points and with a defined purpose.

On the other hand, the "tactic" is the response to the power strategy: «I call a "tactic," on the other hand, a calculus which cannot count on a "proper" (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a border-line distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances.

The "proper" is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time —it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized "on the wing." Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into "opportunities." The weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them» (XIX).

In other words, it is the method of reaction that counteracts the forces of the other. In this way, the tactic acts on the space of power previously indicated and delimited by the strategies, acting in the precise moment with audacity and ingenuity to achieve its goal which is the mockery, the parody or the questioning of the strategies and their signs. For example, as we will see later on, the appropriation of the formula and the tone of the message of a signal or its manipulation can be considered as a tactic of resistance aimed at mitigating the impact of the ban.

These two concepts of strategy and tactic serve as an anchor to understand the rest of the opposing binaries suggested by De Certeau, such as those referring to people: writers-readers, producer-consumer, technocrat-user, strong-weak; those referring to ways of doing: technique-craftsmanship, standardization/homogenization-customization and, finally, those concerning the space-time dimensions: space-time, place-travel, flat-motion. The analysis of practices related to tactic is more elaborate and it includes other concepts such as shortcuts or *la perruque* (diverting), or the use of time, which are included in the general concept of *making do*. These concepts are discussed below[6].

3. Making do

3.1. O*rtho*(typo)*graphy* versus scribble

The Roman cities were the first to have a regular system of urban restriction signs. The public spaces – forum, square, and street – were also the first witnesses to a protest culture (anonymous pamphlets) and it is there where, therefore, we can find the first examples of spontaneous writings on city walls[7].

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6 - Following comparisons with Debord's theories, the concept of tactic and its relation to recycling techniques is close to the creative procedures of Situationist *détournement*, (*hijacking*).

De Certeau pays special attention to the development of the users' own writings, opposing, in some way, technique to craftsmanship (which we could extend to manual/gestural typography-writing). As we said at the beginning (section 1), the writing of the city takes the form of a grid (urban plan) in which we can read the lines of the streets. Thus, compared to a written page, the city is a carefully edited and measured page where straight lines abound. The authors of this system are absent and manifest themselves through codified and depersonalized styles, such as official signs, which rise with perfectly studied shapes, colors and standard lettering styles, and with which they direct life in the city.

These mechanical and fabricated typographies are read by the users when walking. But it is not a simple process of assimilation; as De Certeau explained, the daily practices of using public space, that is to say, the mere habit of choosing a route, reading or ignoring signs involves a series of decisions that constitute a creative process in and of itself. For example, when faced with the obstacle of a "Do NOT enter" sign, different actions can be improvised: detour, shortcut, change of route, or reinterpretation, etc. These actions do not necessarily have to result in a clash or confrontation but simply underline the infinite possibilities of the tactic: «And if on the one hand he actualizes only a few of the possibilities fixed by the constructed order (he goes only here and not there), on the other he increases the number of possibilities (for example, by creating shortcuts and detours) and prohibitions (for example, he forbids himself to take paths generally considered obligatory). He thus makes a selection» (99).

It is at this point that De Certeau introduces the opposition between technique and craftsmanship; the users' routes through the technically-designed city involve the execution of maneuvers and breaks that respond to individual and unpredictable needs and whose steps result in the drawing of broken paths, rectifications, changes of course, turns, etc. and that contrast with the prefabricated space in which they move. Although anonymous, this writing-trail of the one who a priori was destined to be a mere reader, shares with the craftsmanship a unique and personal result.

7 - Throughout *Graphitfragen. In Una mirada reflexiva sobre el graffiti* (2009), Fernando Figueroa explains that the phenomenon of graffiti or painting can only arise in cultures where writing is widespread, citizen organization is governed by writing (posters, rules, etc.) and, therefore, it is accessible to the majority. That is, for a scriptural subculture to emerge there must be a scriptural culture.

In short, the official and fabricated writing of the metallic sign contained in a frame is opposed to the gestural (calligraphic) graffiti that overflows the texture of the street.

[Figure 2] De Certeau talks about this way of acting as "style" and he indeed considers graffiti a tactical writing over the official script of the city; a diverted version of official writings so graffiti and writings on walls are examples of subversion and reutilization of the public space: «[…] we could mention the fleeting images, yellowish-green and metallic blue calligraphies that howl without raising their voices and emblazon themselves on the subterranean passages of the city, "embroideries" composed of letters and numbers, perfect gestures of violence painted with a pistol, Shivas made of written characters, dancing graphics whose fleeting apparitions are accompanied by the rumble of subway trains: New York graffiti» (102).

3.2. Shortcut

As the reading activity is also writing production, the reader may end up using the street to develop his or her own messages or signs and thus recycle the space according to his or her needs at least temporarily. Therefore, in contrast with the durability and unambiguous message of the official writings that keep repeating their orders over and over again, regardless of the changing aspect of the street, the tactic has an ephemeral, open and spontaneous character. The visual simile that explains this contrast of writing methods is the shortcut.

The city is designed to be used in a certain way. For example, in a park, the paths to take or the areas where you should not walk are marked by the difference in materials (sand or grass). However, the walker can take shortcuts that allow him to reach his target more quickly, thus marking an unexpected path through erosion that draws a path of its own. [Figure 3] «As unrecognized producers, poets of their own acts, silent discoverers of their own paths in the jungle of functionalist rationality, consumers produce through their signifying practices […] trajectories obeying their own logic. In the technocratically constructed, written, and functionalized space in which the consumers move about, their trajectories form unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across a space» (XVIII). De Certeau uses this term as a metaphor for trickery and speaks of "shortcut styles", "shortcut as a way of thinking", or "reading the lines of a shortcut". The interpretation of these new paths (with tangible results or not) allows us to read the penetration of

Fig. 2 - Prohibition sign intervened/contested by hand, New York, 2015.

Fig. 3 - Shortcut drawn by erosion in a public park. Madrid, 2018.

the desires of another within the urban rationalist frame. The shortcut, in short, is an alternative way to achieve your own goal.

We also mentioned that street art shares with tactics the loan of languages and aesthetics to achieve its objectives. In this way, and contradicting the aforementioned technique-craftsman dualism, we can observe how art also takes materials and means from the official or legal information system (for example, advertising) to develop discreet practices that blend with the texture of the street. Although the tactic and street art are not necessarily illegal, both operate outside the law and both make use of fast and alternative techniques to street painting such as templates, stickers or posters previously designed and sometimes mechanically reproduced. This appropriation of the strategy method for the tactic is aimed at maximizing costs and results, reducing the time spent working in the street and, therefore, the risks. When talking about motivation behind the tactic, De Certeau constantly gravitates around the idea of taking the space, of removing an obstacle, of solving a problem or of adapting the environment to one's own desires, that is to say, of customizing. Street art operates in the same way with the city decorating it to leave a personal imprint in the dull grey asphalt jungle.[8] Although road signs and their posts have been a common target of sticker artists and getting-up, [Figure 4] recently some artists have developed specific pieces for these stands. This is how the series of interventions on prohibition signs by the American artist Dan Witz [9](Chicago, 1957) seems to work. In an attempt to counteract the boring homogeneity of the signs and to claim the public space for personal use and to humanize it, the signs become portrait supports with proper names, such as *Sarah* (Dresden 2016) or human anatomy (feet, arms, etc.) or even self-portraits (*Self-portrait*, Brookling 2007) that can be considered as a more sophisticated version of the classic signature (*tag*) [Figure 5].

3.2. *La perruque*

The French term "la perruque" literally means "the wig" and refers to the work one does for oneself during the working day while pretending to work. It is not a question of stealing the product of working but of diverting the use of time, as well as the factory's or office's own resources such as uniforms, machines, computers or tools. As unsanctioned street art does, the *perruque* requires a tacit system of solidarity ('he expects that the other will take a turn a blind eye') and is never intended to make an immediate economic profit. «La *perruque* is the worker's own work disguised as work for his employer. It differs from pilfering in that nothing of material value is stolen. It differs from absenteeism in that the worker is officially on the job. […] the worker who indulges in la *perruque* actually diverts time (not goods, since he uses only scraps) from the factory for work that is free, creative, and precisely not directed toward profit» (25). Printing posters or stickers at work, [10]designing them in the working day, using paper or adhesive from the company, in short, "disguising" what is in fact a creative activity of one's own are practices within the sphere of the *perruque*.

During 1999 and 2005, the US artist Brad Downey[11] (1980, Louisville) worked with Darius Jones (also known as VERBS or Leon Reids VI[12], 1979) intervening in the urban furniture of New York and more specifically, the signage. One of the tricks they used to keep a low profile and to avoid attracting the attention of passers-by was to wear work clothes to "make them work". In the photos of that time you can see them wearing the typical safety vests of the builders and they became a symbol for them. In fact, when in 2008 the book *The Adventures of Darius and Downey* (Thames & Hudson) was published, two vests were chosen to compose the cover [Figure 6].

The pleasure of satiating the creative drive and customizing the city allows artists to continue and take risks despite the retaliation.[13] De Certeau considers the

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8 - According to Baudrillard, in the context of the alienation of the contemporary city, claiming identity is sufficient to carry out an act of transgression: «Under these conditions, radical revolt effectively consists in saying "I exist, I am so and so, I live on such and such Street, I am alive here and now". This would still be an identitarian revolt […]» (Baudrillard 30). Baudrillard also compares the city walls to a body:"[…] without tatooing, as without masks, the body is only what is it, naked and expressionless» (36)".

9 - Dan Witz: http://www.danwitz.com

10 - For example, the sticker artist Standard574 admits to have applied this inhttps://thewhitebooks.wixsite.com/thewhitebooks/home/standard-574-italy

11- Brad Downey: https://www.braddowney.com/

12 - Leon Reids VI: http://leonthe4th.com/

13 - «The child still scrawls and daubs on his schoolbooks; even if

Fig. 4 - Prohibition sign intervened with multiple stickers.
Florence, Italy, 2018.

Fig. 5 - Self Portrait. Dan Witz, Greenpoint,
Brooklyn. 2007.

Fig. 6 - Brad Downey and Darius Jones dressed in working clothes while working on *Baby stop* 2003,
Brookling, New York.

tactic of diverting (*la perruque*) an inevitable practice whose benefit, besides, lies in the introduction of the game element (calculation, risk, fun), essential for artistic creation, in everyday life. «In spite of measures taken to repress or conceal it, la perruque (or its equivalent), is infiltrating itself everywhere and becoming more and more common. It is only one case among all the practices which introduce artistic tricks and competitions of accomplices into a system that reproduces and partitions through work or leisure. Sly as a fox and twice as quick: there are countless ways of "making do." From this point of view, the dividing line no longer falls between work and leisure. These two areas of activity flow together. They repeat and reinforce each other» (28).

4. The game and the law: Playing to break the rules.

4.1. Make time (to play)

De Certeau often compares the city and the tension between strategies and practices with the playing field. More specifically, he does it with chess, where the ability of the pieces to move is limited and constrained to the grid. «[…] as in a chess game in which the pieces, rules and players have been multiplied out to the scale […]» (80). One of the clearest ideas derived from the definitions of strategy and tactic by De Certeau is the separation of the two practices in the control of space and time. On the one hand, the strategy has political legitimacy in order to impose itself visually on the space it owns, while the tactic, on the other, operates on an alien space and can only maneuver with the time factor: «[...] strategies pin their hopes on the resistance that the *establishment of a place* offers to the erosion of time; tactics on a clever *utilization of time*[14], of the opportunities it presents and also of the play that if you enter into the foundations of power» (38).

In one of his most famous extracts, De Certeau describes the image of Manhattan from the World Trade Center and reflects on the views of totalizing power involved in the bird's-eye views, panoramic skylines, or maps. The strategy states, «It is also a mastery of places through sight» (36). This overbearing and vertical view comprises all that can be owned by sight and closes the control of the space

by projecting the horizontal plane. In this visual conception and theory of the city, the users have an experience from within, at the street level, acquiring the shape of a moving track introducing, therefore, the time component.

The case of the artist Brad Downey is particularly revealing. On the one hand, he explains how what led him into the world of art was the practice of urban exploration of skateboarding (performative), rather than the practice of traditional drawing (visual art): «Ever since I was very young, I've always made drawing. But I think it was skateboarding that opened my mind: a bench is no longer a bench – it becomes an obstacle for self-expression. Skateboarding taught me how to be creative with my surroundings and question the fundamental function of things» (par 1, Nguyen & Mackenzie). On the other hand, when he explains his sculptures on the street (such as interventions on signs), he believes that, contrary to what you could think in the first place, time is (and not the space which they occupy or articulate), the main element that defines them. He describes this as the "time-sculpture": «The sculpture is the time when the physical objects are being manipulated; the situation left after is not the work» (Brad Dowley)[15]. *Playing is what matters* (and not who wins or loses), the game for itself. The artist plays his game in the city calculating possibilities; on the board of an already-organized space, the time of the artist performs an incursion by taking advantage of an opportunity (the absence of surveillance, the calculation of risks, the chances of durability, the visibility etc.)

The tactic, we insist, is to take advantage of what there is as a board game where one moves; in this case a prohibition sign on which transforming its appearance, its materials, its red background, the white horizontal line and, from there, figure out how to manage to make fun out of it in an exercise of micro-peaceful resistance that causes a smile. This is precisely the essence of street art, to contribute in an ephemeral way by reusing elements of the architecture and the street furniture (collage, palimpsest); it is not created from scratch but rather adapted to the environment. For example, the tactical response of the French artist Clet [16] (Brittany,

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he is punished for this crime, he has made a space for himself and signs his existence as an author on it» (32).

14 - *Establishment of place* and *utilization of time* are shown in italics in the Spanish edition, but in English we have left the italics because we want to highlight the two concepts.

15 - Here is the quote, a bit further developed: "Time is very important for me. I think time and sculpture are related […] For some of my works, I use video rather tan photography. There is a reason for this [….] The sculpture is the time when the physical objects are being manipulated; the situation left after is not the work, and I don´t consider this action a performance» (Interview with Thomas Bratzke)

1966) towards the excess of regulations in the cities has given as a result a recycling of the prohibition signs that have made him famous worldwide. One of the interventions more simple technically, but with more conceptual strength, is that it superimposes onto the image of the Statue of Liberty a sign "forbidden to enter" in Manhattan [Figure 7]. Like Witz, Clet does not cover the signs by an integer (this would also be dangerous) because the tactic is not necessarily to cancel the entire message of the strategy but to establish a conversation with it.

4.2. To *see* and *observe* the law.

Rules are written and exposed publicly: they must be *seen* to be *observed*. By having the law set down in writing, it becomes a neutral witness that guarantees its application but

16 - Clet is possibly the most representative and prolific artist, within the genre of street art, on prohibition signs. In the center of Florence, the city where he usually resides and works, it is difficult to find signs without his interventions. Clet: https://www.instagram.com/cletabraham/

also leaves it *petrified*, that is to say, recorded independently of the natural and changing development of daily life, alien to the real use of the spaces where it is located and, therefore, at times, indifferent to common sense. Its exhibition fixed on the public space also leaves it open to the free interpretation of those who see it.

A careful look at the signs in different parts of the world allows us to deduce that they are not always universally or directly interpretable and that, on many occasions, they require knowledge of the cultural context in which they are located. For example, the regulations on pets, attire or practices such as spitting, making noise, eating gum, smoking or drinking alcohol are cultural variables whose public exposure and location manifest possible group friction. In other cases, prohibitions (both their content and their formulation) highlight very particular issues, revealing customs that emphasize differences in the perception of concepts such as authority, the law and its limits, *what can be forbidden*, or the individual responsibility and freedoms;

Fig. 7 - *Do not enter*, Clet, Manhattan, 2014

this is the case with written signs (more prevalent in the United States than in Europe where they tend to be more visual[17]), which are often found and which have no exact correspondence or meaning in Europe, such as the 'NO trespassing', 'NO cruising', or 'NO firearms allowed here' orders because they correspond to a very specific sense of public and private spaces, as well as to very specific cultural situations[18]. From his birthplace, Madrid, DosJotas[19] (1982) reflects about prohibition signs in Manhattan in his work *DON'T EVEN THINK* New York, 2014)[Figure 8]. The open city *par excellence*, where the Statue of Liberty has received and receives immigrants and tourists, is full of signs such as "NO loitering" or "No soliciting" that in short indicate that the city and its spaces are not intended for people in need, unemployed or idle. That's why DosJotas warns of false signs distributed around the city: *DON'T EVEN THINK OF being poor here, come without insurance here, being free here, coming without a credit card here, etc*.

In addition, although the implementation of both law and urban signage are still emblems of civilization and developed societies, the written law, especially when it is of prohibition, always involves a certain degree of imposition on the relationship with its recipient (institutional grid). Both the normative trails of antiquity[20] and the signs of today are in the public realm, vertical and haughty. The work of the artist Brad Dowley consists precisely of reducing the value of this haughty position by breaking its verticality and rigidity to give them a flexible, organic and natural appearance. For example, in his sculpture *The tree* (London, 2005), the prohibition sign has been transformed into a tree whose trunk is slightly broken and from which branches and leaves emerge. [Figure 9]

Rooted in the value (in itself) of the fulfillment

17 - This is illustrated by the prohibition sign which, being the same in the United States and in Europe (round and red with a white stripe), also includes the message 'Do not enter' to reinforce it. On his website, the artist Dan Witz classifies his interventions and sheets of prohibition signs in US signs and European signs.

18 - This peculiarity of norms and differences with regards to other cultures has been briefly suggested for the purpose of this work but we believe that a monographic and extended study on this would be worthwhile.

19 - DosJotas: http://www.dosjotas.org/

20 - Since the Roman Empire, the custom having things written in public spaces continues.

of the written and historically-articulated law through a succession of "NOs" - "You shall not kill", "You shall not steal" - the space of our day-to-day is conditioned by the type of society we still are (preventive, repressive), and this reverts into forms of domination that become evident, before anything else, through their signaling devices that conquer the place and leave their control and surveillance strategies visible. For this reason, the signs are not usually expressed in positive terms and, on the contrary, they are presented in a preventive manner through the reminder of restriction and prohibition that revolves around "NO". In this way, and always negatively, the icon of "NO" multiplies in the cities and comes out in the way of the walker bombarding him with a constant message that we have assimilated, mitigating his aggressiveness only by force of habit. Consequently, a walk through the monologue of the street signs places us in the realm of order and threat, and leads us to a quasi-warlike setting: «The relation of procedures to the fields of force in which they act must therefore lead to a *polemological* analysis of culture. Like law (one of its models), culture articulates conflicts and alternately legitimizes, displaces, or controls the superior force. It develops in an atmosphere of tensions, and often of violence […]» (XVII). The DosJotas' work *Prohibitions* (Madrid, 2008) [Figure 10] aims to make us reflect on the direct signs of prohibition in cities. The prohibition is applied to transcendental activities in the personal sphere that are not publicly visible: Do not err, Do not feel, Do not think, Do not doubt, or Do not be, and that belong to the human condition, so they are impossible to avoid.

DosJotas also addresses the possibility of articulating positive rules to remind us of our rights and the practicable options of space–"in this area you can play", "in this area you can walk the dog"–. *Permitido pintar* (Painting allowed), (Huesca, 2009) is an intervention on a forbidden parking sign that aims to reverse the message ironically. The message says as follows: "Painting is allowed on September 19. The rest of the year is illegal". The intervention highlights the permissibility of painting on a specific day of the year on which an urban art festival is being held, in order to point out the prohibition of doing so for the rest of the time, thus highlighting the fluctuating nature of the regulations, which are always subject to authority and never based on self-regulation. The management and use of street art from the institutions is a constant concern in the work of DosJotas, as is the use of urban space. In his work *Public Park*

Fig. 8 - *DON'T EVEN THINK*. Dos Jotas, New York, 2014

Fig. 9 - *The Tree*, Brad Downey, London 2005. Duration: 3 weeks. Anonymous installation.

Fig. 10 - "No sentir", *Prohibitions*, Dos Jotas, Madrid, 2008

(Madrid, 2014), he painted positive messages on the ground to encourage users to use the park in a truly recreational way: playing ball, *skateboarding*, or getting carried away without following the signs or itineraries marked. The intervention draws attention to the contradictions involved in the regulations of certain spaces designed a priori for play (freedom, recreation, flexibility) and as an oasis to escape to in the city, but which are so strictly regulated that they are barely different from the rest of the urban space (the use of the benches is restricted to sitting in a specific position, dogs cannot enter or cannot go unleashed or do their own thing, and playing ball is not allowed).

5. Conclusion

The messages of urban signage belong to a visual culture whose aesthetic potential we hardly notice but which is certainly worth reflecting on. Since the mid-twentieth century, artistic trends and frameworks of cultural analysis have proliferated, inviting people to find beauty in the absurd and unusual in everyday life, to the postmodern indulgence of urban wandering with no other direction than the pleasure of getting lost, and to the breaking down of borders between life and art. More recently, and with increasing acceptance in our environment, the phenomenon of street art has spread, forcing us to take the critical eye out of the monument and put it in other secondary devices.

Writing, signage and city are part of an emblem of civilization through which the relationships between the agents involved in public space are negotiated. "No" is one of the first words to be learned and is as tyrannical as it is libertarian because it serves both to restrain and to resist. Although the sign speaks to the user - "NOT (to do)" - they do not always achieve the goal of truly reaching the receiver. At best, they begin the conversation but do not establish dialogue; they make us feel recognized and challenged because they address us in the midst of the deafening and anonymous silence of the city, but the meeting turns out to be a mirage when the owner of these "NOs" is absent and uses a foreign, aseptic and unsuitable language. However, as we have seen, these milestones in the city can be resisted, challenged and tackled through tactics close to bricolage and collage to transform them into artistic objects that provoke a smile or that, at times, invite deep reflection with few means. De Certeau's text allows us to analyze these tactics from the perspective of the aesthetics of tricks as an artistic operation.

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At work and play:
an exploration of street and graffiti artists

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Abstract

Identity work has been a dominant metaphor within the identity literature, while 'identity play' has yet to be fully developed. The purpose of this study is to enhance the understanding of the relationship between play at work and identity play. Contributions to date have proposed and outlined its theoretical potential principally by drawing upon work in other fields such as child development and relevant aspects of psychology and sociology. In contrast this study seeks to address a (creative) work situation directly, introduce empirical insights into identity play within the organisational and creativity literature, and deliver theoretical insights into the relationship between (identity) work and play. The empirical focus of this study is on an area where play is central to the work and identity, that of the lived experiences of street and graffiti artists, where there is a strong connection between the identities and the work (play) created. Using a life history methodology, I seek to explore creative (identity) work and play within the street and graffiti art context, and what (work and play) identity outcomes can occur as a part of their artistic practices.

Key words: Identity play, life histories, creative lives and work, street and graffiti artists

1. Working at play

There has been a growing literature on identity work which focuses on who people are being in their work and what the consequences of those identities are in work and organisational settings. Identity work has been defined a number of times, for example, Snow and Anderson (1987) see it as being the activities a person undertakes in order to sustain their concept of self and Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) see it as a collection of ways of producing, maintaining and strengthening a sense of coherence of self. Watson (2008) stresses the interactive and social aspects of identity work, defining it as "mutually constitutive processes whereby people strive to shape a relatively coherent and distinctive notion of personal self-identity and struggle to come to terms with and, within limits, to influence the various social identities which pertain to them in the various milieu in which they live…." (2008: 129). All the definitions stress the processual nature of identity work, regarding identity as being 'in process' rather than 'complete'. The processes include making identity claims and assertions, adopting stances, styles and behaviours and distancing the self from undesirable aspect of identity, or dis-identifying (Brown, 2015; Fleming and Spicer, 2003).

Identity work is portrayed as a serious business, often involving negotiation, contestation or struggle (Ybema, et al, 2009). The impetus for identity work is seen as a personal 'predicament' (Watson, 2008) or a threat to a person's self-standing in which their claimed-self is disputed or doubted either by the self or others. Equally, identity work can arise in organizational situations of fragmentation and uncertainty which reflect on the individual (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). In some cases, identity struggle is part of the work itself either in an aspirational way as, for example, when creative workers seek to assert a version of the self in their creative output (Beech at al., 2016). The outcomes of such struggles add weight to their seriousness as they impact on the significant matter of self-conception, how the person is understood by others and their standing in their group. Brown (2015) points out that identity work, conceived in this way, is a calculative, means-ends process in which people

aim for particular 'achievements' often with the intention of resisting or overcoming (if only at a personal level) the expression of power and broader discourses which frame the individual in particular ways.

Against this backdrop of struggle, disempowerment, dis-identity and disconcerting ambiguity, the notion of identity play comes as something of a relief. Identity play has been conceived as a liminal state in which the normal rules of work and identity are suspended and a different social setting, a 'safe haven', is entered in which self-expression, experimentation with fantasies and creativity are enabled and heightened (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). As with other liminal situations, play can be concerned with significant identity matters (for example, children playing at parental roles) but, according to Ibarra and Petriglieri, identity play differs from identity work in being focused on variety rather than consistency, experimentation with imagined versions of the self and rather than coping with the current 'real world', being on the 'threshold between current reality and future possibilities' (2010: 11). Rather than making identity claims, defending identity positions negotiating and performing outcomes as in identity work, in identity play new behaviours can be tested out, improvised rehearsal can take place and the aim is reinventing the self as opposed to preserving an existing identity. This playing on the threshold of future possibilities (Brown and Starkey, 2000) allows temporary 'mismatches' rather than eliminating them and has a greater internal focus of evaluation (for example on enjoyment or feelings of authenticity) than identity work's external evaluation of achieving 'fit' or the granting of identity criteria (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). For Brown (2015) it offers the potential of an alternative to a means-ends logic, compliance (and resistance) and rationality that can be implied by identity work. The alternative could be "a different set of potentially generative ideas relating to enjoyment, discovery, intuition, imagined other, spontaneity and fantasy" (Brown 2015, 25). For Ibarra and Petriglieri, identity play needs to be clearly separated from normal work, for example being on a sabbatical.

Play as a diversion from work has been studied for a considerable period. Roy's (1959) classic research showed how workers in mundane, demanding jobs in traditional factory work broke up the day into periods of work and periods of recreation. Similarly, Elsbach and Hargadon (2002)

have focused on play as a space of difference within the overall context of work when different rules are in operation. Play as engagement, or part of work, has been emphasised more strongly in the creative industries (e.g. Amabile, 1996) although there are other industries where a playful approach is regarded as part of the process of innovation (Sutton and Hargadon, 1997). Even in this context, play is a liminal activity in that it is on a threshold between stability and change, is performed at work but not simply as a means-ends function, but rather is an opening up of possibilities, some of which might produce innovations but not necessarily in a planned, resource-efficient way. Play also enables improvisation in changing roles, activities and styles on a temporary basis. The crucial feature of this form is that people do not escape their work to play but turn their work into play, hence it is a "behavioural orientation to performing work" (2006: 92). Mainemelis and Ronson (2006) emphasise not only the behavioural orientation but also the 'creatively-relevant cognitive processes' which play enables such as divergent thinking and practising with 'alternative solutions'.

Identity work has been a dominant metaphor (Brown, 2015), the alternative of 'identity play', proposed (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010), has yet to be fully developed. The purpose of this study is to enhance the understanding of the relationship between play at work and identity play. My empirical focus is on an area where different states of liminality (in-between-ness) and play are central to the creative works and identities of street and graffiti artists. There is a connection between the identities and the work (play) done and the artists who are literally playing ideas, concepts and styles. Therefore, the street/public art context offers an interesting empirical site from which to develop theoretical and practice-based insights. I seek to explore the lived experiences of street and graffiti artists, in relation to their creative (identity) work and play within the street and graffiti art context, and what relational identity outcomes can occur as a part of their creative practices.

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Walk the Line *project in Genoa:*
combining Graffiti-Writing traditions and Street Art innovations

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Abstract

The *Walk the Line* Street Art project, organized in the north-western Italian city of Genoa, starting from summer 2016 has brought a new face to the skyway of the city, mostly hated by both residents and tourists but strictly necessary for the city's fluid control of the traffic flow. Working on the surface of the pillars of the skyway, the artists called by the curators have been participating in a project that not only wants to embellish an infrastructural element of the city, but also wants to start a dialogue and create a link between different neighborhoods, creating a sort of open-space gallery. Furthermore, the different backgrounds of the artists who have taken part in the project raise a reflection about the dialogue between Graffiti-Writing traditions that still live today and Street Art innovations in the field of public art issues. The essay has the purpose of analyzing this kind of Street Art project, evaluating its artistic and social impact on the city, comparing it to the traditions developed by the protagonists of the Writing scene in Genoa and in northern Italy during the 1990s and the 2000s and introducing various questions about terminology.

Keywords: Genoa, Street Art, Graffiti-Writing, Terminology, Festivals.

Introduction

The *Walk the Line* Street Art project, that has been developed by "Page Public Art Genoa" and "Trasherz Music & Art" organizations, has the aim to paint one hundred pillars of the skyway that links the western and the eastern zones of the Italian city of Genoa. Until now, most of the pillars between the central neighborhoods of Molo and Prè have been painted. The representations realized by the artists are mainly linked to the themes of limit, sea, sky and the connection between them: indeed, the skyway follows the natural arch that defines the geographical shape of the city and it is an important element that characterizes the landscape and the skyline of the city center (images 1 and 2). The skyway, in Italian "sopraelevata", has always been both hated and loved by the Genoese people and without any doubt hated by the tourists too, who consider it a disturbing element to the appreciation of the harbor's landscape. The *Walk the Line* project has, as one of its objectives, that of redefining the aesthetic and emotional impact of the skyway,

re-evaluating an infrastructural element that, at this time, has become part of the story of the city. Indeed, built between 1964 and 1965, the "sopraelevata" is, by now, a symbol of the economic growth that occurred in Italy during the 1960s.

1. Story of the project

The associations involved in the project wanted to make an open-space art gallery that follows the line traced by the skyway, transforming the pillars from disturbing elements into objects of interest. Officially started in summer 2016, the project was born from an idea partly already realized during the summer of 2012. At that time, the Genoa municipality asked the D406 gallery of Modena to choose four street artists to paint four pillars in the neighborhood of Molo, in an area of the city habitually frequented by tourists.[1] The

1 - Siviero V., La sopraelevata, il mostro della "superba", si veste di street-art, June 20, 2012, https://www.espoarte.net/arte/la-sopraelevata-il-mostro-della-%E2%80%9Csuperba%E2%80%9D-si-veste-di-street-art/

selected artists were the Italians Ericailcane, 108 and Dem, and the Colombian Bastardilla. Besides the unquestionable importance and the aesthetic impact of the single works, the whole initiative could be defined as a mere embellishment operation coming from the public administration, in a sort of inverted process of the relationships between street artists and municipalities.

The *Walk the Line* project, on the contrary, can be defined as an initiative started from the citizens, that wanted to keep on realizing the project started in 2012, extending the painted pillars to the neighborhoods of Prè, Dinegro and Sampierdarena. Until now, 18 pillars have been painted, mostly between the areas of Molo and Prè.

2. Aims

Besides the aesthetic importance of the artworks realized and the re-evaluation of the infrastructural elements of the skyway, the project has also the aim of linking two different zones of the city center. Indeed, as the Molo is, without any doubt, the most touristic zone of the city, with a high level of integration between local people and immigrants, the area of Prè is instead considered a sort of ghetto, where only immigrants live and where the public administration cannot stop drug dealing and prostitution.[2] Therefore, *Walk the Line* is one of the numerous initiatives that has the objective of creating a link between this neighborhood and the very center of the city and realizing a true integration in the area of Prè. *Walk the Line* can also be considered the very first Street Art project in the city of Genoa, that had never hosted such a wide and complex initiative based on urban art like that before. In this sense, Genoa is reaching the inspirations and the instances coming from all over Italy, where a great number of Street Art festivals and projects have been realized since about 2010.

3. Street Art innovations

The *Walk the Line* project has mixed two different urban art approaches: what is commonly defined as Street Art and what is called Graffiti-Writing, introducing methodological issues and questions at the center of critical debate of the

last years (Bengtsen 2017, Blanché 2015, Dal Lago and Giordano 2016, Tomassini 2012,). Indeed, both street artists and graffiti-writers have taken part in the project: the first ones realized works of representation ascribable to the definition "Street Art", the second ones mixed their personal way of studying the letters with elements of representation, or, on the contrary, developing an abstract research. In the first case, we can put, for instance, the works by Ruben Carrasco (image 3), La Fillle Bertha (image 4); Combo (image 5) and Seacreative (image 6). The works like those by Carrasco, Combo and Seacreative are directly linked to the theme of the sea and the identity of the city, strictly connected with its harbor. On the other side, the representations like those of La Fille Bertha and Caterina Piccardo are based on a feminist inspiration and are linked to the element of the air: the first one with a woman that seems to start flying over the skyway and the second one with a female figure that holds up the architectural structure (image 7). The richness and the complexity of these representations are typically linked to a legal situation, in which the artists can easily work with the daylight and with tools like ladders and cranes, and in which they do not only use spray cans but also brushes and rollers. All these elements are valid also for the graffiti writers involved in the project, but it is important to point out that their contribution to *Walk the Line*'s artistic development is mainly connected with another kind of urban art, that has its roots in the Graffiti-Writing culture which arrived in Europe in the 1980s and grew in Italy starting from the last years of that decade (Caputo 2009, Tomassini 2012).

4. Graffiti-Writing traditions

Even if realized in a legal context and with tools typically used in authorized contexts, the works done by graffiti writers for the *Walk the Line* project conserve a strong background of the Writing culture elements. Indeed, the pillars painted, for example, by Blef (image 8), Joys (image 9) and Dado (image 10) are three cases of works in which the lettering can be considered as the main purpose of the artistic action. These three artists can be included in the list of writers that have contributed to define the history of Graffiti-Writing in Italy, each of them, in particular, getting up[3]

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2 - Viani B., «Via Prè non è un ghetto». E l'imam visita il presepe, December 29, 2017, http://www.ilsecoloxix.it/p/genova/2017/12/29/ASMEHn9L-ghetto_presepe_visita.shtml

3 - In reference to the title of the research realized by Castleman C., 1982. Getting Up. Subway Graffiti in New York, MIT Press, Cambridge

and influencing the cities where they were living during the 1990s and the 2000s: Blef in Genoa and the entire Italy for the wildstyle, Joys in Padua and the whole Veneto region for an abstract research, Dado in Bologna for the 3D style. The work of these artists for the *Walk the Line* project could be divided in two schematic parts: those that contain elements of representation and those that, through the lettering, arrive at a completely abstract result. The pillars by Blef and Shen2 (image11) belong to the first group, as in their works the representational part looks in dialogue but strictly separated from the lettering research. In the same group, we find the pillar by Dado, in which, contrary to the previous two, the lettering leads to a new form of representation. To the second group, belong the works by Joys and Orion (image 12), that came to a complete abstract result, but in which the letters are in some ways still recognizable.

5. Terminology questions

Nowadays, all these graffiti writers are recognized artists who work all over the world, but they continue to preserve and develop the traditions and the inspirations they took from Writing culture. How can we define these works? Is it possible to talk about "pieces" and use the word "Writing", or is it better to put them in the great box of the artistic expressions we call "Street Art"? These kinds of terminology questions are not very easy to solve, but, first of all, we can draw a clear distinction from what is realized in a legal context to an illegal one. Furthermore, we can propose a distinction from what we should put under the term "Street Art" to what we can ascribe to the Writing traditions.

Once certified that all of the artworks done in the context of the *Walk the Line* project are realized in a legal situation, it is clearly not possible to put all these artistic expressions under the generic term "Street Art". The distinction between "Street Art innovations" and "Graffiti-Writing traditions" proposed in the paragraphs before is one, but not the only, of the terminologies that could be adopted talking about these kinds of urban art phenomena. Even if realized in a legal situation, indeed, the pillars painted by the graffiti-writers carry a high amount of elements coming from the Graffiti-Writing culture that it is not possible to reduce in the single term of "Street Art". Talking about the artworks by graffiti-writers like Blef, Joys or Dado it is not possible, as a matter of fact, to overlook their past as members of that culture, their membership to crews, their origins as artists based in the illegal contexts.

All these elements are important facts that allow us to assume consciousness of the ways in which the Graffiti-Writing culture has transformed itself during the last decades. While the masters of the 1990s and the 2000s has developed their own way of being artists, converting their passion into a full-time job, the Graffiti-Writing culture still lives today, thanks to the teachings they gave to the newcomers.

Conclusions

At the conclusion of this essay, it can be stated that the *Walk the Line* project in Genoa can be included in the list of Street Art initiatives and festivals that have taken place in the whole territory of Italy and Europe in the last two decades, progressively leaving a trace on the surface of the cities where these kinds of events are organized. At the same time, analyzing the artworks realized on the pillars by the various artists, it can be declared that, in this project, both street artists and graffiti writers' works can easily stay together in the same context and create a dialogue between each other and the surrounding urbanistic elements. In the end, the participation of graffiti writers such as Blef, Dado and Joys in this kind of project introduces complex questions about terminology and how this culture has been transformed through the years. Therefore, the article has the aim of proposing a distinction system that clearly defines what should be called "Street Art" and what can be defined as "Writing", always specifying the cases in which the works are realized in an illegal context or in a legal one. By doing this, it is important not to reduce and to simplify in an extreme way the complexity of these kinds of artistic expressions.

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Images

Another attempt to explore the transient nature of post-graffiti through the history of a term

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Abstract

The term post-graffiti has a history which seems to be more than long enough to manifest a stable and convenient meaning. However, from 1983 post-graffiti was proclaimed as a completely new art movement several times, which caused confusion and misunderstandings. This essay aims to explore the reasons why the meaning of post-graffiti was so shapeshifting over the time through the analysis of particular stages of its life cycle dated in **New York 1980's** and **Paris 2000s** and how the differences in its meaning between these specific phases affected the modern perception of the term. It appeared to be that the main reason of the transient nature of post-graffiti is in the lack of attention to stylistic features. The artists representing the movement, declared as post-graffiti, were very divergent stylistically. Their artistic practices were not coherent as a whole, there was no aesthetic commitment. Consequently, it is hard to extract the essential features which could represent the movement. Through historical context this writing introduces the idea of *letter construct* which could be used in order to distinguish the movement stylistically.

Keywords: Post-graffiti, Art, Graffiti, History, Abstract

Throughout 34 years (1983-2017) *post-graffiti* several times was proclaimed as a completely new art movement, rarely with a common goal of its participants, often without the set of features aimed to fairly distinguish it stylistically. For instance, with a closer look on the two specific stages of the development of post-graffiti term we will notice that in *New York in 1983* Sidney Janis defined post-graffiti as "transition [of graffiti imagery] from subway surfaces to canvas" (Janis, 1983), while the activity which was considered as post-graffiti on the latter stage - in *Paris in 2000s*, was about "visual language intelligible to the general public" (Abarca, 2010: 385) which "unlike graffiti or academic art, is not built from a series of codes (Abarca, 2010: 333). Apparently, different connotations of the term consequently caused misunderstanding, since nowadays post-graffiti is predominantly associated with illegal abstract painting on abandoned constructions.

It is not a secret that one can hardly find the static meaning regarding the classifications of all the movements and sub-movements comprehensively covered by a term *urban art*[1].

Although, unlike the "street art" which is now quite rarely used by artistic community in order to define anything, "post-graffiti" still serves to define a certain part of the scene. The problem is that the meaning of post-graffiti shifted back and forth between the radically opposite directions and eventually stuck somewhere between letters and non-letters, legality and illegality, wall and canvas, intelligibility and unintelligibility. Why has the meaning of post-graffiti been so transient and shapeshifting over time? The main reason is because both times (in 1983 and in 2003) the artists who were representing the movement, declared as post-graffiti, were way too divergent stylistically. Their artistic practices were not coherent as a whole, there was no aesthetic commitment, consequently, it's hard to extract the essential features which could distinguish particular "post-graffiti" from any other movement which happened to be after graffiti.

In comparison to any other "urban" art movement *traditional graffiti* has quite clear features which make it distinctive and stable: **name/tag** as the essence and the "faith of graffiti";

repetition which leads to *competitiveness* in order to gain *fame*; appreciation of *illicit nature* of the *outdoor performance*; the *attitude* based on special set of rules and "*graffiti codes*" as unique language which provides the *exclusivity* of the group and the target audience; particular *freehand style* and *the spray paint/permanent marker* as a common tool. Those pivotal elements will serve as the focal points during our endeavour to analyse the post-graffiti in relation to its historical precursor.

This research aims to examine the two particular stages of post-graffiti history as quite eloquent examples of development of the term. The first stage is signified by "Sidney Janis Gallery" on 57th street in New York. It was late 1983, which means that the main graffiti-associated group exhibitions were already behind. In 1983, the "Mudd Club" was already closed; owing to Diego Cortez "graffiti art" already had its minute on the same wall with Warhol at PS1; thanks to Claudio Bruni "European direction" was already discovered by Fab 5 Freddy with Lee Quiñones; and Yaki Kornblit was just about to follow this tendency within his gallery in Amsterdam. As Leonard McGurr (aka Futura 2000) will later reflect on this topic: "A lot of it was me being follower at that time, and also being included in things, but kind of unconsciously. [Feb5] Freddy would say, "Yo, we're going to do this show at the Mudd Club. We're going to do a painting" (Lewisohn, 2011: 66). One thing was clear in 1983 – consciously or unconsciously, graffiti trespassed the borders of canvas and art dealer Sidney Janis was the one who decided to celebrate it with a new term. The group exhibition titled "Post-Graffiti" embodied the "transition from subway surfaces to canvas, an extension in scope and concept of their [graffiti artists'] spontaneous imagery" and declared that it was a day when "graffiti artist's painting no longer transitory or ephemeral, joins the tradition of contemporary art and is recognized as an existing valid movement" (Janis, 1983).

Although, the artworld and media accepted only some of the artists who were associated with graffiti but didn't actually practicing it. Therefore, the strongest association with post-graffiti was personified by Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat. As later Tristan Manco will admit: "The original "old school" graffiti artists didn't accept the way artists like Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat were labelled "graffiti

artists" as they clearly came from a different world. It was felt that the art establishment was buying into graffiti style but refused to acknowledge those artists who created the graffiti culture" (Manco, 2004: 9). Surely, you can argue that Futura 2000 and Rammellzee also were quite the faces of this new movement, but that is actually the problem. What do these four artists have in common? Moreover, what is in common between the part of artists from "Post-Graffiti" exhibition like A-one, Crash, Daze, Futura 2000, The Arbitrator Koor, Lady Pink, Lee Quiñones and Rammellzee with the other part like Jean Michel-Basquiat, Keith Haring, Don Leicht and Kenny Scharf? The artistic practice of the first part fully corresponding to aforementioned pivotal elements of graffiti. Through working on the canvas, they were making a shift from *illegality* to *legality*, transition from *outdoor* to *indoor*. If it would be only them, sharing the same style and goal, it could be easy to define "post-graffiti" of the Sidney Janis era – just keep the pivotal elements of traditional graffiti except *illicit nature* and *outdoor performance*. In this case the words narrated by Marc H. Miller in 21th edition of "Art/New York" video magazine would have had fairly true sense: "It started on the streets and on the subways over 10 years ago… Now it's called Post Graffiti, because it's done legally on canvas" (Tschinkel, 1984).

On the other hand, the second part of the artists involved in "Post-Graffiti" exhibition corresponded to pivotal elements of graffiti in a very slight manner: their practices were not name-based, they had a message which was easy-comprehensible by general audiences, these practices were not based on *graffiti codes*, nor *graffiti style* and they were not limited by *graffiti rules*. What they shared with the graffiti scene was its *illicit nature*, *outdoor performance*, *freehand style* and sometimes *spray paint/permanent marker* as a tool. From those four elements, only half are left after painting on canvas. Those two groups did not share the same milieu, had completely different visions and goals and eventually developed quite distinctive styles. Mixing those artists by covering them with one umbrella caused mixing of their artistic styles into some hybrid and shapeshifting feature of "post-graffiti" with Basquiat and Haring on a front cover.

Paris at the beginning of millennium is a next particular stage of post-graffiti history. In winter 2003 French artist Olivier Kosta-Théfaine (aka Stak) as a founder and editor of seminal

"WorldSigns" magazine declared a refusal to "use the words like "street art" and "propaganda", because they don't mean anything anymore" (Kosta-Théfaine, 2003:3). Therefore, he started to use "post-graffiti" as supposedly meaningful substitute for the "trendy" words. Three months earlier on the pages of the same magazine Stak and Honet proclaimed the "reconstruction of the new graffiti movement for true artistic future" (Kosta-Théfaine, 2002: 3). Even without naming it post-graffiti yet, it's quite obvious that they already had a certain idea of the movement in their minds. This idea was based on rejection. Rejection of hip-hop aesthetic, rejection of graffiti style, rejection of strict graffiti rules and codes. It was the moment when "punk spirit" was the reaction against "hip-hop" leitmotif, the moment when post-graffiti became reaction against traditional graffiti. And apparently, this new idea of post-graffiti from 2003 did not include the "from subway to canvas" overtones from 1983. Due to some kind of trendiness of the "street art" label at that moment, it immediately was rejected by the scene and substituted by fresh and not-so-trendy post-graffiti. Yet it seemed more like rejection of the title, rather than ideology, stylistic features or approach behind it.

When it comes to early 2000s in graffiti history the words of Jeroen van Mourik seem to be quite comprehensive: "For graffiti it was a period of experimentation, a moment in its history in which it opened itself up to allow other influences, styles and ideas. Interesting artists with unique personal styles came through weekly, even daily. The boundaries between graffiti and art started to seem unimportant and nobody knew where it was going to and what would happen next" (Eltono, 2012:2). The founder of the influential "Ekosystem" platform – artist known as Eko recalls that moment in similar way: "simple fact of painting something else than letters, not signing one's work or use another tool than spray paint seemed to us – quite naively – incredibly fresh and inventive" (Eko, 2010). Eventually artists felt freedom and deepened more into experiments with every single element of traditional graffiti. It was a crucial moment when a certain amount of different paths appeared in front of artists within the public space. But even though different paths were chosen, the choice-makers again were sharing the same post-graffiti umbrella, regardless of their philosophy, goals or stylistic features.

Let's take an influential Parisian exhibition **"**Nusign 2.4"

from July 2004 as an example. This event was promoted by its organizers and participants as an exhibition dedicated to "European post-graffiti scene". It is not hard to notice the stylistic differences among the forty artists who were representing this particular post-graffiti scene within this exhibition. In accordance with a structure proposed by Tristan Manco in "Street Logos" the artists involved in **"**Nusign 2.4" exhibition fall into different categories, for instance: **"Urban Characters"** category is represented by KRSN, Akroe, André, Microbo, Bo130 and Gomes; **"Signs"** category: Zevs, Francois Morel; **"Iconographics"**: Influenza; **"Logos"**: Stak, Honet, 108, Eltono (Manco, 2004). This time artists from different categories practically share the same social environment, but their artistic practices were dissimilar. Even if we will try to consider post-graffiti as something anchored with such distinctive elements as "public space; behavior without permission; intelligible visual language; general audience [as target]; repetitive motive and recognizable style" (Abarca, 2010: 385), still it is too wide stylistically, since such artists as 108 and Shepard Fairey are sharing the same category according to it. Undoubtedly, it is not an easy task to categorise the young artists at the simultaneous rise of the new movements, but still it is crucial to distinguish one thing from another. The aforementioned group of artists had two principles in common: they were operating on the street and they rejected the style of traditional graffiti. Eventually it was not enough to homogenize the movement, since a variety of artistic practices within a particular scene made it nearly impossible to distinguish the artistic approach and recognisable stylistic features of post-graffiti.

It is important to mention that the impact made by Stak and Eltono became highly influential for the next generation of significant artists. Stak's idea of the *"logo as a name"* and the active period of his abstract logos (1995 – 2004) was a game-changer for certain artists. Italian artist Guido Bisagni (aka 108) stated: "Stak is the artist that really changed my vision in graffiti. I always liked him and Honet and their European way to do letters. Anyway, one day, probably it was in 1996 I saw his strange "signs" on Roman trains in some graffiti magazine. It was totally new. It was like to see the real birth of a new culture to me" (Bisagni, 2012). American artist MOMO with the French artist Nelio are stating the strong influence of Eltono on their artistic way to abstraction. Needless to say, 108, MOMO and other inspired artists eventually influenced the next generation. So, now we have the scene of self-

proclaimed post-graffiti representatives who fairly follow the artists which made the influence on them, rather than the movement. Abandoned constructions as best accessible surfaces in Parisian suburbs remained in preference rather as aesthetic sentiment in a modern day; the letters of the names once reduced to logotypes transformed into pure abstract shapes; the *idea of graffiti* replaced the actual graffiti.

Conclusion

Definite stylistic features are crucial when we are talking about an *art movement*, or a term which aims to describe an art movement. Significant exhibitions are meant to present the tendencies based on features which are making particular art practices recognizably different from any other manifestations. This is how it works. Although, in both cases examined by this essay post-graffiti term was applied to phenomenon which was quite diverse by its nature: in 1983 post-graffiti was meant to describe the "graffiti" on canvas, but the moment of transition from freight trains to gallery was overshadowed by those who just used the street as an extension of their studio practice; in Paris 2003-2004 differences between the artists who were representing the scene were ignored again since post-graffiti term was used mainly to embody the refusal from "hip-hop keynote" of traditional graffiti, with simultaneous rejection of the popular - at that time - street art label.

I suppose, the problem is that even today most part of group shows is attempting to imitate the model of "New York/New Wave" exhibition from 1981. Such exhibitions do not represent the tendencies but are focused on attracting as much audience as possible, which means the artists should be radically different in order to satisfy every taste. The "museum-as-funhouse" model of art exhibition could be quite risky in terms of further influence. It is quite hard to detect the development of any art movement with such an approach. Especially when so many different artistic practices are covered with one umbrella just as it was at "Post-Graffiti" exhibition in 1983, or "Nusign 2.4" show in 2004, or many other exhibitions, events and publications regarding urban art. The transient nature of post-graffiti term is caused by the lack of attention to its *stylistic features*. Every time this term appeared it aimed to involve as much features as it could in order to be broad and significant.

Therefore, it became unclear and shapeshifting.

How can we possibly distinguish the post-graffiti movement stylistically? It is not hard to notice a significant moment in the late 1990s/early 2000s which could be considered as a true game-changer in the history of *graffiti-associated movement*. When Olivier Kosta-Théfaine (aka Stak) came up with an idea of *"logo as a name"* in 1995 and adapted the letters of his tag into abstract shape, he constructed the new stylistic approach. This idea became a fork, the point where movement divides into two parts: where the letters of a name become structure for predominantly abstract imagery; or where the letters of the name are rejected as idea, as structure, or a shape[2]. Both directions share the common idea of rejection of "hip-hop" aesthetic along with the strict rules, style and the codes of *traditional graffiti*. However, each one of these two directions demonstrates distinctive stylistic and structural features which is quite crucial when someone attempts to define and analyse the tendency.

We will drop the latter direction as the one which is less relevant regarding the post-graffiti discourse and will focus on the direction where the idea of the name and graphemes becomes the structure for a new artistic imagery with intangible reference to the heritage of traditional graffiti. Abstract logo which was born from the name "Stak" aimed to reject the style of traditional graffiti, but still it partly stayed within the social construct of graffiti. It was mentally connected with its predecessor and the main link was in its *letter construct*. Just as a grid structure declared modernity, through becoming autonomous milestone between the present and the past, this writing proposes to use the *letter construct* of abstract shapes in order to stylistically distinguish the post-graffiti movement. By following this model, we will have the *traditional graffiti* based on letter structure which is comprehensible and readable by an exclusive audience (due to graffiti codes); on the other side we can easily distinguish the *post-graffiti* which is also based on letter structure, although this time letter is considered by the artist as an abstract shape, therefore it becomes just the base for the abstract composition and doesn't mean to be readable at all. In this case if we will come back to the artists who were showcasing at "Nusign 2.4" exhibition, we can notice that such artists as Stak, Eltono, Eko, Cke were operating within the frame of letter construct. Their imagery

was abstract yet still had some sort of link with reality, because those forms didn't come from pure nothingness, those shapes and silhouettes were constructed through "a distillation, a purification of a moniker into its essential forms" (Eltono, 2012: 3). The abstract shapes of post-graffiti are composed as if it were letters, with the familiar logic and constitution, yet this time it is more like the subject of habit. In this case *letter construct* signifies the *stylistic feature*, where composition of the artwork has rather the "feeling of graffiti", the slight savour of it. Intangible presence of letters is unconsciously decisive for the artists with such a stylistic approach, yet still it gives them the freedom and space for the mistake as valuable extension of artistic endeavour. Going by the words of Christ from Moderne Jazz Crew: "At the end of the painting it's often the same: **writers find words, people see things**" (Kuhnert, 2017: 22).

Footnotes

1 - Urban art here refers to: *"forms of independent artistic performance in the public space that go beyond the graffiti"* (Abarca, 2010: 35).

2 - Obviously in this case letters are regarded as graphemes, and not as part of language with objective or practical meaning such as word, phrase, slogan etc.

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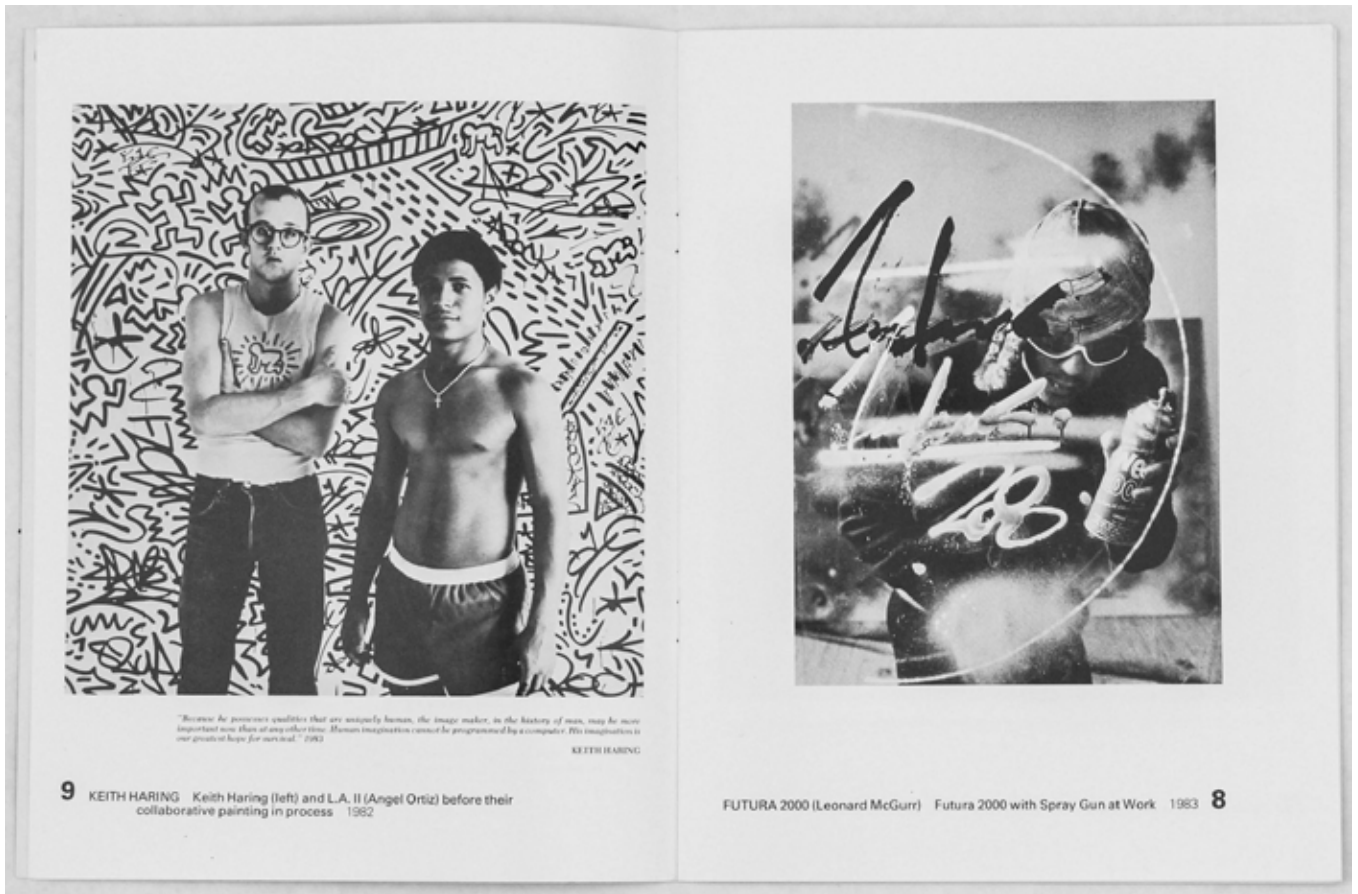
Fig. 1 - Keith Haring, L.A. II and FUTURA2000 in Post-Graffiti Catalogue,   Sidney Janis Gallery NYC, 1983. Courtesy of Yves Stohr.

Fig. 2 - Post-Graffiti Catalogue cover made by John Matos (aka CRASH) and Chris Daze Ellis for Sidney Janis Gallery NYC, 1983 Courtesy of Yves Stohr

Fig.3 - Tags canvas by John Matos (aka CRASH), 1983. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4 - *Eko, 2017. Courtesy of the artist*

Fig. 5 - Logo as a Name by Olivier Kosta-Théfaine (aka Stak), Modena 2002.
Courtesy of the artist.

The posturban paradigm and where street art and graffiti are not (going to be)

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Abstract

Over the past decade, we faced a great outcome and success of urban creativity because cities started to adopt it for image branding within a global competition. This output is tied to the possibility of diverse aesthetic experiences in the urban space. But is this development also meant to last in the future? What can be said about the urban imaginary, planned by global investors or the military complex? The aim of this working paper is to shed light on the desired future urban space, already realized in ambitious projects around the globe. By adopting the post-contemporary critique on the discourse of the urban, it appears that the future is already present in 'ghost-cities' that do not embrace urban creativity anymore, but overtly try to avoid or even fight it.

1 The post-contemporary critique

In recent art theoretical debates the category of time is of increasing importance. After the long *spatial turn* in the humanities, we now encounter the rise of a *temporal turn* (Ross, 2012). Like the former, also the latter turn puts aside strictly physical notions, concentrating more on social, political, scientific and artistic interpretations. Within these discourses, Malik/Avenassian (2016) criticize especially the term 'contemporary' and the related aesthetic experience of the present. They state that the term 'contemporary' became a dominant paradigm in art and politics after the wall came down in 1989. They refer to the concept of *Empire* (Negri/Hardt, 2000) as an endless present in a globalized world order, beyond historical and spatial boundaries. After Malik/Avenassian contemporary art stabilized this system, in which the individual experience of the aesthetic has been extended to all areas, including the city as a space of incessant urban creativity. The merging of producer and consumer into the so-called prosumer, as can be observed especially for the production and reception of street art (Glaser, 2017), has led to a fetishism of the contemporary. The natural living space of this prosumer is exactly the smart city, which has "turned into a kind of permanent biennial." (Malik/Avenassian 2016, 25) Politically speaking, this means that the left-wing project of contemporary art does not disturb the neo-liberal mechanisms, but effectively supports them. Its goal is only to install an aesthetic experience of the present as an endless moment, forgetting about historical or future implications or possibilities.

The attack on the conventional time construction began with the emergence of so-called speculative realism, a philosophy that has led to recent theoretical approaches such as posthumanism. The prefix post- is fundamentally different, as e.g. in postmodernity. It is an attempt to reconsider temporality as a time-complex that merges past and future in favor of the present. Postmodernism had been conceived with regard to its predecessor, the modern age; a succession as we know it from other art historical epochs such as baroque and classicism, in which one period is consciously set against its precursor. The post-contemporary complex, however, speculatively relates the future to the present, for example, when digital technology is transferred to a system that cannot be derived from the past, calling it post-digital art. Among other things, the radical nature of this thinking consists of designing projects for the future and of anticipating their utopia for our present. Some systems already work like this, such as derivatives trading on the stock exchange, pre-emptive strategies by the military complex or the police, like in the film *Minority Report,* where preliminary arrests should prevent possible crimes in the future.

2 - The posturban paradigm

The term 'posturban', as I have developed it here, transfers

this speculative and systemic approach to the discourse of urbanity. From this it follows that we already live in an urban age, in which the historic city is no longer the leading model. Instead, the global societies are living already in extended urban spaces or within the urban sprawl. Moreover, I have not taken the post-contemporary complex purely as an art theoretical approach, but rather as a method for research. I adopted it to analyze the discourses on the contemporary urban and to search for models that have already anticipated the technologies and scenarios of the future in their planning of the present. My outcomes meet perfectly with results from other disciplines as architectural theory and urban planning. There, the term 'posturban' was apparently first coined by Anthony Vidler, who describes it as a reaction to the uncanny effects of cities, like the so-called Paris-Syndrome (Shaw 2017). In this context all aspects of what the contemporary discourse on the urban tries to imply, like heterogeneity, density, ethnic or visual diversity are conceived as dangerous and annoying. The posturban space aims therefore to overcome this uneasiness with a capitalist hyperreality. The examples that I found via my analysis are perfect examples for such an urban imaginary that tries to avoid a multifaceted urban space to which unsanctioned urban creativity belongs.

2.1 The smart city Magarpatta, India

The first example is a city in India, which is the first perfect smart city. Magarpatta is located near Pune, which has become a stronghold of the IT industry. A real estate developer bought land from various farmers and communities to create a perfect resort-city that is privately organized. Many global companies have established themselves here because they appreciate the sophisticated IT expertise, and at the same time can bypass the many urban problems such as traffic congestion, pollution, crime, poverty and homelessness. Magarpatta is organized like a gated community. You can only live there if you have a job. This then allows the possession of a badge card, which you have always to carry with you. A private security service regularly checks the IDs and 24-hour video surveillance promises complete safety. Everyday life is regulated smoothly, as all activities and services are digitally controlled. However, the slum is growing at its limits, as can be seen in a documentary by Patrick Hafner.[1] Despite the symbiosis of slum and gated community, the model is considered highly successful and adopted by the Indian state, which plans 100 such cities. Some will be implemented in existing infrastructures; others will be built completely new. In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ambitious plan to link Bombay with New Delhi through a 1,500-kilometer industrial corridor consisting

of smart cities, such as GIFT-City (Gujarat Finance Tec-City). However, the government is not planning to buy land for these projects, but rather expropriations, which of course are highly controversial.

2.2 The neoliberal city New Ordos, China

The second example can be described as the perfect neoliberal city, since it is purely economic in nature and does not have to take account of its inhabitants, since there are none. New Ordos was born – so to speak – on the drawing board in Inner Mongolia. By the year 2000, large coal and gas deposits had been discovered nearby, which provided a phenomenal economic boost in the region. After 2004 the project was implemented as a counterpart to an older settlement and designed for 300,000 inhabitants. Most of the town was already finished in 2011. The 1.5 km long main square is lined with a library, cultural center and museum - elements of the classic European city. However, not one of these buildings are in use. According to press reports, the population is estimated at 20,000, but most of them seem to be construction or service workers.[2] Nevertheless, both public and private investors see the investment as a major financial success that will pay off in the future.

2.3 The new military urbanism

The third example shows how the military complex feels threatened by the expansion of global urban societies. The video by the Pentagon *The future is urban* explains the need for a complete changing of military tactics, because most future conflicts will be in urban spaces.[3] There the typical urban qualities like heterogeneity, density and diversity are seen to be major challenges for military success. In order to counter these dangers, the military complex no longer exercises only in mockups, but, as soon in Germany, in "real" cities. By 2020, the practice town of Schnöggersburg north of Magdeburg is to be completed, including high-rise buildings, stadium, airport, slum, canals, artificial river and subway. The site covers approximately two by three kilometers and the total cost is estimated at 118 million EUR. "The conflicts are increasingly taking place in cities," said Colonel Becker, head of the exercise center in an interview. "The operating conditions are very complex - it goes over roofs, underground, into the sewage system. Usually the visual contact to other soldiers or vehicles is missing. During the fight, the population lives in the city. Then the soldiers must be prepared for their own protection and for the protection of the population."[4] It is said that the plan did not follow a concrete model. However, in the so-called religious building Christian and Ottoman elements had been

integrated. Here, of course, an enemy image is indicated, which is located in a diffuse Orient; and also the video of the Pentagon shows no blond and blue-eyed people, but especially men of dark skin. A similar plant is called *Junction City* in the Mohave Desert, where the US Army exercises. To this artificial city belongs a kind of mosque too, pointing again to a sort of 'Islamic' enemy. Apart from that, these training areas are clearly useful for urban counterinsurgency strategies, whatever enemy may be at target.

3 - Conclusion

The examples show very clearly that the urban is no longer perceived as a life-style phenomenon, where creativity can be of use for city branding. Diversity and density are rather considered problematic. Segregation and control seem to be the more desired parameters for the future. While the urban is associated with unpleasant experiences, the post-urban projects offer a capitalist hyperreality. In these scenarios, urban creativity find its expression only in tamed ways. For example, graffiti and street art may appear as photographic images in restaurants. Finally, we can deduce that unsanctioned urban creativity in general continues to embody resilience, being a metaphor for the chaotic, heterogeneous and diverse urban that the posturban wishes to overcome.

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Fig. 1: Songdo in the metropolitan area of Seoul in South Korea is another famous example for a smart neoliberal city project that failed, because nobody wants to live there. Even though it is nearly empty, construction on high-rise buildings still goes on, in hope of future developments.

The evolution of Halls of Fame in graffiti writing and my run to a masterpiece

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Abstract

Cultural and urban geographical research related to graffiti and street art poses interdisciplinary questions and employs multi-methodical approaches. In recent years, research methods in the field of ethnography have been receiving more and more attention in the German-speaking community of human geography. With this in mind, the following working paper presents a methodological experiment for examining the everyday urban practice of graffiti writing and its spatial relevance. "My run to a masterpiece" presents the current status of this ethnographic research, whereby it has been attempted to localize and analyze legal walls for graffiti writing (some of them considered "Halls of Fame") in the urban cultural landscape as well as these walls' potential for integrated urban development policies in Germany.

Keywords: graffiti writing, (auto-) ethnography, urban and cultural geography, legal walls, Hall of Fame

1. Introduction – Halls of Fame and legal graffiti writing

The term "Hall of Fame" is used in many different fields and contexts. In general, the Oxford Dictionary defines a *Hall of Fame* as an institution, be it a real or fictional place, honoring and memorializing the most famous people of a certain field, for example sports, music or science. Halls of Fame are also established for leading figures in certain countries or even regions (Hall of Fame for Great Americans, Hall of Fame for Great Bavarians, etc.). In the graffiti world, the meaning of the term Hall of Fame is quite variable. The following list, based on the "glossary of glossaries" in Jacob Kimvall's book *The G-Word* (Kimvall, 2014: 203) presents definitions by authors with various scholarly backgrounds in chronological order: "(Famous) writers' meeting point" (Jacobson, 1996); "A legal or semi-legal walled painting site" (MacDonald, 2001); "Places / walls, where experienced writers (kings) meet and paint high-quality graffiti (masterpieces)" (van Treeck, 2001); "Consistently frequented places to write graffiti" (Lindbald and Jacobson, 2003); "Mostly legal walls on which high-quality pictures are produced" (Ganz, 2004); "Hall of Fame Piece is legally sprayed graffiti" (Ganter, 2013).

It is worth noting that in these definitions is an inconsistency regarding the principle of legality. Several authors define a Hall of Fame as a legal, mostly legal or semi-legal place

for graffiti writing. Others do not mention the principle of legality at all. Also, not all authors mention aesthetic reasons or the quality of an individual graffito. It is interesting and fruitful how the term Hall of Fame is to be understood and defined by graffitists themselves, those who are the users and practitioners of legal areas for graffiti writing. In the understanding of a graffitist from Aachen, a Hall of Fame has the important function as a place for exchanging knowledge and developments for new generations of graffiti artists. As described by the graffiti artist LAKE13, "a Hall of Fame is a place with several walls that can be painted on legally. They contribute to the exchange of the scene and the development of the generations of street artists, enabling sprayers to work 'freely' and more creatively on the wall" (Kesseler, 2013). For other graffiti artists, it is not really graffiti anymore if it is sprayed legally in a restricted area with permission. In some of my interviews, we used the term graffiti-mural[1] for the single final graffito and for officially sanctioned walls and areas in the urban landscape sometimes even terms like graffiti preserve or graffiti reservation.[2] In summary, combining these somewhat contradictory statements into one definition, a Hall of Fame stands for a consistently frequented meeting point in a legal sprayable area where graffitists exchange knowledge across generations and produce "high quality" graffiti (master-)pieces. Especially worthy of further research is the dissent regarding the principle of legality as it is related

to the process of graffiti being created and where it is located in the cultural landscape of cities.

In some cities, Halls of Fame have a long history in the local legal and illegal graffiti writing culture, and function as an integral part of the urban cultural landscape or even as a landmark. In the past years, their role has been intensively discussed in the media because of the illegal whitewashing of the Graffiti Mecca 5Pointz in New York City. The owner of the building had to pay more than six million dollars in compensation to certain graffiti artists and other people in charge, because of the unsanctioned eradication ("whitewashing") of the graffiti-murals.[3] Today 5Pointz is no longer the landmark it used to be, but this confrontation and kind of dilemma for urban practitioners shows once more the "(…) re-evaluation of graffiti in the light of the importance of creativity to the post-industrial economy (…)" (McAuliffe 2012: 190). Moreover, a re-evaluation is needed of the spatial relevance that graffiti practices have in the transformation processes of the urban cultural landscape. Confrontations in urban politics such as those mentioned and the various urban governance arrangements connected to graffiti in general are significant for my research on the social innovation of graffiti-murals (Hilmer, 2018). This is because I understand graffiti primarily as a social phenomenon and an everyday practice involving the interaction of mainly four larger groups of actors in the local urban setting.

2. *On the run*[4] to a masterpiece – My (auto-)ethnographic research experiment

In order to gain more clarity about the principle of legality as it relates to Halls of Fame and the spatial relevance in the transformation processes of the urban cultural landscape, I have used a multi-methodical approach. I claim that it is essential to visit Halls of Fame in person and in situ. Cultural and urban geographical research related to graffiti and street art poses inter- and transdisciplinary questions that demand multi-methodical approaches (cf. Bloch 2012; Dickens 2009; Kramer 2010; McAuliffe 2012). In recent years, ethnographical research methods have been gaining more and more importance in the German-speaking realm (Everts et al. 2011; Müller 2012; Strüver 2011). Such ethnographic research is often characterized by extensive descriptions of everyday interactions to enable an understanding of unfamiliar living environments. Extensive descriptions of this kind require observation and participation in the world

of the research subjects as they live in it, "to be in the thick of things and not just looking on," as Martha Müller has described it (Müller, 2012: 179). Furthermore, as a researcher "you also have to face the practical and material handling of things on the spot. Even more than that, you have to keep track of how things actually get to where they are taken" (Frers, 2012: 214). To be "in the thick of things" and to face the practical and material handling of things on the spot, my plan has been to (1) visit and (2) paint on 50 legal walls in 50 different cities. I have postulated that only in situ will I find answers to questions like: Where are legal walls in the context of cities and how can this placement of legal walls be (re-) interpreted? What is the quality of individual graffiti pieces? At these walls, what is the atmosphere and materiality in terms of architectural structures and what kind of arrangements or control is experienced there?

I was inspired to use "my run" as an empirical basis for my fieldwork, by Joseph Murphy's 1500 km walk as described in *Walking a Public Geography through Ireland and Scotland* (Murphy, 2011). During my visits to legal walls and explorations of their environs, as well as while painting at these walls, I had long conversations with people I met. A difference to other forms of qualitative research might be the fact that I do not initiate conversations with other users of legal walls. Instead I wait until people at the walls interact with me while I am painting. After this first encounter, we discuss various questions, such as: Why do you like to paint graffiti legally? What is cool or not cool about this particular wall? What are the dos and don'ts for you at the walls? Such conversations developed in the course of my research into another purpose for my run: To help people involved in the civic life of cities such as city planners, cultural managers and street workers to organize and become clearer about questions such as: Where, when and how should a legal wall be placed in the landscape of a city? What should a legal wall offer for graffitists? How can this be balanced to some extent with other users of the same public space and nearby inhabitants? Until now, I have visited 27 legal walls. Since some legal walls in Germany already have people in charge, I decided to interview these experts in order to follow and recreate how legal walls either evolve into a Hall of Fame or are eradicated from individual settings. "On the run to a masterpiece" has used a multi-methodical approach that combines the mapping and localizing of legal walls, participant observation of legal wall users, and, if such people exist, interviews with people in charge of legal walls.

3. Mapping, framing and doing of legal wall writing

Not every legal wall for graffiti writing is automatically a Hall of Fame or becomes one. On some occasions and in some cities, graffitists, city officials and other people in charge use terms like open walls, free walls or graffiti reserves to emphasize the fact that these are legal places to spray. This does not necessarily mean that high-class graffiti pieces are found on such walls. The unwritten rules of graffiti[5] often regulate the aesthetics of legal walls. For example, one is not supposed to overpaint ("cross") a piece that one cannot compete with. The concept of competition in various graffiti styles has to do with how graffitists compare and value their work based on different aesthetic criteria as well as artisanal and technical aspects. Valuation can be related to the size of an individual piece ("out of human scale"; see Abarca 2016), or specific skills that experienced graffitists need to have, as for example very clean, thin and energetic (out-)lines written in one flow, or the ability to add character to one's personal typographic, calligraphic style writing elements. This type of quality indicator regulates (to some extent) the frequency that the visual appearance of a legal wall changes. It goes without saying that not all people at such walls agree about these criteria. And sometimes you will find "chromebattles"[6] or some kids or "toys" (unskilled sprayers) using left-over spray cans to add comments on high quality pieces. This is one reason why most graffitists never leave nearly empty cans with caps at legal walls.

Other rules and regulations I have encountered so far have to do with certain political, sexist and abusive themes and subjects in wall paintings. Especially fascist and anti-Semitic themes are not tolerated and are crossed immediately. Some privately owned (semi-legal) walls, usually overseen by a local "crew" and/or a graffiti shop nearby, disapprove of chrome (metallic paint) or using tar or asphalt (bitumen) as a basis. This is connected to the principle that effort should be put into the paintings, and that for walls with chrome and tar are not easy to overpaint for the next person wanting to paint a wall.

Figure 1 - Amount of legal walls / Halls of Fame (HoF) in Germany (24.04.2018) (Hilmer 2018)

For my mapping and research about painting on legal walls, I focused mainly on Germany, but I have also visited legal walls in other countries. The first results of my mapping process of legal walls in Germany have shown that Bochum is the capital of legal wall writing, with 25 legal walls (Figure 1). It is interesting to note that the creative and cultural hubs of urban art – the big three in Germany being Hamburg, Berlin and Cologne – are not very striking in this regard. There are smaller cities, cities with less than half a million inhabitants like Bochum, Freiburg and Heidelberg, which have a higher potential for possible case studies in my research. It is very important to mention the fact that the database, this map of legal walls / Halls of Fame (HoF) in Germany, is unstable - as Boris Bouchon puts it in one document I used as a source: "Attention - this list is lying!!!" (Bouchon, 2012). There are only a few official databases or statements of city councils, so I had to use various kinds of PPGIS - public participation geographic information systems or also VGI – Volunteered Geographic Information.[7] A particular problem with such open access mapping tools used by unprivileged groups with little financial backing is the validity, control and double-checking of the locations that are added. A large and very helpful mapping tool is the website legal-walls.net. The problem here is its anonymity (i.e. no site notice), lack of control who is mapping (authorization being only an email address), and the lack of double-checks about what kind of area has actually been mapped as a legal spot. I, thus, sometimes found myself in wired situations such as a wall in someone's private backyard or a wall or area having been demolished months earlier. Other initiatives include wallspot.org, openwalls.info, and graffolution.eu. These sites have a higher validity (i.e. contact information, site notice), but they generally list just a few legal walls. Luckily, an archiving initiative was started in Germany by the pioneer of German graffiti research, Axel Thiel. It was formerly held in Kassel; after his death the archive has been based in Berlin. He and his team collected addresses and background information about different legal walls in Germany since the late 1980s. This is possibly the reason that on legal-walls.net, the longest list of legal walls worldwide are those in Germany.
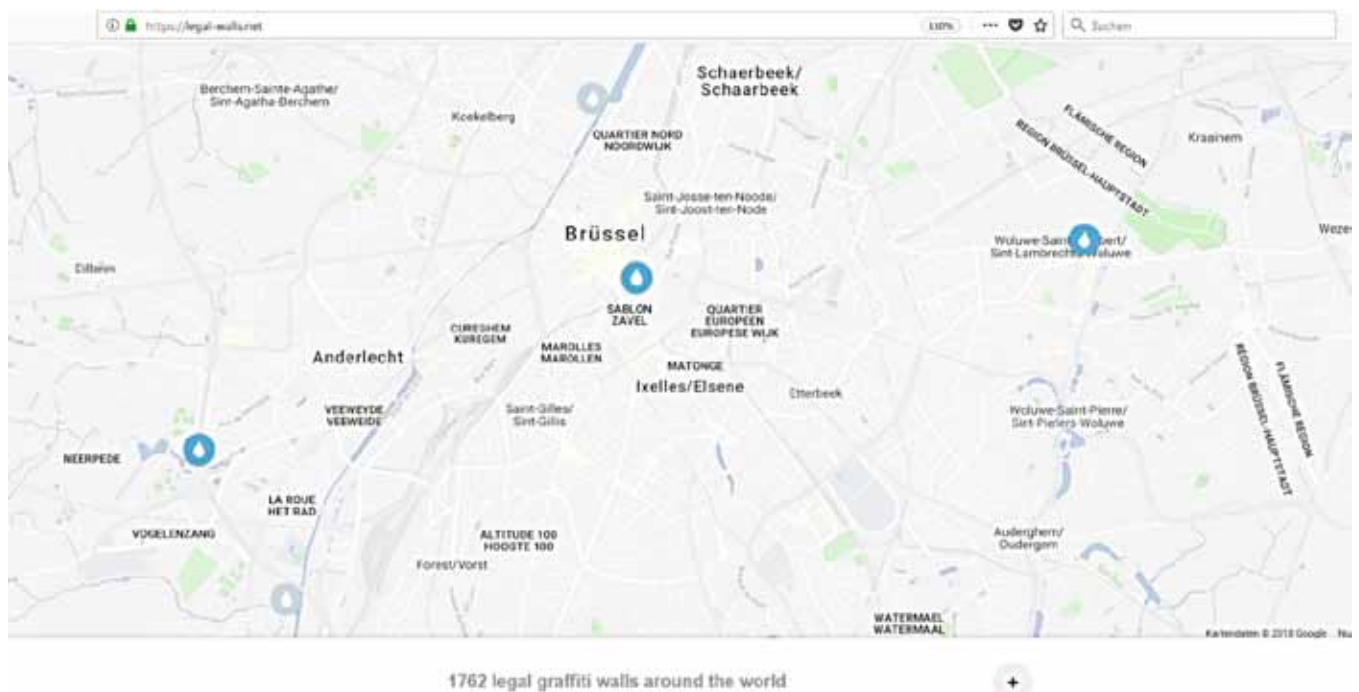

Figure 2 - Screenshot of the VGI on the legal-walls.net homepage. (Modified by Hilmer 2018)

4. Case study: A short discussion of legal walls in Brussels

After the first step of online research, it has been essential to visit individual walls in situ to localize, observe and experience the legal walls in their specific local setting, and to get to know the people who are using them. At an international conference in Lisbon, I described my run with a case study in Brussels, the capital of Belgium. Brussels is a good case study for my run because the city does not have a zero-tolerance policy against graffiti and the municipality provides more than one legal wall for graffiti writing. The legal-walls.net homepage (Figure 2) presents five legal walls in Brussels and its suburbs; these are found in various types of local urban settings. Legal wall number one is almost in the city center of Brussels. Number two is a youth club where permission from the people in charge is needed before one is allowed to use the wall for legal painting. Number three and four are motorway bridges that are further away in the suburbs. And the last spot, number five, is an old abandoned factory that is almost completely demolished; it is not officially legal to paint there but it is not under daily surveillance and "no one really cares."[8] The urban landscape setting for legal walls as found in Brussels is characteristic for the legal walls I have experienced so far.

To illustrate some of their characteristics, I will describe my observations, interpretations and personal reflections in more detail about the centrally located legal wall number one and legal wall number four, on the margin of Brussels. The location of legal wall number one in the center of Brussels is quite unusual since it is directly at a tourist hot spot in Brussels, the Mont des Arts. This urban complex and historic site includes the historic Royal Library of Belgium, the National Archives of Belgium, a big public garden and various museums, including those for musical instruments and fine arts. Consequently, it is a very busy area with a large number of international tourists. But at night, it is also a hangout spot for local youth. The wall is labeled as an "OPEN WALL" and is in a sheltered corner between the Royal Library of Belgium and a protestant church. The legal wall itself is a wooden construction attached to a historic concrete wall. Signs at the wall set the limits of the specific area reserved for graffiti and request users to respect and not to paint the surrounding historic buildings not covered with compressed wood. Such precautions and fastened constructions are characteristic of temporary-use walls. Homeless people use the space between the wooden construction and the concrete wall as a shelter during the night. It is a very small

Figure 3 - Legal wall number one in Brussels, city centre "Mont des Arts". 3.A picture taken 13.04.2018 - 4.26 pm and 3.B picture taken 14.04.2018 - 5.41 pm (Hilmer 2018)

wall with room for approximately five pieces; when I visited the wall, the quality was not particularly high, with pieces that were not demanding, painted in a rush with not much effort. But this does not necessarily mean that the wall is only used by "toys." While painting there, I met ERA67 from Chicago, who started graffiti writing in the late 1980s. We painted little "throw ups" together because we thought they would be crossed very soon anyway. As one can see in the photos in Figure 3, the visual appearance of the wall changed completely within 24 hours. In short, wall number one is shaped by high public visibility and a high turnover of single pieces. The state of the wall on my one-day visit was one of a low-quality work with effortless and low-skilled pieces. The wall has a strict and limited size, both in length and height, with an undeviating wooden construction and no unique architectural structures. Moreover, the atmosphere is not favorable for painting, in part, because you were often interrupted by tourists passing by who did not hesitate to ask you to pose for their photos. The particular placement of legal wall number one in the context of the cultural landscape of the city leaves room for interpretation and opens up further questions. It might be interpreted as a preventive strategy to protect the monuments and historical buildings nearby and to domesticate the "wild" and illegal graffiti of tourists and local youth in a reservation. The strategy of creating legal walls to reduce illegal graffiti writing is controversial (see for example Bloch, 2016). But this particular wall might also be seen as a sign of a progressive movement of commodification, instrumentalization and touristification of graffiti practices, a movement that brands certain locations as genuine spaces for subculture, here creating a unique trendy atmosphere of the Mont des Arts.

In comparison to legal wall number one, wall number four is outside the city of Brussels in the municipality of Anderlecht, about thirty minutes by tram from Brussels' central train station. The spot for doing graffiti legally is under a highway bridge. It is the largest area for legal and sanctioned graffiti writing that I have experienced so far, offering room for more than one hundred pieces. Because of the unique size of the bridge pillars, both in length and height, as well as other architectural features such as large tubes and curved elements, the area provides interesting materiality for wall painting. When I visited the spot, at least ten people were working, either in groups or singly, on wall paintings in progress or beginning new pieces. But the area also has some older graffiti pieces and large (neo-) murals[9] by local and international artists. Some of these were painted in the context of a festival supported by a collective/project called "Urbana."[10] The wall has lower public visibility than the wall in the city center, since people who do not have an interest or prior knowledge of graffiti writing do not generally pass by. The graffitists at the wall combine their painting activities with picnics and barbecues because there is a park nearby as well as green fields between the bridge pillars. Such amenities at legal walls support the gathering of graffitists and create a higher potential for former "non-places,"[11] such as this one under a highway bridge, to be transformed into landmarks, a subculture hotspot for graffiti writing culture in Belgium. From this short comparison of these two legal walls in Brussels and by slightly modifying the different definitions of Halls of Fame presented in Section one, it follows that legal wall number four can be defined as Brussels' Hall of Fame.

Figure 4 - Legal wall number four in Brussels, Anderlecht. (Hilmer 2018)

5. Conclusions: Different categories of Halls of Fame

I have categorized the 27 legal walls I have visited so far based on various observed and experienced factors. These have been inspired by a project of Ferrel and Weide (2010) to spatialize graffiti writing. They have investigated "(…) in deep ethnographic fashion the physical placement of graffiti, providing situated spatial analysis of graffiti's engagement with the urban environment through the categorization of the 'spots' that writers access and select to showcase their work" (Bloch 2016: 444). In addition to the work of Ferrell and Weide, I am mainly concerned about the showcase of legal graffiti writing and the disunity of the definitions in chapter one about Halls of Fame opens up further discussion. In general a Hall of Fame does not have to be an official sanctioned or legalized wall. On my run, I experienced also illegal and semi-legal walls/areas that are used for graffiti writing. Some illegal Halls of Fame were formerly legal, but after a change of ownership or due to the fact that the ownership is unclear, the walls lost their legal status. Some illegal Halls of Fame are found in abandoned infrastructure areas that are not under daily surveillance and where the public is indifferent

and do not confront graffitists ("no one really cares and calls the police"). With the category "legality" in mind, the Halls of Fame have developed different characteristics related to public visibility, quality of pieces, the atmosphere for painting and the durability of individual pieces. Old and/or higher quality pieces are usually found in abandoned buildings or on road bridges at city peripheries. The space for painting in such areas is normally not as limited as in centrally located areas. Moreover, the more central a spot is - locations that are easy to reach and close to tourist attractions - have a higher frequency of pieces that are often of lower quality. However, this is not necessarily so. For some semi-legal walls, one needs permission; sometimes those in charge do not allow certain colors, styles, and/or materials. Some regulations permit painting at a legal wall only at a certain time of the year or day, as for example during festivals or the opening hours of a nearby graffiti shop. For some long-established, privately-owned Halls of Fame, one needs a recommendation, invitation or work sample proving that one does high-skilled painting ("*Just Kingz*") or that one is not part of the "wrong" crew.

Illegal	Illegal	Semi-legal	Semi-legal	Legal
(prosecute by law – criminal property damage - daily surveillance)	(prosecute by law – no daily surveillance - „no one really cares")	(limited period of time, event, opening hours, application)	(regulated and controlled by owner)	(no permission and prior contact necessary)
• mostly former legal walls	• state and privat ownership	• Private organization and state owned territory	• Private ownership	• state owned
• state ownership / process of changed ownership	• Abandoned Buildings or „non-places"	• Festival for HipHop, Graffiti, Streetart …)	• contact details necessary - Name, sample of artwork..	• Some Regulation -> „Unwritten rules of Graffiti"
• no 48hours cleaning policy (zero tolerance)	• Outside of city - „Hidden spots"	• Application or invitation	• Rules in terms of style and material (No chrome, just KINGZ …)	• High(er) visibility (peers, "street art hunters", passersby, public)
• Central in city or near traffic axis -> high visibility	• Low visibility (just peers, urban explorer and "streetart hunters")	• Temporary painting/ use	• High visibility (peers, magazin)	• used by local artists to develop "high quality pieces" and beginners to start
• used by (local) graffitists	• used by local graffitists to develop and present "higher quality pieces"	• Highest visibility (peers, magazine, media…)	• used by national artists to develop "highest quality pieces"	• Low durability of pieces
• low(er) quality pieces - more throw ups		• used by (inter-)national graffitists to present "highest quality pieces"		

Figure 5 - Categorization of Halls of Fame on the basis of the principle of legality (Hilmer 2018)

To conclude, following the definitions presented in Section one, a Hall of Fame can also exist in illegal surroundings. Not every legally sprayable wall gains the status of a Hall of Fame. In addition to the definitions in Section one, my observations have shown that a Hall of Fame needs to have certain material characteristics that are more than just being a legal spot where painting is officially sanctioned. Those reservations of the wild graffiti developed (mostly) out of the graffiti writing culture. Some of those areas rise(d) to a Hall of Fame with an enormous variety and reputation of the artworks of styled letterism. Besides the possibility to paint free and legally, those places function not only as spaces for worshipping and presenting single artworks but also the whole process of creating the wall paintings. The spaces can be seen as battle arenas and as walls of memory of (old-school) graffitists who proved themselves in former battles. Furthermore, Halls of Fame function as meeting points, where you exchange intangible knowledge about local distinctions, certain skills of handling the coloring tools and "(…) just celebrate yourself and the lifestyle of painting walls"[12].

Reflecting this research's ethnographic approach and as advice for practitioners, improvements in the planning and communication process for legally sprayable walls are desirable, both in Germany and worldwide. City planners, members of local municipalities and social workers need to be aware of the socially innovative and integrative potential a legally sprayable area is able to stimulate if it is placed in the urban cultural landscape. The transformation processes of non-places like road bridges through legal graffiti writing have shown that Halls of Fame for graffiti writing, if balanced with a multidimensional approach and planned in a socially innovative and responsible manner, have a high potential for integrated urban development. This also has to do with basic concerns about "how to keep it real" (on this, see McAuliffe/ Iveson 2011; Merrill 2015). But that is a whole other essay and discussion, one that may be presented next year at the conference in Lisbon.

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EndNotes

1 - On the term graffiti-mural, see Bloch 2012, Healey 2016 or Hilmer 2018.

2 - For more about legal graffiti writing, see for example Kramer 2010.

3 - See for example; Kilgannon, C. (2017): 5Pointz Graffiti Artists Whose Works Were Erased Will Get Day in Court. In: New York Times (accessed on 10.08.2018 https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/09/nyregion/5pointz-graffiti-artists-whose-works-were-erased-will-get-day-in-court.html) Or see Howard, G. (2018): Graffiti Gets Paid at 5Pointz. Now What? In: New York Times (accessed on 10.08.2018 https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/20/nyregion/graffiti-artists-5pointz.html)

4 - The sub-title "on the run" commemorates the first graffiti magazine that appeared in Germany (OTR, first published in 1992) as well as to the graffitist ODEM, a pioneer of German graffiti culture, and his "stylism mission." ODEM passed away last year (2017); his book *Odem – On the Run* (1997) is an autobiographical insight into the German graffiti writing culture.

5 - To understand the "unwritten rules" of graffiti, it is helpful to see the statements and results of the online discussion about the exhibition "SPLASH – Rules of Vandalism" by („Germany's most wanted graffiti artists and TOPSPRAYER") MOSES and TAPS: "Amazingly enough, but not surprisingly, the most repeated answer was 'there are no rules'."http://thegrifters.org/moses-and-taps-interview-exclusive-for-the-griters-journal/ (accessed on 31 July 2018).

6 - Undemanding pieces often in silver and black crossing multicolored pieces.

7 - For VGI see Schomacker et al. (2015)

8 - In my discussions with graffitists and other users and visitors of legal walls, the phrase "no one really cares" was often used to describe the public perception of where legally sprayable areas are placed in the context of a city.

9 - For neo-muralism, see the contribution of H. von Busse in this journal or Besser (2010)

10 - See for more http://www.urbana-project.com/

11 - About non-places see Marc Augé (1995)

12 - Comment of a graffitist I met on a legal wall.

No Tags. No Masterpieces.
Graffiti as a catalyst of individual creativity

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Abstract

Graffiti often receives attention as a social problem. Its potentials and positive influence on the individual or the society are often left aside in the public discourse. This article shows how graffiti, as a catalyst of creativity, shapes one's personal career. Graffiti enables a unique combination of motoric and psycho-social abilities, which opens up many perspectives and careers for the so-called writer. The paper aims to show and complete with suggestion the value added through graffiti, especially in the areas of education, participation and urban development, both for the individual and for the whole society.

Keywords: creativity, graffiti, self development, urban development, education, carrier

1. How it all started.
Development of one's own creativity.

It seems quite strange that after the first media appearance of TAKI 183 more than 40 years ago (Charles 1971), graffiti is still a deeply mysterious and ephemeral phenomenon which has been described in several phases, especially in scientific fields and the humanities in the 1980s (Mailer, Naar, Kurlansky 1974; Cave 1976; Baudrillard 1978; Bianchi 1984; Müller 1985; Stahl 1989; Akademie der Künste Berlin 1994) and has attracted the attention of artists such as Keith Haring, Jean M. Basquiat, Harald Naegeli and many more. But due to its supposedly closed and externally attributed illegal character, it has never received the social recognition it deserves as a unique catalyst in the development of creativity.

Since 2001, despite the unstoppable rediscovery of the street as a playground for art, functioning as a place for self-realization, society merely focuses on the finished creative work – the beautiful and intelligible. Until the public realized its mastery, this creative work is usually preceded by a long phase of development. The "where" and "what" are less important as only the finished work has a value and is perceived as creative. But creativity is not the product of a deed; it is the act itself that counts. In the case of graffiti, finding solutions to a problem happens on a very special and unique path. The reduction of the creative act to the end product blocks the view of the actual potentials and abilities (Senf 1994). The foundation for graffiti is already being laid during adolescence via socialization.

Thus, the following questions should be asked: What role does graffiti play in the development of creative skills? Which skills are positively enhanced by graffiti in particular? Which suggestions could improve the position of graffiti in society?

2. The first steps give the momentum.

In most cases, the first contact with graffiti happens during youth, where the grownups test their limits and want to find their own identity (Figure 1). For the most part, the first spraying attempts are made in the group. The mutual incentive and the competition – whether it is for the largest works or the best spots – are important factors in the development of one's own abilities (Hacker 2005). Thereby, trains, facades and roofs, as well as other areas in public space such as traffic signs, billboards or toilets serve as means of communication.

Despite its dangers, the playful act is the fuel of creativity. One of the foundations of graffiti is the play with form, colors and content, which varies depending on the individuality of graffiti *writers*. Playing causes them to fall into a flow
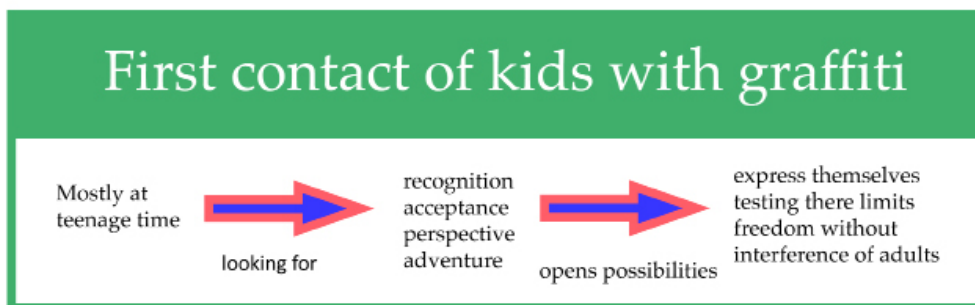
Figure 1: motivation and possibilities of children in graffiti. Illustration by author.

(Cíkszentmihályi 2010). This phenomenon describes a condition, in which the graffiti *writers* get so absorbed in the flow of their action that they forget about their surroundings. They are usually unaware of the variety of skills they appropriate and develop. For them, it is all about making graffiti and doing it the way they imagine it. The flow puts the graffiti *writers* in a state that is neither under- nor over-demanding of their skills (Figure 2). They continually work to extend the limits of and form psychological as well as physical abilities, which build the basis for the expression of creativity and artistic development. Over the years, experienced graffiti *writers* acquire a variety of competencies to tackle the complex challenges that they face. This creates the will to face a problem and to find ways to channel and express one's own creativity, ideas, beliefs and opinions.

In graffiti, obvious cognitive abilities such as abstraction and anticipation are continuously trained, as it involves a complex interplay of various competencies. It is only by combining all the skills listed in *Table* 1 that it is possible to cope with the many graffiti-typical external stressors and dangers, such as the pressure of persecution, internal and external competition, unnatural periods of activity, social exclusion and a social double life. To overcome the stressors and dangers, *graffiti writers* develop some important skills, such as a high level of teamwork or a well-trained analytical observation of their environment and public space.

PSYCHOLOGICAL (Erler, Gerzer-Sass, Nußhart & Sass 2004)	PHYSIOLOGICAL (Meinel & Schnabel 2004)

- Strategic thinking
- Abstract thinking
- Efficiency
- Assertiveness
- Decision-making ability
- Individual responsibility
- Self-reflection
- Flexibility
- Conceptual thinking
- Planning action
- Teamwork
- Anticipation
- Mental resilience
- Stress resistance
	- Conditional skills
	  o Strength
	  o Speed
	  o Endurance
	  o Coordination
	- Coordinative skills
	  o Kinesthetic differentiation ability
	  o Responsiveness
	  o Coupling capability
	  o Orientation capability
	  o Balance ability
	  o Conversion capability
	  o Rhythm ability

Table 1: Overview of skills and abilities trained by Graffiti.

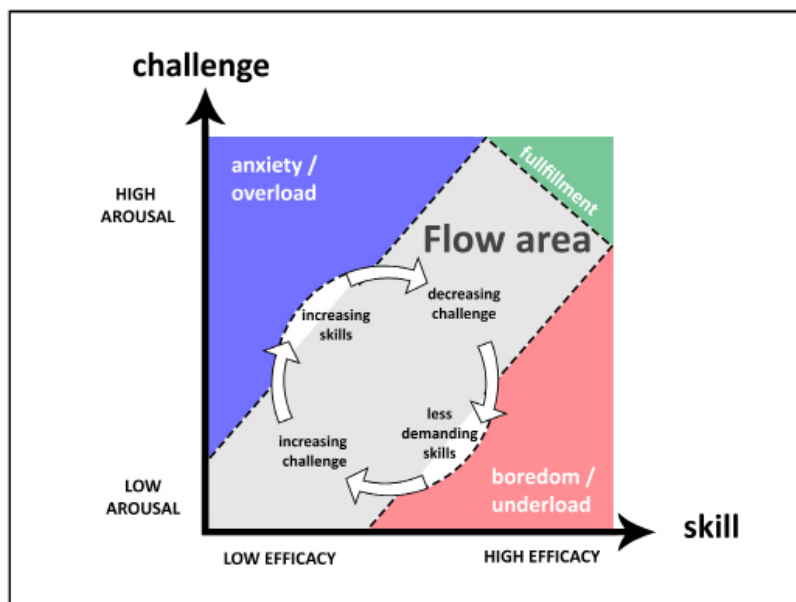The acquisition of skills and competencies is done on the following two levels:

Figure 2: Flow theory by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1985; 1990). Illustration by author.

Of course, this variety of skills and competencies necessary to succeed in graffiti also affects the *graffiti writers* daily lives. This ranges from making a career choice, taking on entrepreneurial actions, to assuming social responsibility. Due to the high degree of transferability of his or her experience, a positive learning transfer of basic skills and competencies enables the graffiti *writer* to access other areas of activity and creation. These skills and competencies can be used in a variety of social areas – be it in the arts or cultural activity, social work, urban development and architecture or in crafts and entrepreneurship. The advancement of these numerous abilities makes graffiti an outstanding catalyst for the development of one's own creativity, which is characterized by its versatility and similar features to other domains (Cíkszentmihályi 2010).

The non-academic character of graffiti is characterized by a low-threshold beyond socio-economic or regional origin. This promotes the uniqueness of each individual, because there is no institutional restriction in graffiti, while this may occur when it comes to striking the path of academic-artistic education.

3. United in diversity. Development of creativity.

How does it all start? How does the creativity evolve from the wish to express oneself?

Everything always starts with small steps. The first tags find their way into the public and show quickly who is serious about graffiti or just trying it out. At the beginning there is the name: a word that may have many sources, but still – with its first strokes and lines – becomes the graffiti *writer's* own possession. The tag becomes a symbol of one's own identity, similar to one's own handwriting. References to one's own identity or background can have as much influence as personal heroes or other role models. In the rarest of cases, the first self-chosen name is used permanently. It is just the ball that gets everything rolling. The tag always remains part of the graffiti *writer*'s identity and is thus gladly remembered. But, just as the taste changes, so does the name over time. This may be due to external as well as internal factors. Often the old name simply does not fit, because the graffiti *writer*'s own interests have evolved or redirected.

The tag is a means of dealing creatively with one's own identity and one's own external presentation, detached from one's own physicality. The freedom experienced in shaping one's own visual language changes the consciousness, increases the self-efficacy and the associated feeling of happiness. It creates a pull that does not let most people go. The tag is a reflection of the self, which remains hidden in everyday life and exists only in graffiti. The way and development of

tagging is influenced by personal impressions, as well as by dealing with the graffiti-specific dynamics and behaviors, such as the competition with other graffiti *writers* and crews, and the permanent readiness to escape.

Most of the time, doing graffiti is not just about the simple enjoyment of form and color, it is a stressful and formative way of getting yourself out in the streets.
Here, the personal imagery usually remains unmistakable. It is possible to change the handwriting or the style of the tag; nonetheless, certain preferences and personal traits persist. Turns, proportions or letters repeat themselves and can easily be recognized by someone with trained eyes. This recognition is based on the idea of one's own aesthetics, which is reinforced by the ongoing exercise of graffiti. Many graffiti writers are reaching the limit of their horizons and are starting to look for new challenges. This process is often started by the adaptation of role models and guides them in further steps to the acquisition of influences and techniques from other arts, cultural fields and social movements.
This increased knowledge does not merely happen via copying, but also by further academic education in creative fields, such as illustration, graphic design or painting. Even influences and techniques of graffiti writers enrich other fields such as political protest, graphic design, art production, advertising or art education.
These visible and obvious connections are only the tip of many other effects, non-visible at first glance, which are characterized by the strengthening of personality and individuality. Mutual learning, teaching and collaboration characterize the foundation of self-confidence. These forms of cooperation could be more integrated into social action spaces, if graffiti were to be freed from its social hiddenness and condemnation.

4. Life goes on. Application and benefits.
It is beyond question that many professional careers have been directly and indirectly paved by graffiti. But, it is precisely the multitude of unintended professional careers that reveal the possibilities of learning transfer and influence on society. Above all, these careers are characterized by a wide range of activities that are not aimed at a professional level in art and design. Graffiti gives each individual the freedom to produce what she or he likes and what lies in his/her range of possibilities. Outstanding, non-artistic

fields of activity are urban development and architecture, subjects with a pedagogical focus that can be found in the arts and cultural studies and social work (Beuthan 2011). Graffiti supports the special sensitization of writers for social and societal problems and challenges the early training of specific coordinative and psychological skills. Especially the eye-hand-coordination, the tactile feeling as well as the abstraction ability could be strengthened. Among other things, these are the basis for designing and transferring sketches to works. In addition, graffiti not only affects the formation of one's own abilities, but on a personal level, the creative activity can be one of the crucial factors in shaping one's life. It is particularly remarkable that graffiti as a creative and private action acts as a valve to process problems, stress and conflicts and thereby creates a mental balance. This enhances yourself, as it broadens your horizon by extending moral borders and dismantling inner prejudices - or at least generates a reaction that signifies an (un)intentional outburst of everyday life.

Therefore, it is necessary to demand and encourage this personal development in order to make use of graffiti as a catalyst for positive change and for dealing with one's own life in a more creative way.
Due to its actors and sympathizers, graffiti succeeds to influence society in a positive way. Firstly because the work of graffiti based artists, cultural entrepreneurs and scholars influence society. Their social background and the variety of experiences enable them to solve challenges and problems with a different approach. They influence other creative fields, and it becomes visible as trends in media, fashion or lifestyle. Furthermore, the creative output of graffiti writers shapes and designs their environment and changes the point of view of local residents. These interventions pose the old question of who really owns the city. To local people their borough looks almost different every day and shows them that there is still enough space to create a place worth living in. Whether tags or masterpieces, every graffiti comments, reflects or criticizes current issues from the local to the global level. Therefore, graffiti can be seen as a mirror reflecting society.

5. So far so good. Potentials and perspectives.
In which areas of society are the greatest potentials of graffiti identified now and in the future?

	kids (beginner)	young adults (amateur)	adults (professional)
motivation	lack of recognition, acceptance, perspective, look for adventure, escape from home	improve skills, hold status, test limits, new challenges, seek for popularity,	expand popularity, increase business, follow there profession, make a difference with art, see new countries
possibilities	express themselves, test limits, freedom without interference of adults, be somebody, be a part of a group, recognition **>> local FAME (in the scene)**	exchange, refine or redirect profession or interests, get respect, distraction from daily life, new challenges, commissions **>> city-comprehensiv FAME**	get stable income, develop personal business, connection to other artist, travel, invent new forms or transform expression **>> positiv public reception**
range / coverage	**local circulation** neighbourhood, borough and hometown	**local - national circulation,** hometown, public transport, other cities or countries	**local - global circulation,** public space, venue, museum, official commission, fairs,
affect	development of basic skills and abilities, arouse personal interest on being creative, increase self-efficacy, respect from others	improve skills, notice of the public, get first commissions, find a profession, have a valve for stress and problems, hobby or parallel life	financial security, influence on society, acceptance and recognition by public, lead role in creative expressions
dropout	chance hometown, get injuried, get caught, get arrested, exclusion by the group, chance of interests **>> become a sympathizer and maybe an direct influencer in another field**	to much risks, have family, injuries, arrest, not enough time, (drug) addictions,death, sick of it, chance of interests or profession **>> become a sympathizer and maybe an direct influencer in another field**	burn out, chance of subject, injuries, death, family, not enough commissions **>> become a direct influencer as an artist**
field of activity	illegal, **because no options for legal practice (hall of fame)**	mostly illegal, **but if avaible legal as commission or hall of fame**	mostly legal, **in exceptions or in case of understatement illegal**

table 2: Example for development in course of the time for a graffiti based artistic career. Illustration by author

Apart from the art and cultural work of which graffiti has already become a part, the possibilities of transfer should be considered more closely. Concerning the challenges for the future (for example, automation of the secondary and tertiary sectors, demographic change), in the field of intergenerational education there are a multitude of application areas: questions regarding one's own actions and the confrontation with one's own identity and with regard to finding one's own role in society through skills and experiences from graffiti. Through the mediation of free, creative action through graffiti, both the commitment to one's own environment and society as well as self-efficacy can be increased considerably. Everyone can become the creator and designer of society. The key is to initiate the development of the uniqueness of each individual through creative action. If this succeeds, it means stability and security against external influences, which are more present than ever nowadays. It lays the foundation for responsibility and maturity that allows for social change and improvement. Thus, it is the closest possible approach to the expanded concept of art of Sozialer Plastik, by Joseph Beuys, which states that art brings about social change, since every human being is a creative being who tries to change society with

his or her actions (Beuys 1977). From creative individuality springs a cultural wealth of perspectives and opportunities for each individual and the society. Only the right conditions have to be created.

Existing structures in education with the purpose of talent and ability promotion should be extended and should involve the offer of graffiti and support more creative activities. For example, at school graffiti could be included through a curriculum extension or art working groups. By promoting and involving honorary and full-time employees, associations and independent educational institutions, the necessary specialist knowledge and positive role models that show the potentials of graffiti can be brought to school. One of the basic ways to promote this is to create more free legal activity space and to observe and integrate existing experiences of graffiti generations.

In urban development and participation, it is especially important to involve the street, which has been a place of exchange and action since modern times. Here, the genesis of graffiti offers unprecedented access and the opportunity to create new forms of participation. This is already illustrated

by isolated projects that use Urban Art to anticipate the challenges of social urban planning in the 21st century (Halle, Treihse, von Busse 2017). The recourse to already existing findings from graffiti practice opens up a wide range of action and planning spaces, which enable productive approaches to the (first) activation of neighborhood residents.

The goal must be to make the inhabitants of the urban space aware of their neighborhoods and, through participatory projects, become partakers and actors in their development, because they know best what the demands of their neighborhood are. Graffiti and even street art can play a special role in this kind of urban development, since they promote freethinking at the initiator level, as well as activation and change at the implementation level. It is very important to break the repression or gentrification described in the double invasive successive cycle (Dangschat 1988). For this purpose, tools of urban development such as environmental protection, public participation centers, district councils must be taken into consideration in advance in order to prevent displacement.

Here and in many other societal challenges, graffiti's creativity and self-efficacy can provide new and unconventional approaches and solutions. The integration of graffiti as a catalyst of creativity, however, succeeds only if the known restrictions (Graffiti Archive 2012) are overcome and adequate balance and activity offers are produced by society. Then, nobody will be able to stop this development. The first tags have been set some time ago, now they only have to be recognized and promoted as the beginning of all masterpieces.

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Documenting graffiti culture: an evolution of content

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1. Introduction

Since its early years, graffiti has been documented with photographs and videos, showing legal and illegal activities in the streets. The most famous photographer of this time will always remain Martha Cooper,[1] who still runs her photographer activities and is invited to the most important events of the graffiti culture in the world. In the mid-seventies, the first digital camera was coming out leading towards a real revolution in filming and photography. Technology has then developed extensively and cameras with higher resolution allowed graffiti writers and audio-visual artists to produce work of higher quality and with new visual perspectives. This progression in time has changed the way of documenting graffiti culture and has expanded its possibilities in terms of visual content, thanks to the democratization of technologies and its improvements.

I have photographed and filmed a few groups of graffiti writers, which gave me insight into this culture. This essay wishes to introduce some thoughts on this subject and open a longer discussion concerning the importance of audio-visual material for graffiti as an ephemeral art form.

2. An evolution in the mediums

Starting from the 1970s, mediums have followed a wide progress. The cameras available in the pioneering years of graffiti were heavy, and quite limited in terms of speed and light. At this time not everyone had a camera, and mostly professionals had access to quality cameras. Developing film also added a price of documenting your daily life with a camera, thus most kids did not have such things in their hands. Martha Cooper, at this time was the one chasing newly painted wall or trains, sharing them with the graffiti writers, immortalizing these historical moments. With the proliferation of digital cameras available at low price points, almost every writer now has a camera of quality. When a group of people is going to paint, several persons generally

1 - American photographer specialized in graffiti

possess a good camera to shoot their final piece, and, even have go-pro to film the entire action. Also, the emergence of cameras integrated in phones make it so much easier to archive an action. The iPhone 7+ has, for example, 12 mega pixels and only weigh 188 grams. This evolution in the access to technology has changed the way of documenting graffiti because each person is now able to document his or her own action. The expert photographer or video maker is no longer crucial to the action, even if his or her presence brings added value to the documentation process. An evolution coming from analogue cameras, then to big pixels reflex, until drones.

3. Practicing graffiti has also changed

Graffiti has become more ephemeral so it is important to document it straight away. This evolution in the access to technologies is thus really essential because graffiti on a train can disappear and never come to light. Photographers are not always available to come along the mission and sometimes it is too late to wait for the next day. It is not like New York in the 1970s, except for some cities like Athens where graffiti works can run for years.

Also, in terms of filming, graffiti crews have been more and more prolific in their self-production. Some members of a crew film, photograph, and edit videos. The presence of edition tutorial on the web also makes learning so much easier and available to the ones who want to learn. Many groups are coming out with movies that are sometimes quite impressive technically and aesthetically.

4. New perspectives

This self-production is really important in the age of social media where images are accorded a crucial place in our world. Instagram is the platform for writers and being able to post regularly is a good way to show that you are active on the scene. They are then able to promote their crew and increase their reputation on social media and the web.

More than that, in the last few years, videos of renowned crews and videographers have shown new perspectives of

filming graffiti in action. KCBR[2] were the first crew to use a drone to produce a video of a train action. This type of filming gives the opportunity to see the scene from another angle. Selina Miles,[3] in collaboration with "One up crew," goes even further with a one-shot filming[4] drone going from a roll down painting to a metro action passing by several artists painting a wall

. Selina documents eight different actions in various locations but close enough to film it in a one-shot drone filming. Graffiti writers and filmmakers are able to let their imagination go with this new possibility. The drone's cameras can go to diverse places in a few minutes and increase the capacity of the filmmaker to approach space and time differently.

A go-pro camera is also a tool regularly used by many writers. A go-pro generally costs less than a drone, and the accessories made for this kind of camera are really handy for the use of graffiti writers. They can record without thinking too much about their camera as you just need to press a button one time to begin the documentation process.

Good Guy Boris, a renowned graffiti writer that is beyond the Grifters, has used the drone to film himself painting[5] pieces in Greece. It expands the capacity of filming yourself that was only possible thanks to the go pro. The drone can shoot a wider spot and it is possible to leave it on autopilot, which gives a more professional look to graffiti videos. Before and still now (because drones are still a bit expensive), writers were leaving their iPhone or small camera behind them to film the broader scene.

Indeed, iPhone is also a new tool for graffiti writers since this decade. Their high-quality photo and video make it possible to produce high-quality visual records. And recently, Instagram has permitted the graffiti scene to go "live" while painting walls and trains.

5. Conclusion

Documenting graffiti has changed as the technology has improved throughout the last few decades. There are great videos on graffiti from the beginning of this trend, and the content is better nowadays and has changed significantly to explore new paths. Graffiti writers now have greater access to technologies that facilitate documenting their own

actions, which increases the number of documents that record graffiti culture.

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2. **1up,** *Graffiti Olympics - Drone Video Athens,* **2018** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyjZ-zHzXN0

3. **Montana Cans & Happy Socks:** "*Wear Under Pressure*", *2018* **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_RmjB6bZ68**

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2 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lVf-4dRx2Ds

3 - Australian filmmaker specialised in graffiti and street art culture

4 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HyjZ-zHzXN0

5 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_RmjB6bZ68

Image *versus* writing:
from post-graffiti and murals' assault to graffiti's scriptural riposte in Madrid, Spain

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Abstract

The 2010s have witnessed the rise of a new aspect of street art on the world stage: institutionalized murals. Downtown Madrid is no exception, though the mural scene there remains less developed than in some other European cities like Saragossa or Paris. Forsaking its graffiti forbear's emphasis on writing, this new trend embraces instead the power of imagery. Meanwhile in the walls of central Madrid, the writers are showing a new resilience with a variety of strategies that will ensure that the written word survives the ascent of the image in street art. This leads to a plastic discord juxtaposed—graffiti and mural, illicit and sanctioned, word and image—in an urban art scene in constant flux.

Keywords : Street Art, Resistance, Writing-Image, Graffiti, Murals, Combat

1. Introduction

In *La conversación mural, ensayo para una lectura del graffiti*[1], Joan Garí stresses that the European school of street art tends to favor a verbal component—words and phrases—in contrast to the American model. It seems, however, that it may be time to revise this statement made in 1995, long before the advent of sponsored murals. The current state of affairs represents the culmination of a long, slow progression in street art towards an ever-greater emphasis on imagery, as evidenced in the city of Madrid by the rise of the icon since the late '90s, as well as the poster, the drawing, and the mural.

In the last decade, Madrid has welcomed an array of new sponsored initiatives such as fairs and festivals which have helped to expand the influence of the urban art paintings, nibbling away at the place of the graffiti. Graffiti writers must then develop tactics to minimize the visibility of those images and interfere with their original message in a relentless artistic conflict that amounts to no less than a battle for survival in the streets.

2. «In the beginning was the word...»

The genealogy of street art shows that the tag, a kind of signature inked again and again on urban surfaces, is at the origins of this artform. Tagging might be considered an embryonic form of graffiti[2], in use since the birth of this

phenomenon in the 1970s in the United States. At the end of the '80s, Madrid began to be overrun by tags. First appeared the "autóctono" (native) graffiti, also called "Flechero" graffiti, urged by the artist Muelle. Gradually, the signature became thicker and bigger to achieve more visibility and complexity. Then, in the 90's, Hip Hop related graffiti, inherited from the United States came to Madrid, dividing the writers into two groups: the "autóctonos" and the "Bboys." In both the Spanish and American practice, the alphabetical code is the founding principle of contemporary street art.

Moreover, the name of the artist is often surrounded by what might be called the "paratexti"[3] of graffiti: an ensemble of micronarratives that enrich the signature by calling out another artist, his/her "crew," the year the work was made, sometimes even a meta-commentary on the outcome of the work itself (See Figure 1). These layers of expression begin to grow in complexity as the work is erased, struck out, or scribbled over by passers-by or other artists. The wall then becomes a true dialogical medium in which writing calls for more writing and a complex message is held in a single, condensed signifier.

3. However is graffiti purely writing?

Image and writing are often found in opposition: the image is foremost a signifier of plastic meaning, while writing is the signified, a meaning expressed in alphabetic form. A word

Figure 1 - ECY, Madrid, Spain (December 2017)

Figure 2 - Eltono, Nuria Mora, Madrid, Spain (February 2017)

Figure 3 - Eltono, 2015, Calle Espoz y Mina, Madrid, Spain (February 2017)
and Figure 4 Los Reyes del Mambo, 2017, Madrid, Spain (October 2017)

tells a tale and an image shows the tale. This idea is still problematic in street art, despite attempts to draw graffiti and the mural farther apart.

Graffiti can thus seem as any other kind of writing. The reality is of course more complex, as the word's etymological tie to the Greek γράφειν (*gráphein*) reminds us: the term consists of several semes, including "draw" and "write." Graffiti is a signature in graphic form, an exploration borne of the interplay of style, colors, outlines, and so on. Graffiti lets itself be seen before being read, appealing to the plastic materiality of writing and threatening our Western, logocentric conceptions. In order to read and utter it, the passer-by must understand the language of graffiti, which blends alphabetic and iconographic awareness.

The mural, descendant of graffiti, has exaggerated the visual nature of the original signature, even more than post-graffiti in Madrid in the 2000s. The two artforms could be likened to two members of the same family, born in two different generations, now waging a merciless war on the walls of Madrid.

4. The rise of the image in the street art of Madrid

From the 2000s onward, Madrid has witnessed an evolution in graffiti towards practices which distanced themselves from the signature, widespread in the city as unpopular. As with Keith Haring and Gérard Zlotykamien before, some writers have developed new tactics in Madrid in order to stand out in the alphabetic thronging of the "linguistic ghetto"[4] formed by traditional graffiti. The artist Eltono gave up writing in 1999 in favor of an icon that echoes his signature, the tuning fork: "I realized that my work was suddenly much more noticeable."[5] This figurative motif has grown in abstraction and has been fed by and mingled with Nuria Mora's key-symbol (see Figure 2).

The streets of Madrid between 2000 and 2010 thus became a truly dynamic laboratory in which artists like Suso33, Nano4814, Remed, and others blended tagging, graffiti, and post-graffiti with iconic, narrative, and abstract features. Since 2010, graffiti has been in Madrid as in the rest of the world as the age of the mural, a logical transformation of iconographic graffiti wherein the painted image has grown in size and visibility. Three murals by Sam3 (*Viento, Hoja* and *Siesta*) and one by the Italian artist Blu appeared in 2010 on the Manzanares river banks.

Downtown Madrid remains, nonetheless, relatively

untouched by the incursion of the mural, in spite of its many festivals and fairs that celebrate street art and imagery: *Persianas Libres* from 2010 (renamed *Pinta Malasaña* from 2016), *C.A.L.L.E* since 2013, and the contemporary art fair *Urvanity* in 2017. Among other examples are Eltono's 2015 mural shown in Figure 3, one by Los Reyes del Mambo in 2017 shown in Figure 4, another made by Sabek, Koctel and YesJM the same year and four new paintings made in February 2018.

The annual festivals have given rise to a sea of paintings on storefronts in the neighborhoods of Lavapiés and Malasaña,[6] a source of tension with graffiti writers. While there are obvious territorial implications, likewise, at play is the essence of street art itself. Festival paintings are measured against a set of aesthetic criteria and selected by a jury where those judged most pleasing are awarded prizes. Despite their massive expansion throughout the urban landscape, their reasonable size (the artists use ladders or trash cans, not cranes) leaves room for a graphical jousting between graffitists and street painters.

Figure 5   GUOS, La Latina, Madrid, Spain   (May 2017) "Graffiti = dirt and destruction. Find beauty in museums. Guos"

Figure 6 Moneyless, 2017. C.A.L.L.E Lavapiés, Plaza de Arturo Barea, Madrid, Spain
(September 2017- December 2017)

Figure 7 Virginia Montesinos, 2017. Pinta Malasaña, Malasaña, Madrid, Spain, May 2017

5. Graffiti's scriptural riposte

Compared to the image, writing is guilty in the eyes of the law and civil society: outside of an advertising context, it is usually relegated to the margins of the city—bathrooms, schoolrooms, vacant lots. It has become even more so reprehensible since the coming of the age of the mural due to the mural's claim to municipal beautification, graffiti answers with a damning of traditional aesthetics (see Figure 5).

This new order, bound to an art in continual renewal, feeds the tensions that exist between the various grades of urban art. Graffiti is responding in the face of the onslaught of the image in Madrid's territory, and it refuses to yield its place (see Figures 6, 7, and 8).

In this war of walls, first-generation (tag-graffiti) and the new generation (post-graffiti) stand opposed. Graffiti tries to cover the paintings, in order to suffocate the new generation and to take revenge on the image.

Like in an advertisement, the text appears below the image. Its goal here is different, however, since it seeks to interfere with our perception of the painting and send a dissonant message. Owing to its size, a painting would seem to have the upper hand in the public space, but with this change, it is the writers who have the last word, until their graffiti is covered over by the city authorities or by another painting. The image, in fact, feels no need to fight for its life, and indeed it is invited every year to cover up the "scribbling" of graffiti.

Figure 8 Manolo Mesa, 2017, Urvanity. Campo de la Cebada, Madrid, Spain
NAOR, 2018   (February 2017-October 2017-March 2018)

Figure 9 Hyuro, 2016. *Reciprocidad*, Madrid Street Art Project por la igualdad mujeres-hombres, Calle
Embajadores, Madrid, Spain SEARZ, 2018 (February 2017, March 2017, March 2018)

Figure 10 RUSO, 2017, La Latina, Madrid, Spain   May 2017- December 2017

6. Conclusion

As bellwethers of the ebb and flow of the street art scene, walls become meeting places, centers of tension and of territorial reappropriation among the different schools of urban art.

This tension is quite young compared to a more timeless struggle: the turf wars waged by writ against writ, between tagger and graffitist. Since a signature functions as a person's alter ego[7], to attack (scratch out, cover over, plagiarize) a tag or a work of graffiti is to strike at that person's very self. The twin urban discords between writing and image and writing and writing are well illustrated by the artist RUSO (see Figure 10).

In the first photograph, the pseudonym covers over the mural with a symbolic message "Fuck Art," while in the second graffiti overlays the tags that had invaded it, turning the first assertion into "Fuck Toys."

In any case, this generational conflict, a child of changing times, might be seen like a lake of respect and tolerance, a harmful reaction from the writers. On the contrary it can be seen as a natural and healthy process to restore balance between illegal and institutionalized work, between a non-conformist attitude and an art in accordance with the general taste, between «destruction» (to use Guos' term) and creation, between writing and image in the urban space.

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2. See Abarca, J., 2010, who develops this idea in *El postgraffiti, su escenario y sus raíces: graffiti, punk, skate y Contrapublicidad*, PhD Thesis, Complutense University, Madrid, E.

3. «Paratext» is a concept developed by the literary theorist Genette, G. 1982. *Palimpsestes. La littérature au second degré*, Le Seuil, coll. «Poétique», Paris, F.

4. Baudrillard, J., 1976. «Kool Killer ou l'insurrection des signes», in *L'échange symbolique et la mort*, Gallimard, Paris, F. The idea of "linguistic ghetto" was developed by Baudrillard in reference to the alphabetical density created by graffiti.

5. Eltono, 2012. *Line and Surface*, Stickit, Utrecht, NL, p. 8.

6. To be convinced of this, one only must take a quick glance of the past Pinta Malasaña and CALLE editions: http://pintamalasana.com/ and http://xn--lavapis-gya.com/CALLE/

7. In 2011, in an interview with Fernando Figueroa, Luis Cabrera and Felipe Gálvez, the writer CHETE says: «[...] yo mi firma veo que era un poco proyección de mi mismo» that is to say «I believe my signature was a little bit like a self-projection», http://www.spanishgraffiare.com/entrevista_a_chete.html.

Direzioni Coraggiose - Brave Paths

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The graphic work at the railway station of Villa Claudia (Fig.1a, 1b, before the work and 1c, 1d after been re-painted) in the municipality of Anzio (Rome), was made in February 2007, with the approval of RFI (Rete Ferroviaria Italiana). With a great sense of responsibility the writer undertook this project in a place that is part of the hinterland of Rome, where he lived for many years and where he saw its continuous human and environmental degradation. Local institutions, rather than enhancing the territory by exploiting the enormous potential of its heritage (historical & environmental), have focused on an economy based on the speculative overbuilding, facilitated by the indifference and acceptance of the citizens. A parallel social context has been created, in which the illegality is justified and the concept of "public goods" ignored, with the consequent increase of baby-gangs, gambling addiction, drug dealing and of garbage that "embellish" roads and beaches (Fig. 2).

Street art can have a great global impact in close relationship with the place itself and the population that lives it (Borriello et. al 2010); "Orma/Zampetta" (see appendix for a brief biography) believes in fact that is essential to put up ideas on public buildings that are lived by people. He often associates the drawing with a sentence in order to strengthen the critical function and, at the same time, calling into question the involuntary spectator. The phrase from which he started "SAREBBE L'ORA DI PRENDERE DIREZIONI CORAGGIOSE" (IT IS ABOUT TIME TO TAKE BRAVE PATHS) (Fig. 3) correlate a series of characters struggling with a daily

life that imposes rhythms marked by a consumerist vision and intends to invite the public to change their attitude (Fig. 4a, 4b). The station itself is synonymous of change, by getting on the train we also undertake a change, a journey to the new and the removal from the safety of the family environment. The tracks indicate a precise and predefined direction from which it is dangerous to derail. To "take brave directions" means making a different choice from the one imposed by the rails, always parallel, always equidistant. To break the monotony of the tracks would mean to defeating the prejudices (preconceptions), to break down the distances towards the neighborhoods, to break the alienating rhythm to which we are subordinated every day.

Two main objectives were considered to communicate a personal vision on the walls of the station, which is a secondary stop of a trainline that every day sees thousands of people struggling with their work-study schedules:

Firstly, the possibility of re-appropriation of a public space presenting it as a comic work (Fig. 5a, 5b) and thus subtracting it from advertising signs and the visual bombardment of various brands present on the territory (Fig. 6).

Secondly, since the station is a public asset it was necessary to focus the attention of passers-passengers on a theme of common interest. A message of change needed to be spoken aloud, in a territory where a very conservative mentality dominates and also to make the spectators to reflect, hoping to awaken a critical conscience.

In order to renew the subversive gesture of the first writers (such as Zephyr, Lee, Taki 109, Dondi) it is crucial to develop the one's practice within a constructive discourse of the common (Pani et al., 2008). Sometimes it becomes essential to intervene, to redevelop and to implement decorating paths in places where the old modules have evidently failed. Since street art has been legally recognized, the artist-spectator relationship has become more intimate; direct, free from filters and rules imposed by society and the dominant cultures (Galal, 2009), also this can represented a great change.

Appendix

Costantino Casella in art Orma/Zampetta, was born in Rome in 1969 and from the age of 13 he began to use sprays to write slogans praising his football faith and later on political phrases. In the mid-90s he approached the world of graffiti by refining the technique and beginning to enrich the messages with comics-caricatural style drawings and to sign the his "pieces" with a paw (Fig. 7a, 7b), which then become the tag that identifies him. Assuming the pseudonym given to him of "zampetta" he participates in jam and writing convention throughout Italy, leaving its mark also in Barcelona, Madrid, Lyon, Crete and Istanbul. In 2007, together with other artists, he founded the cultural association Participastazione becoming a creator of urban works, collaborating with local national Italian institutions and creating writing workshops for young people (Fig. 8a, 8b, 8c).

Here one can find some of his work: http://www.lasciailsegno. it/index.php?it/225/orma-zampetta

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Graffiti on trains, photography and *Subterráneos*

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When contemporary graffiti first emerged in the New York of the 1970s, the game was about making your name travel around the city by painting it on the sides of subway cars, a particularly visible surface. Original graffiti writers did not need to photograph their works: contact with their audience was direct, and painted cars could circulate for months or even years before the graffiti was removed. In the eighties, many European adolescents, myself among them, began to reproduce this practice, but in our cities, painted cars were rarely allowed to go into circulation.

Unlike the original writers, we did not paint trains to make our names visible. In most cases we knew that the trains would only be seen by the workers who cleaned them. We painted the trains mostly because of tradition, to reproduce a phenomenon that fascinated us. Thus, to prove our accomplishments, we needed to document the pieces after completing them. For European graffiti writers, photography was, from the very beginning, the main medium.

One of the consequences of the use of photography was the possibility of expanding the audience. Images were exchanged by mail and printed in fanzines, and for the most ambitious writers, competition would soon take on an international scale. This made travel increasingly common, until it became a cornerstone of the culture. Train writers today don't necessarily focus on their own cities, their main goal is often to paint the transit systems of different cities, and the more the better.

While in some cities painted trains are regularly put into circulation, most transit systems remove the paintings before they are seen by the public. Therefore, the result of a writer's work is still a trophy in the form of a photograph, carefully collected in his personal album. Some hoard the

images vigilantly and show them only to people they trust, others are quick to send them to specialised media outlets and upload them to social networks.

In the last thirty years the phenomenon has grown incessantly, and the competition for recognition is increasingly hard. As this competition takes place through documentation, photographic and video techniques have become more and more sophisticated. Today, the most visible writers and crews are those who best document their work in photography, and particularly in video. In today's forays it is not uncommon for one party member to be there for the sole sake of recording the action.

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As fans of urban exploration know well, one of the attractions of infiltrating infrastructures is that explorers get to visit extremely photogenic environments. So much that many haul along heavy and expensive photographic equipment on their expeditions. Following a similar impulse, in the middle of the last decade, some train writers turned photographers by necessity started to focus on the infiltration processes, the peculiar spaces where the forays take place and the tense atmospheres they create. In 2006 the Italian Alex Fakso published his book Heavy Metal, the founding volume of a form of photography which has come to be known as graffiti action photography.

Ten years later, the number of photographers who, inspired by Fakso, have dropped the aerosol to grab a camera instead, is in the dozens, and graffiti action photography has become an established genre. Enrique Escandell, who has spent fifteen years of deep involvement at the forefront of the scene – he appears in a picture taken by Fakso in the

Barcelona subway in 2007 –, is one of those photographers. But his recently published book *Subterráneos* goes beyond the clichés of the genre. It is not only a work of action photography of exceptional quality, it is also a fully fledged artistic project which combines different approaches to portray the experience of train graffiti with rare narrative intensity.

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The culture of graffiti has a hierarchy of surfaces that places a much higher value on trains than it does on walls, by tradition and mainly because painting trains is more difficult. Subway cars in particular are the most prized targets, and the writers who specialise in this kind of trains are the most respected subgroup. This is because infiltrating the hangars and tunnels of the subway is much more demanding and risky than working on other kinds of trains, which tend to circulate above-ground and to sleep in open, even rural environments.

For the most part, action photographers document graffiti on overground trains. In *Subterráneos* however, Escandell shows five years of work across Europe dedicated solely to subway systems and to the elite class of writers who explore them. This implies a notable level of dedication and effort, but most importantly it allows his photographs to portray environments and processes of infiltration more interesting and with a greater visual and narrative potential.

The adjective "atmospheric" is often used to describe graffiti action photography. It is usual in this genre to portray the atmosphere of the incursions, and blurry moving figures abound. In contrast to this, Escandell's pictures are conspicuously sharp. This approach makes it possible to go beyond the atmospheric and into the more difficult and rich field of the narrative. In his best shots Escandell succeeds in identifying and capturing inflection points in the action which convey the intrigue and tension of a whole story.

But what most clearly makes *Subterráneos* stand out is that it is not simply a series of graffiti action photography. Escandell's ability to identify images that condense a story goes beyond the limits of that genre. *Subterráneos* includes two series that feature two unprecedented perspectives in the photographic exploration of train writing. Two rare cases of very simple and abstract imagery full of narrative content.

One of these series features close-ups of the grids that close off the vents connecting the street and the subway tunnels. After writers force their way through them using angle grinders, transit companies weld them closed again. This process is repeated indefinitely, and grids get scarred with violent patchworks of molten metal in which stories are superimposed.

The second series is made up of cryptic black images sprinkled with tiny colored dots. These are scans of jackets worn by writers in subway tunnels. In these closed spaces aerosol paint floats in the air and gradually descends, landing on the writers' clothing like a shower of particles. In each constellation captured by Escandell there is an accumulation of forays into multiple tunnels in different parts of the world.

The last component of *Subterráneos* are the photocopied images that appear facing the action shots. These are photographs taken by the police and the transit companies to be used as incriminating documents in trials against writers. As a native to the post-photographic era, Escandell naturally combines his own work with these appropriated images, letting the viewer empathise also with the police and security guards, the opposite team that makes the game possible. Again, these are strong photographs, formally as well as in their ability to evoke the intensity of the experience, and they effectively complement the narrative that unfolds in *Subterráneos*.

SAUC

After Urban Creativity Lisbon activities (5,6 and 7 of July 2018) here is presented the 4th Volume of SAUC Journal, reaching other audiences and building an ongoing trajectory of recognition aimed to the highest standards, not only academic and or institutional, but above all production and practice-oriented.

The 2018 activities thematic "about time" aimed the objective of problematizing the chronological constraints of street art, graffiti, and urban creativity in general. Reinforcing the idea of the atemporal, potentially interpreted as something indissociable of human nature, linking 30000 old archeological findings with today.

This issue 1, "Changing times: Tactics" gathers contributes about the Displacement of the Street Art Aesthetic (OSGEMEOS in the white cube), looking at a City-wide Art Gallery or The Pixed City the Body-Landscape, Aesthetics of Change with Multiculturalism. Also Sustainable Graffiti Management Solutions for Public Areas and street art and Copyright hard areas of approach. And more soft approaches (based on human sciences) on and Against Street Signs: On Art Made out of Street Signs, Work and play, in Line or within Graffiti-Writing traditions and Street Art innovations. Visioning with the posturban paradigm and where street art and graffiti are not (going to be), the evolution of Halls of Fame, and as a statement: No Tags. No Masterpieces, but also the duality of Image versus writing: from post-graffiti and murals' assault to graffiti's scriptural riposte. Also Graffiti as a catalyst of individual creativity and more broad contents about Documenting graffiti culture. All brave Paths also documenting Graffiti on trains, photography and Subterráneos.

With contributions from Germany, Iran, Brazil, Australia, UK, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Austria, Portugal, and France.

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