

Nuart produces both temporary and long-term public artworks as well as facilitates dialogue and action between a global network of artists, academics, journalists and policy makers surrounding street art practice. Our core goal is to help redefine how we experience both contemporary and public art practice: to bring art out of museums, galleries and public institutions onto the city streets and to use emerging technologies to activate a sense of public agency in the shaping of our cities. Outside of Nuart Festival, our growing portfolio of projects represents an on-going art and education program that seeks to improve the conditions for, and skills to produce, new forms of public art both in Stavanger and further afield. For us, public spaces outside conventional arts venues offer one of the richest, most diverse and rewarding contexts in which this can happen. Our work is guided by our belief in the capacity for the arts to positively change, enhance and inform the way we think about and interact with each other and the city. → p. 6

This year's Nuart Festival is dedicated to exploring 'power' in the public sphere: who has it, how do they wield it, what are the conduits to it and the mechanisms that control it? Is it distributed fairly and what happens when you challenge it? As well as producing physical artworks both indoors and out, artists, academics, media and industry experts will come together to explore these topics in a series of keynote speeches, presentations, panel debates, film screenings and workshops in the days leading up to the Nuart exhibition.



Nuart Festival 2017 Street Art Tours

**Leaving from Tou Scene
this tour focuses on the new
artworks created during
this year's Nuart Festival.**

**Departing every Sunday at 14:00
from Tou Scene Ølhallene
(Beer Halls) until 15th October.**

**Our first and last tours departing
3 September* and 15 October will be in English.
All other tours will be given in Norwegian.**

Tickets: 100kr

Children under 11: free

* Tour departing on 3 September will be FREE,
as part of the Nuart Festival program

Stavanger Sentrum Street Art Tours

**Takes you through 16 years
of Nuart Festival's impressive
Street Art history and the evolution
of Stavanger into one of the world's
leading destinations for Street Art.**

**Departing every Saturday at 13:00
from Region Stavanger Tourist Office,
Strandkaaien 61, 4005 Stavanger.**

Adults: 150kr

Student / Senior: 100kr

Children under 11: free

Family (2 adults and 2 students/seniors): 400kr

**For more information visit
streetarttours.no**

**Tickets available from
nuartfestival.ticketco.no**

EXHIBITION – 'RISE UP!'

3 sept–15 oct 2017

Opening hours:

wed–fri 12:00–17:00

sat–sun 11:00–16:00

Tou Scene

Opening: 2 sept at 19:00

Adult: 80kr

Student/Senior: 50kr

Children under 11: free

Tickets: nuartfestival.ticketco.no

Festival Programme

DAY 1 – THURSDAY 31 AUGUST

15:15–16:00 Artist Presentation

by Vermibus (de)

→ Kunstskolen i Rogaland, Birkelands gate 2

Join Berlin-based ad-buster and artist Vermibus for a multimedia presentation about his unique brand of anti-advertising activism.

Vermibus regularly collects advertising posters from the streets, using them in his studio as the base material for his work. Here he transforms the advertisements using solvents to disfigure the faces and flesh of models and brand logos. Once the transformation is complete, he then reintroduces the adverts back into their original context, hijacking their visibility and ubiquity in order to present his own subversive, anti-consumerist messages.

19:00 Hand Luggage Only

→ Nuart Gallery, Salvågergata 10

An exhibition of small works by this year's Nuart Festival artists. This year's participating artists have been challenged to produce work that will travel in their hand luggage: work that will be questioned, scanned, interrogated, quarantined, stripped, bullied, fingerprinted, and ultimately...we hope, released for the show, where it will join contributions from local artists operating outside of the traditional art world.

21:00 Fight Club: *Revolution or Evolution*

→ KÅKÅ, Valberget 3

Death to Art!, Burn down the Institution, Abolish Bureaucracies, Smash the System, Reclaim the Streets.

The paradoxical ascent of a socially engaged contemporary art in a morally bankrupt artworld, not only complicit with neoliberal ideology, but exemplifying it, has left us

wondering, can the artworld evolve to serve the people, or have we reached an end game, a final neoliberal plateau of mundane middle-class biennale banality destined to repeat itself ad infinitum with little to no impact on either art or life.

Can the current global monoculture of homogenised institutional contemporary art be brought back into everyday life, become life?

Should Critical Street Art, Activist Art & Progressive Graffiti Artists engage with the neoliberal hierarchies that permeate and dominate the contemporary artworld in a vainglorious attempt to "evolve" the system, or should we simply light it up and move on!

More Red Wine, or Molotov Cocktails, you the audience decide

Team leaders Evan Pricco (Managing Editor of Juxtapoz Magazine) and Carlo McCormick (pop culture critic and independent curator) go head-to-head to argue these points and more in the latest installment of Nuart's legendary Fight Club.

Refereed by Doug Gillen
(Founder & Director, Fifth Wall TV)

DAY 2 – FRIDAY 1 SEPTEMBER

11:00–11:40 Jan Zahl (NO)

in conversation with Ian Strange (AU)

→ Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

Artist Ian Strange discusses his career and work to date with Jan Zahl, Arts Editor at Stavanger Aftenblad newspaper. The talk will begin with a six-minute screening taken from the recently commissioned series of shorts entitled 'Home: The Art of Ian Strange' by Australia's ABCTV.

As part of his participation in Nuart Festival, Ian Strange is the latest artist to contribute

to The Aftenblad Wall – an on-going public art project that sees invited artists create work on a large-scale billboard in the heart of Stavanger. By mimicking the scale and visibility of advertising, the project aims to raise awareness about who has the power and authority to communicate messages and create meaning in our urban spaces.

The Aftenblad Wall is located at Ryfylkgata 22 in Storhaug in Stavanger east—a short walk from Tou Scene.

12.00–15.30 Seminar Day 1: REVOLUTION
→ Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

From the Berlin wall to the Palestine wall and Syria, unsanctioned art has often been used to give voice to the voiceless – providing an outlet for expression that is suppressed by regimes and dictators in all its other forms. What parallels are there between these historical acts of resistance and the wider street art movement, which today operates within an increasingly privatized and controlled public space? What can we learn from studying the ethnographic, anthropological and sociological implications of street art practice, and what does this tell us about the power of art to change the world?

12.00–12.15 Welcome and introduction by Pedro Soares Neves (pt)

12.15–13.00 Promises not kept: Art, the art institution and social change
Keynote speech by Mikkel Bolt (de)

If we zoom in and look at the art institution from the inside, from within the framework of its relative autonomy, we can, on the one hand, observe the art institution as a space for political discussion and militant actions that rarely takes place elsewhere, which is also why artists and cultural producers played a leading part in Occupy Wall Street in New York in September 2011 for instance. On the other hand, contemporary art is the window dressing and sale of only apparently critical utterances or forms that in no way challenge the ruling taste, but, on the contrary have become indistinguishable from all the other forms of aesthetic entertainment. Contemporary art is no longer just a research and development unit of advanced capitalism but is part and parcel of an all-encompassing experience economy

on a level with advertising, fashion, music, TV and games.

In this presentation, Mikkel Bolt will attempt to account for this paradox and ask how we can potentially re-work or end it in an era characterized by crisis and the revival of authoritarian nationalism.

13.15–14.15 Revolution, From the Artist's Perspective
Artist presentations by Carrie Reichardt (uk) and Igor Ponosov (ru) followed by a Q&A session with Evan Pricco (us).

14.30–14.50 From Cairo: I Know Why the Caged Birds Sing
Artist presentation by Bahia Shehab (eg)

Six years since the Egyptian uprising the voices that chanted in Tahrir Square have been silenced. The city and its walls do not tolerate anything but the white wash that has covered all the stories. Since 2014, Bahia Shehab has been painting poetry on different walls in different cities around the world. Even if this act is meaningless now, it is a way to leave songs on walls so that maybe change will come one day.

14.50–16.00 Nefertiti's Daughter (Scandinavian Premiere)
Film screening followed by Q&A with Bahia Shehab, hosted by Mikkel Bolt

A story of women, art and revolution, Nefertiti's Daughters (running time: 39mins) documents the critical role that revolutionary street art played – and is continuing to play – in the political uprising of Egypt.

19.00 Saving Banksy
Scandinavian Cinema Premiere
→ SF Kino, Sølvsberggata 2

Tickets: 100NOK/90NOK
Available from: sfkino.no

Saving Banksy is the true story of one misguided art collector's attempt to save a painting by infamous British street artist Banksy from destruction and the auction block. It asks the question, 'What would you do if you woke up one morning and found a million dollar Banksy spray-painted on the side of your building?'

DAY 3 – SATURDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

11-00–11-40 BRAVE: Nuart X Amnesty International present the case of **Human Right's activist Sakris Kupila**
→ Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

Panel debate with Sakris Kupila (fi), Ricky Lee Gordon (za) and Annamaria Gutierrez (cu/no), hosted by Sara MacNeice, Head of Global Campaigns, Amnesty International

Adding his voice to Amnesty International's Brave campaign, Ricky Lee Gordon will create a mural of Sakris Kupila – a human rights defender from Finland who has fought tirelessly for transgender rights in the face of harassment and intimidation – as part of this year's Nuart Festival.

The 'Brave' campaign calls for an end to attacks against those defending human rights, in a context of increasing global hostility against activists. The campaign focuses on people who are taking enormous risks to stand up for our rights through exploring the power of art to push boundaries and stimulate debate.

Joining the panel debate will be Stavanger's Head of Municipal Council for Culture and Sport, Annamaria Gutierrez, who was instrumental in the Venstre (Left) Party's successful attempt to abolish the law which made it obligatory for anyone in Norway to be sterilised when undergoing the legal process of changing their gender.

12-00–15-30 Seminar Day 2: EVOLUTION
→ Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

12-00 Welcome and Introduction
By Pedro Soares Neves, Lisbon
Urban & Street Art Creativity

12-05–12-45 Trash Talk
Presentation by Carlo McCormick (us)

What do rats, Dada, wheat fields, the radical posturing of Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers, pink trash, fallen monuments, public shame and commodified space have in common? Carlo McCormick, legendary pop cultural critic and Nuart fellow takes us on a journey down the rabbit hole of cultural obscurity to shine a light on transgressive public art practice.

13-00–13-45 DIY Culture & New Utopias
Presentations by Adrian Burnham (uk), Pascal Feucher (de) and Addam Yekutieli aka. Know Hope (il)

14-00–14-30 Panel debate: DIY Culture & New Utopias
Discussion led by: Carlo McCormick
Panel: Adrian Burnham, Pascal Feucher and Addam Yekutieli

14:45–16.05 Creating New Cultural Heritage and 'Rights to the City'
Presentations by Laima Nomeikaite (lt), Javier Abarca (es), Emma Arnold (ca) and Susan Hansen (uk)

Challenging the prevailing paradigm demands rights to the city and the resources to give citizens agency – resources currently locked into cultural heritage and public art budgets. This series of presentations will explore how intangible and ephemeral art practice can usurp and supplant the status quo for the benefit of the many, not just the few.

16-05–16-30 Panel debate: Creating New Cultural Heritage and 'Rights to the City'
Discussion led by: Susan Hansen
Panel: Laima Nomeikaite, Javier Abarca and Emma Arnold

12-00–17-00 TRAF0 workshop with Carrie Reichardt (uk)
→ Metropolis, Nytorget 1

British artist and self-titled 'craftivist' Carrie Reichardt hosts a two-day workshop for youths aged 16–22 years old at this year's Nuart Festival in Stavanger, courtesy of TRAF0 youth organisation.

Email priscila@nuartfestival.no to register!

19-00 Nuart Exhibition Opening
Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

In addition to presenting a diverse range of artistic expression within the public sphere, Nuart produces one of the most eagerly anticipated exhibitions of the year in Tou Scene's vast beer halls. Join us for the opening on Saturday 10 September, 19-00!

DAY 4 – SUNDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

14-00 Street Art Tour*
→ meeting point: Tou Scene, Kvitsøygata 25

The first of our weekly Street Art Tours where our Nuart guides discuss the works and the artists behind them as well as some insider and behind the scenes stories. (Approx. 75 minutes)

*Tour given in English

'RISE UP!'

(continued from front page)

The Real Power of Street Art

Nuart festival presents an annual paradigm of hybridity in global sanctioned and unsanctioned street art practice. Through a series of large and human scale public artworks, murals, performances, art tours, workshops, academic debates, education programs, film screenings and urban interventions, supported by a month long exhibition of installations, Nuart explores the convergence points between art, public space and the emergent technologies that are giving voice and agency to a new and more creative civilian identity, an identity that exists somewhere between citizen, artist and activist.

The real power of "street art" is being played out daily on walls, buildings, ad shelters and city squares the world over, and it's now obvious that state institutions can neither contain nor adequately represent the fluidity of this transgressive new movement. As the rest of the world begins to accept the multiplicity of new public art genres, it is becoming more apparent, that street art resists both classification and containment. The question is, not how can this inherently public art movement be modified or replicated to fit within the confines of a civic institutional or gallery model, but how can the current model for contemporary art museums, galleries and formulaic public art programs, be re-examined to conform with the energy of this revolutionary new movement in visual art practice.

In the 1990's, Situationist concepts developed by philosopher Guy Debord, surrounding the nature of "The City", "Play" and the "Spectacle", alongside sociologist Henri Lefebvre's theories exploring the rights to shape our own public and mental space, came together to form an emergent adusting "artivism", which now forms the foundation of street art practice. Radical cultural geographer David Harvey has stated, "*The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources, it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city*".

It is here, at the intersection between philosophy, geography, architecture, sociology, politics and urbanism, that Nuart situates itself, it exists as a critique of the colonization of everyday life by commodity and consumerism, whilst recognizing that one of the only radical responses left, is to jettison the hegemonic, discursive and gated institutional response to capitalism, and engage it directly where it breeds and infects the most, in our urban centers.

The challenge for a new and relevant public art isn't to attempt to negate capitalisms neoliberal market logics with an ever more dominant liberal discourse, both are ultimately mired in a conflict that on the surface simply serves to feed the polarization and spectacle that we're attempting to transcend. What we need is the active participation of citizens in the creation of their own holistically imagined environments, both physical and mental, a direct and collective response to *space* that leads to the shaping of *place*. A place in which the disengaged and passive citizens desired and ever more manipulated by market forces, are inspired to re-make themselves. Nuart proposes that the production of art in public spaces outside conventional arts venues offers the community, not only the most practical, but also the richest, most relevant and rewarding contexts in which this can happen.

It is in this "remaking" of self, this deep desire to engage with the world, to develop civic agency and purpose, that transcends identity, gender and class, and enables those locked out of the arts by a post-Adorno obscurant lexicon (eh?), that street art delivers. It offers an opportunity to reconnect, not only with art, but also with each other. Hundreds of people covering a vast swathe of demographics, from toddlers and single moms to refugees and property barons, on a street art tour conversing with each other, are testament to this.

We believe that when you want to challenge the powerful, you must change the story, it's this DIY narrative

embedded within street art practice, that forms the bonding agent for stronger social cohesion between citizens from a multiplicity of cultures, as our lead artist for 2017, Bahia Shehab will attest. It is this narrative, that is acting as the catalytic agent towards street art becoming a vehicle capable of generating changes in politics as well as urban consciousness.

The question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from what kind of person we want to be. The transformation of urban space creates changes in urban life, the transformation of one, being bound to the transformation of the other. What social ties, relationship to nature, lifestyles, technologies, art and aesthetic values we desire, are closely linked to the spaces we inhabit. The "banalization" of current city space, combined with the numbing effect of digital devices that guide us from A to B, have rendered us passive. Consumer cows sucking at the teat of capital trapped in a dichotomy between left and right, instead of right and wrong. And for the most, the hegemonic islands of sanitised cultural dissent we call Art Institutions, are either unable or uninterested, in engaging with the general public in any meaningful way.

In the early 2000's, the evocative power of certain already existing and often crumbling industrial interzones, including that of Tou Scene, our main exhibition space, one that we were instrumental in establishing, gave rise to a new form of engagement with art in urban spaces that is only now being fully recognized and *exploited*. Street Art is at times of course co-opted and complicit with the "creative destruction" that the gentrification process engenders, but Capitalism's continuous attempt to "instrumentalize" everything, including our relationship to art should be vigorously resisted. It is these "Stalker-esque" zones of poetic resistance, that initially gave shelter to one of the first truly democratic, non-hierarchical and anti-capitalist art forms, and unlike most cultural institutions, it is still, for the most, unafraid to voice this opinion, important in a time when even our art institutions are beginning to resemble houses of frenzied consumption. Street art exists to contest rather than bolster the prevailing status quo. As such, it is picking up as many enemies as friends within the field of public art.

By attempting to transform the city, street art attempts to transform life, and though by no means is all street art overtly political, it does, in it's unsanctioned form at least, challenge norms and conventions regulating what is acceptable use of public space. In particular, it opposes commercial advertising's dominion over urban surfaces, an area that Nuart are active in "taking over" throughout the year and in particular during the festival period. Our curating initiatives not only aim to encourage a re-evaluation of how we relate to our urban surroundings, but to also question our habitual modes of thinking and acting in those spaces. Street art is not just art using the streets as an artistic resource, but also an art that is questioning our habitual use of public space. Street art doesn't simply take art out of the context of the museum, it does so whilst hacking spaces for art within our daily lives that encourage agency and direct participation from the public, "Everyone an artist" as Joseph Beuys would have it, and if it is accused of being produced without academic rigour, we are reminded that he also asked, "Do we want a revolution without laughter?".

Nuart's programs are designed specifically to explore and silently challenge the mechanisms of power and politics in public space. Increasingly, we see the *rights to the city* falling into the hands of private and special interest groups, and yet, we have no real coherent opposition to the worst of it. The 20th Century was replete with radical Utopic manifestos calling for change, from Marinetti's Futurist manifesto of 1909 to Murakami's "Superflat" of 2000. Nuart's annual academic symposium, Nuart Plus, acts as a platform for a resurgency in utopic thinking around both city development and public art practice, and whilst recognizing that street art is often co-opted and discredited by capital, it also recognises that even the most amateur work, is indispensable in stimulating debate and change in a Modern society that has developed bureaucracies resistant to seeing art, once more, as part of our everyday life.

As the Situationist graffiti scrawled on Parisian walls in 1968 stated, *Beauty is in the Streets*, so Rise Up! and support those dedicated to unleashing one of the most powerful communicative practices known to mankind, there's work for art to be done in the world amongst the living.

July 2017, Martyn Reed
Founder and Director

Ampparito (es)



Born 1991 in Madrid, Ampparito is a young Spanish artist who's conceptual murals subvert objects, meanings and realities to generate new experiences or situations. A graduate in Fine Arts from the Universidad Complutense, Madrid (2014), Ampparito has built a solid reputation in recent years for a number of thought-provoking murals that provide metaphors and allegories for the human condition and mechanism of societal behaviour. His series entitled 'I Accept The Terms & Conditions' is a reflection on ideas pertaining to 'Big Data' and the consequences of accepting the terms and conditions intrinsically linked to every app and piece of software which accompany our lives.

Ampparito has painted in Italy (Milan, Carrara and Palermo, 2016), France (Biennial Design, Saint Etienne, 2017; Saint Chamond Le Mur Project, 2017), India (KA Project, 2016), Spain (Arte Para Todxs, curated by Madrid Street Art Project, 2016; Festival Polinizados, Polotecnico University of Valencia, 2017) and the UK (Upfest, 2016).

ampparito.com

Bahia Shehab (eg)



Lead artist Bahia Shehab's political street art was instrumental in the Egyptian uprising that saw widespread protests against poverty, unemployment, government corruption and the rule of president Hosni Mubarak in 2011.

Shehab is an artist, designer and art historian. She is Associate Professor of Design and Founder of the Graphic Design program at The American University in Cairo where she has developed a full design curriculum mainly focused on visual culture of the Arab world. Her artwork has been on display in exhibitions, galleries and streets in Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Morocco, Turkey, UAE and the US.

She has received numerous international recognitions and awards including the TED fellowship in 2012, the TED Senior fellowship in 2016 and the UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture in 2017. Her book "A Thousand Times NO: The Visual History of Lam-Alif" was published in 2010.

The documentary Nefertiti's Daughters, which focuses on Shehab's street artwork during the uprising, will receive a Scandinavian Premiere at this year's Nuart Festival. A story of women, art and revolution, the film documents the critical role that revolutionary street art played – and is continuing to play – in the political uprising of Egypt.

facebook.com/bahiashehabpage/

Carrie Reichardt (uk)



Carrie Reichardt is a self-titled 'craftivist'. Her work blurs the boundaries between craft and activism, using the techniques of muralism, mosaic and screen-printing to create intricate, highly-politicised works of art. Reichardt trained at Kingston University and achieved a First Class degree in Fine Art from Leeds Metropolitan. She was Artist in Residence at Camberwell Art College in 2009, following this with a period as Artist in Residence at The Single Homeless Project. She remains a proactive supporter.

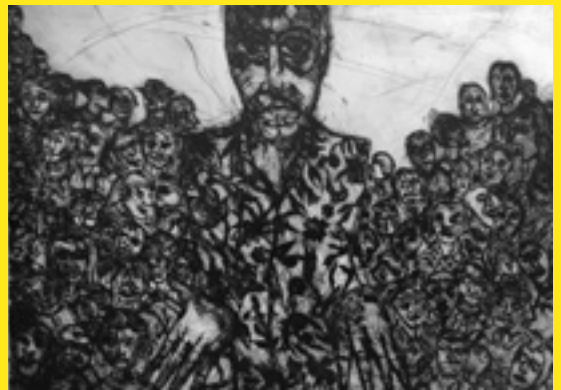
Reichardt has been involved in community and public art projects for over 15 years, designing and consulting on large-scale mosaic murals in various local communities. She has produced a community mosaic in Miravalle, one of the most deprived districts on the fringes of Mexico City as well as designed and installed 'The Art of Recycling' at Harold Hill Library, Essex, and 'The Revolution will be Ceramicsed' in London Portobello.

She is frequently called to speak on the use of craft and art as protest and has presented at National Museums Liverpool's International Women's Day lectures and the British Association of Modern Mosaic forum at the V&A, London.

Her work has been featured in The Observer, The Guardian, Evening Standard, Tile and Stone and in several books including: 1000 Ideas for Creative Reuse, Garth Johnson; Mural Art No. 2, Kirikos Iosifidis, and The Idler 42 – Smash the System, Tom Hodgkinson.

carriereichardt.com

Derek Mawudoku (uk)



Born in London in 1959 and graduated from Goldsmiths College of Art in 1987 with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art, Derek Mawudoku has worked assiduously to produce an incredibly powerful and well-wrought body of work.

Since 1985 he has shown at a number of venues including the Morley Gallery, London; Stephen Lawrence Gallery, University of Greenwich, London; Kettles Yard, Cambridge; Edition -100 Years of British Printmaking, SW1 Gallery, London; The London Original Print Fair at the Royal Academy of Arts; the New York Print Fair at the Park Avenue Armory; Adjustments & Errors, a group exhibition held at the Bag Factory in Johannesburg, South Africa, following his residency at their Studios in 2006. While his work is held in many private and eminent public collections – including The Arts Council England, The British Council, The British Museum – Mawudoku's art is still relatively under-recognised. The respected artist, curator and academic Jon Thompson wrote about the artists' work: 'As representations they are wonderfully lucid and yet carry with them the vivid sense of life experienced at the very edge of social breakdown. Even so, Mawudoku is not weighed down by the burden of his own critique. He is no purveyor of gloom. A passionate attachment to the human values helps him to sustain an unflinching optimism.'

flyingleaps.co.uk

Ian Strange (au)



Igor Ponosov (ru)



Ian Strange (previously known as Kid Zoom) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores architecture, space and the home, alongside broader themes of disenfranchisement within the urban environment. His practice includes large-scale multifaceted projects resulting in; photography, sculpture, installation, site-specific interventions, film works, documentary works and exhibitions. His studio practice includes painting and drawing as well as on-going research and archiving projects.

Strange has been featured in publications including; OSMOS Magazine, Art World, Dazed and Confused, The Atlantic, Imagine Architecture, ArtAlmanac, Artlink, Art Market, Artist Profile, Vault Magazine, Oyster Magazine and The Financial Review. In 2017 ABCTV released 'Home: The Art of Ian Strange' a commissioned series looking at his career and work to date.

His work is held in private and public collections including: the National Gallery of Victoria; Art Gallery of South Australia; Art Gallery of Western Australia, and the Canterbury Museum.

He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

ianstrange.com

Born in Nizhnevartovsk in Siberian Russia in 1980, Igor Ponosov is an artist, activist and author of several projects and publications relating to urban art. He began his artistic career in 1999 as a graffiti artist in Kiev and between 2005 and 2009 published three books on street art in Russia and the ex-USSR. From 2011 to 2013 he curated the project 'The Wall' at the Winzavod Centre for Contemporary Art in Moscow. In 2011 he founded the 'Partizaning.org' website as a platform for exchange among activists, artists and urbanists, and from 2013 to 2016 he curated 'Delai Sam' festival, which focused on grassroots indicatives and activism in Russia. He is also the author of the book 'Art and the City' (2016).

He has undertaken residencies including the Global Art Lab public art residency in New York as part of the 2014 Arts Leadership Fellows as well as at the National Centre for Contemporary Arts, Moscow, in 2016.

Ponosov currently lives in Moscow, where he works as an activist, artist and independent curator of multi-disciplinary projects, focusing on the social environment of the city and its transformation through the arts.

igor-ponosov.ru

John Fekner (us)



John Fekner (b. 1950) is best-known for his series of environmentally conceptual works consisting of words, symbols, and dates spraypainted throughout the five boroughs of New York in the 1970's. These "Warning Signs" pointed out hazards and dangerous conditions that overtook New York City and its environment during this decade. The project expanded in 1977 where Fekner created "Word-Signs." Through hand-cut cardboard stencils and spray paint he began a crusade that was tirelessly concerned with environmental and social issues.

Starting in the industrial streets of Queens and the East River bridges and continuing to the South Bronx in 1980 his "messages" brought awareness to areas that were in desperate need of attention, whether through demolition or repairs. His "labeling" of these structures brought emphasis to the problems, where the objective was a shout to the authorities, agencies, and local communities to, above all, take action.

His work is held in numerous museum collections across the US and Europe including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA; Museum of Modern Art, NYC; Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC; and Malmo Museum, Sweden. His work has also received recognition from the New York Foundation for the Arts and New York State Council on the Arts.

johnfekner.com

Know Hope (il)



Over the past decade, Addam Yekutieli (aka Know Hope) has developed a visual iconography and language used to mirror real-life situations and observations, and document the notion of a collective human struggle.

By creating parallels between political situations and emotional conditions, his work represents an attempt to perceive the political process and dialogue as an emotional mechanism, therefore making it a process that can be understood and participated in intuitively and not solely intellectually. These processes take place both indoors and outdoors, in the form of site-specific installations, murals and assemblages, combining ready-made materials, mixed media pieces, photographs and text.

By placing these works in public spaces, Know Hope aims to make the separation between the emotional and political non-existent, and allow the viewers to see themselves in the larger context of their surroundings simply by recognizing each other.

Yekutieli has exhibited internationally. He currently lives and works in Tel Aviv.

thisislimbo.com

±maismenos± (pt)



±maismenos±

is an intervention art project by Portuguese visual artist and graphic designer Miguel Januário (b. 1981) that began in the scope of an academic thesis in 2005, and later gained a life of its own. It offers a critical reflection on the model of political, social and economic organisation inherent to contemporary urban societies.

Conducting a clinical dissection of reality that plays with the system of dualities intrinsic to the Western ideological edifice, the project's programmatic expression is conceptually reduced to an equation of simplicity and excluding opposites: more/less, positive/negative, black/white.

Under the ±maismenos± banner, Januário has been producing thought-provoking, cutting-edge work both indoors and outdoors in a variety of media – from video to sculptural installations to painting and performance.

Besides numerous illegal public art interventions in several countries, the project has also been showcased in solo and group exhibitions in various institutional contexts and at leading art festivals and events around the world including Nuart Festival in Stavanger in 2014.

±maismenos± has also been the subject of two TED talks, at TEDxLuanda (Luanda, 2014) and TEDxPorto (Porto, 2015). The project is also the focus of Januário's ongoing PhD research at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto.

maismenos.net

Ricky Lee Gordon (za)



Ricky Lee Gordon is best-known for his large-scale murals inspired by his experience in mediation and Buddhist Dharma (law of nature). His paintings explore the nature of non-duality and interconnectedness, with a focus on bringing to light relevant social issues.

Born in Johannesburg South Africa in 1984, Ricky Lee Gordon only started painting full-time in 2014. Before this his main focus was curatorial and creative activism; co-founding /A WORD OF ART gallery, project space and artist residency in addition to the Colour Ikamva school rejuvenation project, which aimed to re-imagine education through creativity and self-empowerment. In 2016, he moved to Los Angeles to study classical painting, which is where he now resides.

He has received the British Council Young Creative Entrepreneur Award and been shortlisted for the IAPA International Award for Excellence in Public Art. His achievements in public art and activism have been covered by The Guardian ('200 young people in South Africa who make a difference') and CNN among others.

rickyleegordon.com

Slava Ptrk (ru)



Moscow-based artist Slava Ptrk focuses on social & political statements, interactive projects and site-specific artworks using stencils, posters, muralism, installations and urban interventions to express his ideas.

Slava Ptrk co-founded the street art gallery Sweater in Yekaterinburg, Russia after graduating from Shadrinsk School of Arts in Yekaterinburg with a Bachelor in Journalism (Majors in Print Media & Web-Journalism). He has curated Stenograffia, an international graffiti festival held annually in Yekaterinburg, as well as edited Stenograffia's online publication about graffiti and street art. He is also a regular contributor to leading Russian online publications covering street art, music and urban living. He currently gives lectures on graffiti and street art and is the author of a course on creative thinking and independent urban interventions.

Recent notable achievements include participating in the Creative Peacebuilding project in Kiev, Ukraine (2016); receiving the 'Artist of the Year' Award from The Assembly Of NGOs for his work 'Barbed Wire' in Belarus in 2016, and being awarded the Artmosphere Community's first grant for a public art project in 2015.

slavaptrk.com

Vermibus (de)



Berlin-based artist

Vermibus regularly collects advertising posters from the streets, using them in his studio as the base material for his work. Vermibus transforms the advertisements using solvents to brush away the faces and flesh of the models in the posters as well as brand logos. Once the transformation is complete, he then reintroduces the adverts back into their original context, hijacking the publicity, and its purpose.

By using advertising space and subverting how human figures are represented in that space, Vermibus' interventions become part of a broader conversation of social significance by questioning who has the power and authority to communicate messages and create meaning in our shared spaces.

By manipulating the image through removing the flesh of his subjects, Vermibus dehumanizes figures that were already depersonalized. He is, in fact, trying to find the aura of the individual – the personality that was lost – however. Once banal posters and advertisements are not insidiously lurking in the background anymore; they stand out in the public space, giving us the opportunity to call their presence into question.

Since beginning this work across Europe with hundreds of posters a handful of years ago, Vermibus has developed a distinctly ghoulish aesthetic, exhibited in the streets and at galleries and art fairs the world over.

vermibus.com

To the Streets

An ode, not a battle cry

Carlo McCormick

Nuart is calling and there is urgency to their tone. Things are heating up, battle lines are being drawn, and I still don't know where I stand. Martyn writes me — "The festival theme is Power, who has it, why and how do they use it, what are the conduits to it and the mechanisms that control it, specifically as it relates to public/private space and the shaping of art and the city..."

Indeed there is cause for concern, and I'm no help because I'm still jumping down rabbit holes of cultural obscurity, looking for what? A way out, or maybe I'm just ducking for cover. He wants me to address these pressing issues with the polemics I once brought to these things, back when the streets offered so much novelty and discovery for all of us that the possibilities seemed endless. But I still remember that time too well, and even the time before that when we had the cities to ourselves, wastelands of social abandonment so fecund for growing culture. There was a time when artists played in the streets unattended, without adult supervision like those great photos Martha Cooper and many others were taking in the Seventies and Eighties of kids inventing their own play out of rubble strewn vacant lots framed by the shells of burnt out buildings. And it's not nostalgia to remember that — it wasn't that great a time to begin with and the urban landscape is far too embattled now to dwell on the past — but it is vital to know how the topography has changed so we can figure out our place in it.

I don't have a manifesto for the new city, sorry Nuart, just the odd musings of an old flaneur still lost in the crowd, as Baudelaire described "in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and infinite." This is the city we all inhabit, all the more so now that the long trend of depopulation has reversed itself and it's all become that much more busy and crowded. Where do we find a place for art in the new city of prosperity and privilege? More

importantly, what kind of art do we need there? Now seems hardly the time to reward and ratify such status with aesthetic bling. In New York City, where I live, the trend for luxury dwellings is to commission major works by artists like Anish Kapoor and Yayoi Kusama, so it might be more important than ever to resist these baubles of vulgar wealth in our public spaces, like Paris — a place that allowed us to fall in love with what a city might be — confronts the extravagance of Koons poisonously baited public art gift. Urbanism increasingly seeks to adapt strategies for bringing utility to the disused zones of our cities, to bring order and rationality to the chaos. Have we forgotten so quickly the lessons of Jane Jacobs who told us in no uncertain terms; "There is a quality even meaner than outright ugliness or disorder, and this meaner quality is the dishonest mask of pretended order, achieved by ignoring or suppressing the real order that is struggling to exist and to be served." If the city is to have a public art in needs to embrace and even celebrate this ugliness and disorder, not to deny it.

Now don't get me wrong, I kind of love the idea of public art, but does it have to be so God damn horrible? More than thirty years ago, when I was still young enough to entertain my follies, I had the idea of doing a guidebook of all the very worst public monuments cluttering our towns and cities. Though I knew far less of the world then, and far fewer people than now, I was immediately inundated by people trying to communicate to me how the ugly statuary they walked by daily, commemorating some figure few remembered and fewer yet cared about, deserved the dishonor of such a wretched inventory. And this was before the Internet. Could we presume the cultural clutter of our landscape has gotten any better? Hardly. It sure doesn't help that the ever-avaricious contemporary art market has gotten into the game. Municipal and corporate bureaucracies have no idea of what we need or want, they simply

find consensus in mediocrity.

Community-based mural programs hardly have a better record of creative vitality; rather they strangle authentic vision and artistic idiosyncrasy through some wishy-washy negotiation through the petty concerns and imaginative bankruptcy of the many. Surely this is the kind of asshole thinking one should expect of an art critic, but let's face it, art in the streets does not beg for an overlying authority, it rejects it.

A few years back, stumbling upon an ugly rock inscribed in 1664 as testament to the Danish traitor Corfitz Ulfedtz "To his eternal shame, disgrace and infamy," I thought it possible to define a new kind of monument, to make public shame rather than heroes. I've not had much luck in my search since then, though I am somewhat heartened by the establishment of the Fallen Monument Park in Moscow, the Memento Park in Budapest and Stalin's World near Vilnius, Lithuania. The Soviet Empire has much to contribute to the litany of atrocious public art, but we too have plenty of historical and artistic missteps to fill similar parks of our own. Maybe in the United States this could be the solution to all the suddenly contested monuments to the Confederacy. I'd bet there are plenty of states in the south with ample room for such a hateful assembly and that something like this would be immensely popular with tourists. Let's too consider a space for all the empty signifiers and boring banalities from the fine art world that populate our public spaces, or even a lot of what street art has given us by a similar measure. There's plenty of kitsch to go around, so it's a good project for one of you out there, and I'd be happy to serve on your advisory board, though with my shifting attitudes towards such monumentality I might have to spell that as bored.

Personally, I'm happy to see so many of my friends doing so well in career and life with this global muralist movement. Indeed, in many ways this art is making our cities better. Honestly however, that is not what I got into street art for. Murals, for all their glory, have come too often to work with the city as a commodified space, representations of renewal and hipness that serve a

gentrification process which pays little heed to the diversity which makes cities great, landmarks for a new kind of cultural tourism that while laudable have become so prolific we risk the heart of their authenticity; to express the locality of space and not simply play an alternate tune of the same global hegemony perpetrated by multinational franchises.

So what am I looking at these days? I'm trying to reconsider the kind of art that was made when the city was a great canvas precisely because it was abandoned and reviled. I want an art that grows in the forlorn and forbidden, like it was for my generation with the first graffiti masters and those proto-street artists like Haring and SAMO who took their cues from that movement, but also oddities on the periphery of my memory like the wheat field Agnes Denes grew in lower Manhattan in the landfill that would become Battery Park where I used to woo my sweethearts in that brief time before I was married. I'm remembering the early work of Roa, who I came to late in the game but fell in love with when I understood how those murals were about bringing beauty to a place everyone hated, and how that transformation can be something physical and of the heart. I've been checking out the work of John Divola, now getting some serious recognition in the art world for his wonderfully abject vandalisms in abandoned spaces in southern California during the Seventies. Scott Hocking too, who is also one of the blessed few to be getting real attention in the art world, was not just one of the leading figures of what we've come to recognize Detroit's great age of "Ruins Porn" wasn't simply a terrific photographic trespasser but a great sculptor building magical interventions in the mighty vacant cathedrals of America's industrial collapse.

As usual I'm looking at a lot of garbage, but with a purpose this time. Oh, I don't mean those "in" formalist heaps of trash that we see piling in MFA programs, galleries, and museums (though I remain beholden to their antecedents in Dada and Schwitters), but artists who are actually confronting the filth itself outside the white cube. Since doing this show called Magic City I've been



looking for rats that thrive in our rubbish, thanks in this to the help of Christian Omodeo, tracking them from Christy Rupp's street posters in 1979 through the likes of Blek le Rat and Banksy, but appreciating them too as the union organized protests using inflatables called Scabby the Rat as well as coming to terms with how the unwanted, such as Jews in Europe, have often been depicted as rats, more prevalent now that my country turns to a demagogic vilification of the other. I can't stop thinking about El Seed's mural for the garbage collectors in Cairo, or all the work Merle Laderman Ukeles has done with the sanitation department in my hometown since the Seventies. And there's this wonderful piece "Pink Trash" done in 1982 by Maren Hassinger where she went through Central Park lovingly hand-painting every bit of garbage in her path pink and then placing it back just where she found it. Now that's fucking alchemy.

I'm totally smitten by the art of this young Polish friend of mine named Adrian Kondratowicz who works in Harlem and the Bronx (as well as further afield in places like India) where he makes decorative trash bags to organize communities to clean up their polluted environments. I was happy to share with him recently the "cultural exchange" organized by the Up Against the Wall

Motherfuckers in 1969 where they brought up all the garbage piling up in my neighborhood by subway to dump upon the then recently built Lincoln Center. In fact, I asked Nuart if I could just trash-talk my address so to speak, but well, they quite rightly didn't think there was any place to go from there if their keynote address was so lowly. I still don't know what I might talk about, but if by chance it sounds uplifting, understand my mind and heart remains in the gutter.

Carlo McCormick

is an esteemed pop culture critic, curator and Senior Editor of PAPER magazine. His numerous books, monographs and catalogues include: TRESPASS: A History of Uncommissioned Urban Art, Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture, The Downtown Book: The New York Art Scene 1974-1984, and Dondi White: Style Master General. His work has appeared in numerous publications including: Art in America, Art News, and Artforum.

Theses on art, alienation and revolution

Mikkel Bolt

Art is revolutionary. Art necessarily has an antagonistic relationship with capitalism that at one and the same time conditions and limits art. Capitalism not only gives shape to the world in which art – the institution of art, the art work and the artist – emerges into, capitalism also dominates this world and retains it in its image. Therefore art has necessarily to reject capitalism and its dominance.

Art is an effect and a result of a break. The split up of life into separate spheres. Art's autonomy is the result of a social process in which political economy is also separated and turned into an autonomous sphere. The self-sufficiency is parallel; art is meaning without reality, political economy is reality without meaning. Art's ideality thus supplements the materiality of the economy. This is the starting point of art, this is the relation art always tries to process and reject. And this is why modern art has taken the form of an endless series of fantastic and ridiculous escape attempt and suicides. This is why 'Death to Art!' has been art's motto all the way from Jean Paul to Rimbaud to Warhol to Debord and onwards to Luther Blissett.

Art distinguishes itself by a consistent self-critique. As no other praxis art is constantly and always pushing the boundaries and capable of expansion and connecting to other discourses. The expansion of art is a learning-process in self-alienation and hospitability. And because art is conditioned by capitalism, this self-critique also includes a critique of capitalism.

Art is an attempt to reach beyond. Beyond itself, but also beyond capitalism. To create another world. This is the lesson of the avant-garde; that it is necessary to break free from art and create connections with other anti-capitalist practices on the other side of art. It is in this way that art acquires signification. Art must necessarily test autonomy, not doing so with amount to not addressing

the fundamental conditions concerning art and capitalism. It is that simple.

As an autonomous and privileged form art is separate from life. It is and remains locked inside capitalist society. Artistic praxis is the visible expression of capitalist society's alienated praxis. Art is creativity that is allowed in as much as it does not question the fundamental separation of work and art. Instead of realizing its needs in every day life art abstains and withdraws to its autonomy. Art's freedom without efficiency equals the efficiency of work without freedom. Capitalism and art are two sides of the same mode of production or the same society.

Art is a break, a rejection of any kind of synthesis or harmonic fusion of opposites. Art and capitalism does not come right, just as proletariat and capital does not come right and just as communism and capitalism cannot be joined but is each-others opposites. One becomes two and two does not become one. The false whole is split up. And no two splits look the same. Shocked into abstraction.

Art is the visible expression of an alienated activity. Even when art is anti-artistic and intervenes outside the institution of art it only confirms alienation. Its satisfaction of needs always has to do with alienated needs.

Art is anti-capitalist. In order for art to become itself art has to reject capitalism and the capitalist society. If art fuses with capitalism, it disappears (as Marcuse writes). Therefore art is forced into trying to supersede capitalism and abolish it in its entirety. This has of course taken place in a number of different ways throughout the history of art but it is a constitutive condition for art that it is engaged in this undertaking and tries to move against capitalism. From romanticism through aestheticism and the avant-gardes to high-modernism and on art has been



a continuous testing of capitalism, simultaneously production of art as an autonomous phenomenon and the rejection of art's function within a larger process of de-differentiation characterized by the appearance of relative autonomous discourses.

Capitalism is both art's condition of possibility and its limit. No matter what designation we use – the bourgeois capitalist world, modern, late-modern or post-modern society, integrated world-capitalism, the society of control, empire or the specific capitalist mode of production – capitalism sets the frame for art.

In its neoliberal phase the dominance of capitalism tends to become total. Neoliberal capitalism not only uses art as a model for new forms of work and consumption, art is also being sponsored by banks, firms and cities that in exchange acquire a smarter or socially concerned brand adapted to the ruling idea of social responsibility.

As an institutional activity art has no critical function. When the formal innovations of art become norm it is only in the institution of art that art has any kind of 'critical' function.

When this happens, when the avant-garde becomes tradition, art not

only stops being negative, it also stops being art and turns into industry.

Art is situated between ideas and ideals. Like moral, religion and metaphysics art is a mystical fog in the mind of wo/man. It has no independent existence but is attached to its material presuppositions. In that regard art is just a reflex or an echo of human life processes. Art appears to be autonomous and disconnected from the primary material life production but serves to uphold the symbolic relations in the social organisation.

Art is artificial. Art is not a natural testing of capitalism but a negation of capitalism. An attempt to get away.

Art has to question the already produced world and open passages towards another world. It constantly has to visualize the continuous catastrophe of capitalism. And it has to haunt the already created world with representations of another life. It should not only shake all familiarities and interpret the world differently its has to transform the world. This is the starting point for the idea of art, this is the dream, this is the hope that continues to haunt art. Art is thus an attempt to envision modernity differently. Art always has to do with a idea of an ending of existing capitalism, whether this takes a grandiose form as in Constant's *New Babylon*-project,

is tragicomic as in Syberberg's *Hitler*-film, hysteric as in Bataille's novels, distracted as in Walser's micrograms or just damned ironic as in post-post-neo-avant-garde projects like Bernadette Corporation.

Whoever is not prepared to talk about capitalism should remain silent about art. As a modern phenomenon art is indissociable related to the capitalist mode of production and the de-differentiation process of capitalist modernisation. Art shaped the world art emerged into and art appeared as an autonomous sphere in the violent and comprehensive transformation of the world that took place in the 18th and 19th century where more and more aspects of human life were subsumed under capitalist relations of production.

The artwork's autonomy cannot function as a model through which the abolition of wage labour can take place, it can only function as a model for a communist praxis after the abolition of capitalist wage labour (Adorno), meaning after the abolition of art. This is the positive side of the fact that 30% of the German youth want to be artists. They of course intuitively understand art as an escape, to be an artist is a possibility of escaping capitalism's depressive cycle of production and consumption where everything is mediated or turned into

a commodity including one-self. What they don't necessarily understand it that art's potential will only be realized though the supersession of art. The abolition of alienated labour is the same thing as the supersession of art, as Debord wrote on two of his Directives in 1963.

Mikkel Bolt

is an art historian and political theorist, employed as a lecturer in cultural history at the Department of Arts and Culture, University of Copenhagen. Bolt has published books and articles about activism, avant-garde, revolutionary tradition, contemporary art and anti-terrorism. He defines himself as a Marxist art historian and is part of the left-wing movement in Copenhagen. He is in the editorial board of the academic journal K&K and previously edited the journals *Currently* and *Mutant*. For several years, he conducted a conversation with *Das Beckwerk* on life and art, published in 2008. Bolt, together with the visual artist and activist Jakob Jakobsen, arranged a series of seminars and workshops on Scandinavian Situationism and Image Policy in People's House in Nørrebro. Together with the visual artist and activist Jakob Jakobsen, Bolt owns the publishing house *Nebula*, which publishes books on radical theory and experimental art.



Cleverly Contesting the Surfaces of Power

Adrian Burnham

The material surfaces of towns and cities index legal, civic and corporate influence. With rampant privatisation these last two seats of power coalesce into a regime that proposes and propels corporate capitalism as the only socio-economic option available.

However, in the UK and elsewhere, recently we've seen a substantial and growing number of people hungry for analyses of the flaws of neoliberal governance. In ways that were almost unimaginable even a year ago, a contemporary democratic socialist and/or communitarian conscience appears to be gaining traction. Although, in this era, when it is perfectly possible to imagine oneself connected and active without ever leaving the purview of a screen, 'real' or material, physical interventions calling for social conscience, needling for change or simply helping viewers to see the world afresh can take on enhanced significance.

As cultural anthropologists Megan McLagan and Yates McKee (2012) put it in their book *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism*: "Material networks are important because they shape the nature of cultural forms that travel along them, but also because, like platforms, they are political actors themselves. Politics does not lie within the image, as if the only political exchange at stake is lodged in the [...] ability to decode a meaning that inheres in the text. Rather the modes of circulation and of making public are forms of political action in and of themselves."

While corporate culture continues its creeping grip on education, health, the news, entertainment and our personal and collective consciousness, opportunities to express views outside the narrow confines of the established political order are diminished.

Like Nuart the flyingleaps project seeks to offer a material

platform and a critical, enduring digital media presence for artists and visual activists. Making space for alternate 'voices': those who resist. As Chris Hedges wrote in *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt* (Hedges and Sacco: 2012) the '[D]oubtters, outcasts, artists, renegades, skeptics, and rebels – rarely come from the elite. They ask different questions. They see something else: a life of meaning. They have grasped Immanuel Kant's dictum, "If justice perishes, human life on earth has lost its meaning."'

And it's the multiplicity of voices, tactics, the range of visual languages employed as well as inventive siting and enactment of art and visual activism that lends it a strength, that affords it a much better likelihood of breaking through, effecting a publics' concerned awareness – publics plural because urban dwelling is an agglomeration of many ideas and mentalities – arguably sometimes even to the extent that visual engagement translates into action.

Whilst I think some work on the more radical end of the art/visual activist spectrum is brilliant at skewering government wrongs or exposing corporate cant and abuses of power, what the activist art rebels have to do – and I know the best do this constantly – is consider the efficacy of their message. Is it managing to get anywhere close to reaching those who are not already persuaded? Humans for the most part are not simplistic. We thrive on and evince a multitude of ideas and practices.

Take, for example, the Artist Taxi Driver (aka artist/activist Mark McGowan): his practice consists of serious sociological interviews, comical interventions, vituperative rants, practical support and involvement, collaboration with popular music and producing 'naïve' watercolours (which themselves are incredibly varied)...The point being

he is all these things (and more besides) and we're all, for the most part, similarly complex. That's why the critical visual art we make needs to appear in various forms, work in various ways to at least have the potential to affect us in differing registers.

American architect, urbanist, writer and teacher Keller Easterling (2014) observes in *Extrastatecraft* that the declarative and enacted approaches to activism are to an extent bound together and complimentary. She cautions, however, that too glib a reliance on any declarative 'us versus them' rhetoric completely misses the mark in terms of effective dissent in contemporary political work. Worse, it plays into the hands of excessive power and wealth because more and more the means by which the '1%' maintain control is extremely sophisticated. 'Righteous ultimatums or binaries of enemies and innocents that offer only collusion or refusal might present a structural obstacle greater than any mythical opponent' such as Capital, Empire or Neoliberalism. Adopting merely a simplistic oppositional stance lets big business, government and the sophisticated mechanisms of global capitalism off the hook.

Many powerful players that [...] activists oppose maintain fluid or undeclared intentions by saying something different from what they are doing. It is easy to toy with or trick activist resistance if declaration is all that qualifies as information. When targeted, the powerful wander away from the bull's-eye, arranging for shelter or immunity elsewhere. They may successfully propagate a rumor (e.g., that there is evidence of WMD, that climate change is a hoax, that Obama is not a US citizen) to capture the world's attention.

Capturing attention to divert attention. Vested interests are ever cloaking themselves in the mantle of resistance. The commercial construction sector negotiating to build quotas of 'social housing' – inadequate in the first place or, as we've seen recently in the fallout from the tragedy of Grenfell Tower, a blatant con – or the thrust to privatise services, schools, the pushing through 24/7 of access to health is ideology in

the guise of reform. Mainstream media plays the same surreptitious game. Witness, for instance, the cynical volte-face of a Murdoch press now loudly 'supporting' breast cancer awareness.

Easterling's concern is to unearth and explore ways that publics might counter the power of global infrastructure but her proposed co-option of extra state craft in support of radical reform has other elements that accord with thinking and practice that stands a better chance of being productive. '[...] Techniques that are less heroic, less automatically oppositional, more effective, and sneakier – techniques like gossip, rumor, gift-giving, compliance, mimicry, comedy, meaninglessness, misdirection, distraction, hacking, or entrepreneurialism.'

Leaving open the question as to whether and how directly socio-politically engaged art and visual activism speaks to social justice, what does occur from time to time is a work – image, text, installation, T-shirt, performance, street poster... – can challenge and even help to alter the public's disposition. Here, in part, resides the value of turning our urban environment into a platform for artists: it's an opportunity to visually delight but also a chance to question, maybe even shift shared beliefs, ideas and ethical concerns operating across society.

Adrian Burnham

has a long held empirical interest in both the variety and efficacy of interventions on urban space and a particular fascination with paper-based art and visual activism. His career spans both a mundane engagement with the metropolis – as a commercial flyposter in the 1980s and 90s – to more academic study of the city and the social production of space at Goldsmiths University. After 10 years leading courses and lecturing on art and design at Hackney Community College, in June 2016 he founded and continues to curate *flyingleaps.co.uk*, a street display and online platform for socio-politically engaged artists.

Fall on Me

Evan Pricco

"Me, on the other hand...I'm an optimist. So, when I see this, I don't think the sky is falling. I think that, sir, is the sound of opportunity knocking." —Mike Milligan, *Fargo*, Season Two

I'm going to start this essay off by trying to connect the best written TV season ever, *Fargo* Season Two, and the concept of street art and power. There is a big part of me that sees the sky falling. Everywhere, not just here in America. Shit is falling apart. You can just feel it. We had these eight standout years that were, obviously, not without struggle, conflict and frustration with power and those in charge. But you felt like the conversation was moving forward; that we were evolving and beginning to understand the nuances of race, sex, gender, justice, climate change, and simply language itself. We were (and the "we" here is those of us who constantly think of the evolution of these previously listed nuances no matter what leaders are in charge) beginning to feel empowered to really challenge the status quos and turn our space in the world into a place where everyone could begin to feel included. And then, well, we took a few steps back this past November.

I'm speaking for America, but it applies to a lot of people and places. The sky is falling. Not everyone was ready to have these nuanced conversations. A lot of people, Europe, Asia, America, still digest information in simple platitudes, banal expressions and ignorant speech. We've gone back to the language of *1984* while living in *Brave New World*. We are distracted. We have toys. We have gadgets. We have a celebrity president whose catchphrase was gas station memorabilia in the early 2000s. So the attempted progress of a few years ago is sort of back to square one.

But...*but!* I'm going to be like Mike Milligan here. Don't think of the sky falling. Think of what this means in terms of how we now have to fight against power. This is an opportunity for the arts. This is a time where we really need to get comfortable with being uncomfortable, to retool our arsenal about how we compete with and challenge the power structures in the world around us. This year's Nuart Festival is based around this theme of power, or, as they note, "...questioning who has it, who doesn't, and how sanctioned and unsanctioned street and public art can challenge prevailing mechanisms of control." What Nuart has successfully accomplished in past years is putting street art and graffiti into the pantheon of historically relevant political interventions. Whether those interventions come in the form of revolutionizing the way we look at art itself, or how we look at dissident behavior, or how we challenge power structures, Nuart has always attempted to connect these dots.

When the theme of "Power" was raised for the 2017 edition, I immediately thought of this classic Milligan line: we are in a time of opportunity. It's our time to question. What have we done well in the past? What can we do in the future? How did the power structures form, and how do we fight back and infiltrate these systems with better ideas and plans to make the world, if not better, more sustainable and equal. Using the idea of public space, as Nuart bases its whole program on, is the best place to start. It's where we shop, eat, drink, gather, wander; it's the place we all share. If we begin to share ideas here, or challenge the notion of shared space in the face of powerful entities that control what we see and what we buy, this is us challenging the system. Or, challenging *the man*, shall we say?



While we are at it, let's not talk about Tweeting. Don't show me your iPhone photos from a protest. Don't Snapchat or Instagram that you passively care about a cause. Let's not discuss social media's impact on challenging these power structures. These new modes of communication are owned and operated by the definition of power. These are, by Wall Street definition, *the man*, man. I love that these mediums connect us with causes around the world, allowing us to find like-minded struggles in far-off places, that they teach us new ways to challenge this idea of power. But Nuart is about discussing *and* doing. Street art and graffiti, when it's great and subversive, is about the action on the actual street. When you get on Instagram and see something that challenges the way mainstream audiences think about the world, when you see something that is in direct conflict with power structures and you start to feel empowered yourself, it is generally right next to a photo of a kitten. I love kittens. They are my favorite thing on Earth. But when I want to feel enabled and strong when I see equal rights rallies in Korea, or Occupy Wall Street protests in NYC, I don't need comfort. I want that unease. I want to see and feel something new in my consciousness.

Yes, I went from *Fargo*, to power, to Instagram, to kittens—but my point is that we live in a tremendous moment in time where we constantly see

progress nullified by grabs of power that leave us feeling defenseless and hopeless. We have always had wonderful tools to grapple with these feelings, whether it be through Street Art, protest, social justice reform, human rights, and activist platforms brought to the forefront through the campaigns of Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn. Sometimes we need these reminders to fight back. To understand what the power structures mean. Where Nuart takes this discussion, from the way the streets are owned and operated, to the way museums control our art history, I see an opportunity to equip ourselves for the intellectual and ideological battles ahead. The sky is falling, and we are ready.

Evan Pricco

is the founder and Managing Editor of the world's leading international contemporary art magazine, *Juxtapoz*, based in San Francisco, California. Prior to starting *Juxtapoz* in 2006, Evan worked at SF-based gallery and apparel company, Upper Playground. He is the author of *Juxtapoz'* continuing book series, including titles on Poster Art, Illustration, Handmade Art, and Contemporary Painting.

Some notes on street art, murals and power in public space

Javier Abarca

Today's huge institutional murals have very little to do with the ephemeral, contextualised, human-scale pieces scattered across the landscape we used to call street art some years ago. These are two very different practices with diametrically opposite roles regarding power in public space.

Questioning limits

Due to the unregulated nature of their practice, street artists can ignore the boundaries dictated by property that determine where they can or cannot act. A piece of street art can simultaneously cover two or more contiguous surfaces belonging to different properties, thus ignoring the division of matter and space demarcated by money. Street art can make visible how these limits of action and physical demarcations are arbitrary and cultural. It can take space and matter back to its natural state, when everything was for everybody to use, and nobody actually owned anything.

Murals, conversely, confirm the limits demarcated by money. They validate the status quo by arranging themselves obediently where architecture and property dictate. Instead of questioning the logic of money, they visibly reaffirm it.

While power uses architectural materials to try and make its division of the world into a permanent physical reality, street art typically uses humble, temporary materials such as paint or paper, which transform space merely at a symbolic level. For this reason it can be read as a sort of parody of this allegedly permanent capitalist arrangement of the world, this presumptuous order that inescapably goes back to the amalgam from which it started. Street art can therefore be a sort of foretelling of the future state of a building. This is one of the reasons why it can be disturbing, because it can make visible how a prideful building is in essence just a miserable ruin.

Inhabiting margins

In the process of creating and searching for street art pieces, both the artist and

the viewer often get to explore parts of the city they would rarely visit otherwise. Places such as alleys or empty lots, dead spaces below or around bridges and other infrastructures, even off-limits terrains such as abandoned buildings or tunnels. French theorist Guilles Clement describes how the distinctive value of these places resides in them being the only parts of the city free from the control of money, and how they thus become the only chance for the city dweller to find space for natural and human qualities such as indetermination or imagination.

For both artist and viewer street art can end up being an excuse to discover and visit these kinds of ignored places, to follow unfrequented paths across the city. Being on the look out for street art consequently widens and enriches the viewers' awareness of their environment. Murals, conversely, tend to appear within the predictable spaces of power. They take the viewer along the official paths, through the alienating urban spaces of production and consumption.

Time

A street art piece mutates and evolves like everything around it, including its viewers. It naturally intertwines with the evolution of its context and with the life of the people that repeatedly come across it. Murals, instead, are generally meant to remain. They exist in a plane different to that of the viewer. They are frozen in the atemporal dimension of the monument, of power, far detached from the real life going on around them.

The human scale

Street art always works within a scale related to the human body. It can only go as big as the body allows. An artist can reach beyond that by using a ladder or a pole, but these portable tools work only as extensions of the body, therefore the scale of the resulting artwork is still visibly human. Artists can also take advantage of the features of the architecture surrounding a chosen spot, for example climbing up a ledge or

leaning out a window. But, again, this takes place within discernibly human limits. A street art piece is the visible presence of a fellow human being.

Murals, conversely, exist in an inhuman, monumental scale, very far from the viewer. When producing a mural, artists are not forced to understand their working environment, because they do not need to adapt to it. Murals are deployed with superhuman devices such as scaffoldings or cranes, which operate on a scale that allows the artist to ignore the context of the artwork. Instead of coming from below, a mural comes from above.

A piece of street art is necessarily created in a way analogous to the way a path appears on a landscape. A path needs to adapt to the features of the terrain, it is the result of a dialogue between these features and the scale and potential of the human body. A mural, on the other hand, works as a highway or a viaduct, ignoring by its very nature all but the most prominent characteristics that define a place. A similar analogy could be drawn between a piece of street art and a medieval street, which takes form based on the features of the terrain and the decisions of its inhabitants, and between a mural and a Haussmannian avenue, deployed with the help of superhuman machines and blatantly blind to any human or natural characteristic of the place it appears on. A mural is, from this point of view, yet another instrument for exerting control over the environment and its population.

A mural reveals nothing about the possibilities and limitations of the relation between the human body and the built environment. It is no longer a portrait of the relation between a person and his or her surroundings, which is necessarily open to dialogue. It is, instead, a portrait of the way in which power relates to the environment, which is most often a blind, imposed monologue.

Viewers can respond to a piece of street art. They can, for example, correct it or paint over it. Street art is a call to action – it empowers the viewer.

It brings us back to the time when each person was able to rearrange

his or her surroundings as far as his or her bodily potential would allow, before the power of a few would start to determine the limits of action of everyone else. It evokes this inherently human reality whose repression has created the alienating scenario we now live in. In light of this, it is only natural that street art, and particularly the neighbouring practice of graffiti, have become more prominent and violent as the control over the environment exerted by architecture and advertising has become stronger.

As opposed to the empowering nature of street art, murals force a passive position on the viewer. Like architecture or advertising, murals are a monologue that the viewer cannot respond to. Murals make clear that the viewer is a passive spectator, and a consumer. Street art can be a dialogue between people, while murals are essentially a one-way communication channel monopolised by power.

Excerpted from "From street art to murals, what have we lost?", *Street Art and Urban Creativity Scientific Journal Vol 2 N°2, 2016*.

Javier Abarca

is an artist, researcher and educator in the fields of graffiti and street art. A leading figure from the first generation of Spanish graffiti, he taught a class on graffiti and street art at the Complutense University of Madrid between 2006 and 2015. He founded the website Urbanario in 2008.

Abarca is a renowned specialist in the international scene, and appears regularly at European conferences and festivals. His PhD (2010) and his texts are widely cited in Spanish-language literature. His teaching, curating and writing have been commissioned by museums and institutions in Spain and across Europe.

Abarca's work stands out with its focus on essential aspects of graffiti and street art such as the exploration of the margins, the attention to the context, the work within a human scale or the understanding of street projects as networks. A work field far from the monumentality and kitsch characteristic of today's mainstream conception of street art.

Economical Power

Lisbon Urban Art case study*

Pedro Soares Neves

Introduction

In "O Banqueiro Anarquista" by Fernando Pessoa, the banker states that he is in fact the real anarchist, while all others are just theorists; pseudo-anarchists. This philosophical tale by Pessoa carries particular significance today.

Economic value in the field of art and culture has never been an easy topic but the apparent freedom and anarchy in fields which have more economic impact, such as the financial system, are also taboo. In recent times, the subject appears to have been publicly exposed: the financial system was revealed to go beyond the rules, behaving anarchically, and underground or criminal art movements such as graffiti and street art found a path to the market like never seen before.

This essay highlights elements of a larger research topic on the cultural values of Urban Art, specifically those relating to economic value.

Context

The perfect financial storm hit's Lisbon in the early 21st century, in a context where the city was still finding out how to convert its infrastructure from one of decay to renewal.

After Portugal's mural renaissance in the late 70's – a consequence of democratic freedom and low cost communication strategies – the 80's heralded a period of inactivity in terms of art on walls. In the 90's however informal discourses associated with "hip-hop" sub cultures (imported from New York via Paris) began to appear. Many of this first generation of taggers and writers are still active today and share reference points with a new generation that in the 21st century started to stimulate more eclectic discourses associated with street art, graphic design and illustration.

In this context, and after the 98 world expo's multi-million budgets for public art had been expended, the public art paradigm had to change. The time for low budget productions arrived in 2008, when Lisbon city council assumed a strategy for (graffiti related) Urban Art. A number of factors allowed space for this strategy: decayed buildings serving as canvases, the city's existent graffiti scene (which required a program), and an increasingly mature body of authors/writers.

The strategy included two main components, the first one related to tourism, city branding and public relations. The second was the creation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem somehow connected with the idea of the 'creative city'.

Tourism / City break

The desirability of short term 'city breaks' depends on visibility, widely achieved through IT developments and trends. The political and security issues of the destination are also relevant, as is accessibility, which should be fast and cheap (e.g. low cost flights).¹

However, there's also the 3.0 consumer or the 'prosumers' needs, which should be taken into consideration. When combining city breaks with this human need for creation you have the perfect ingredients for graffiti and street art development. Lisbon Street Art Tour, The Real Lisbon Street Art Tour, and Underdogs Tours, are just some examples of ongoing services that are taking advantage of this fact. Exemplifying the union of creativity and business, while aligned with the city's wider cultural policy of financing low cost public art.

Looking up-close

In Lisbon 30% of jobs are connected to the creative sector: 47% of GVA (Gross Value Added) is generated by 22,000 companies from the creative sector. The city boasts more than 100 teaching institutions that on average produce 33,000 graduates a year.²

Graffiti and street-art related formal and business oriented initiatives dating back to 2008 (the year when Lisbon City Council formally started interacting with the graffiti and street art community) include: Visual Street Performance (2008, 2009); Project CRONO (2010); Writer's Delight (2011, 2014); Book a Street Artist (2011); Underdogs Gallery (2013); APAURB (2013); Mistaker Maker (2014); Lisbon Street – Art and Urban Creativity (2014); André in MUDE (2014); Vhils in EDP (2014); Street Art Lisbon guidebook (2014); Lata 65 (2015); and Urban-Art (interior decoration) (2015).

Just mentioning the most relevant initiatives alongside the wider picture of cultural (and other integrated) local policies, there's clearly a cluster of actors within the Lisbon creative sector specifically dealing with graffiti and street art.

Conclusion

But the reality is not uniform. This investment consisted of a very limited amount of resources for the promotion of graffiti and street art practices. An analysis of the available public data from 2008–2016 shows overall investment in the city's Urban Art strategy as averaging 28.000EUR per year.

Even with the knowledge that the 'real' value of this investment is much bigger,³ it is still less than 2% of the municipalities estimated budget for graffiti removal – a 3-year program that is being implemented with a budget 1.3 million EUR per year.

Although there's been some overtures and resources invested in cultural initiatives, the infrastructural approach is still "blind" to the added value that graffiti, street art and urban creativity brings to the urban landscape.

Acting in an apparent contradictory manner, it's more important than ever that the institutional forces that deal with this phenomenon are supplied with impartial research data in such a way that could better decide how to proceed tackling the subject of graffiti and street art: either as a menace or as bringing added value to the city.*

This case study was presented in "State of urban art, Oxymores III" October 2016, Paris.

¹ in Turismo de Portugal (IP) (2006). 10 Produtos Estratégicos para o Desenvolvimento do Turismo em Portugal – "City Breaks". ITP. Lisboa.

² in Lisbon Creative Economy blueprint, produced by the Lisbon city council in 2013, ref: https://issuu.com/camara_municipal_lisboa/docs/lisbon_creative_economy/82

³ Base.pt – public platform escape due to the majority of the commissioned works (low) values

Pedro Soares Neves

is a researcher, designer and urbanist who has undertaken multi-disciplinary academic training in Lisbon, Barcelona and Rome. He is the co-creator of the first academic journal dedicated to graffiti and street art, 'Street & Urban Creativity, International Research Topic'.

He is also founder of the Portuguese chapter of IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) and APAURB (Portuguese Urban Art Association). He is one of the pioneers of Portuguese graffiti and a mentor to several international institutions about their approach to urban art.

The Right To Write The City: Breaking The Law Of Untouchability

Susan Hansen

Street art is a form of democratic conversation not captured by conventional understandings of how art works. It provides a point of potential connection with others, and a sense of attachment within a potentially dehumanizing urban space. The fleeting moments when we are 'arrested' by work on the street may in turn afford the potential for ethical engagement and indeed the radical realization of one's own right to write the city. Street art's invitation to engage in the city's ephemeral dialogue is antithetical to traditional heritage frameworks, although this may fit within an understanding of street art as a living tradition, or as intangible cultural heritage.

A traditional understanding of the ways in which we make sense of art assumes the reception of a transhistorical singular meaning identical with the artist's intention. The philosopher Jacques Rancière refers to this as a model of stultification that sees meaning as conveyed via the logic of cause and effect, with the transmission of the artist's intention to the spectator positioning viewers as passive recipients. However, graffiti and street art accord the citizen-viewer radically different possibilities in terms of their active participation and engagement with art.

Art historian Anna Waclawek asserts that the viewer of work on the street, in the act of encountering the work, achieves its "transitory completion," and that the authorship of street art is thus a "community affair." Of course, the notion that the act of reception and interpretation implies a form of participatory authorship is not unique to street art and graffiti. Indeed, the literature on contemporary art also makes use of this notion, with Martha Buskirk arguing that a work of art is created through the viewer's "experience of the work as a series of unfolding encounters"; Howard Becker claiming that a work's completion is continually determined anew by its reception; and Pierre Bourdieu maintaining that the plurality of re-readings inherent in the reception of an art object engender its recurrent recreation.

Rancière asserts that viewers are not passive and thus do not need to be encouraged or shown how to actively engage with work, as they are already involved in an active process of interpretation and appropriation:

[B]eing a spectator is not some passive condition that we should transform into activity. It is our normal situation...we have to recognize...the activity peculiar to the spectator...[which] requires spectators who play the role of active interpreters, who develop their own translation in order to appropriate the "story" and make it their own story.

Beyond this form of immaterial participation through reception, aesthetic experience and interpretation, it may be argued that street art offers viewers a more active role in inviting them to consider materially engaging with the work on the street by making their own marks in response. This too has a parallel in the contemporary art world, in work on audience participation and viewer interaction. Art critic Nicolas Bourriaud's influential framework of relational aesthetics presents a utopic reading of the possibilities inherent in work that aims to encourage the interaction of viewers. He asserts that this may provide for the formation of new micro-communities, novel social experiments and enriched interpersonal relations. However, the institutional context of the museum closes down the likelihood of such emancipatory principles translating into democratic practice, as these "new micro-communities" are in fact dialogues occurring within the established networks of the communities of practice peculiar to the art world which neglect the site "specificity of local art and cultural production and political disputes within and between communities."

While commissioned public art often positions its "user groups" as inherently passive, requiring solicited invitation to participate and experience the work — street art arrests the passing viewer without prior consultation,



Frames from 1247 Days on Whymark Avenue (2017) © Susan Hansen

involvement or forewarning. Street art's distinct aesthetic of display accords viewers the right to interact differently to the ways in which they might engage with art in institutional contexts. Derrida described graffiti's "aesthetic of the outside" as "an aesthetic of touching" that stands in contrast to the regulated interactions permitted in museums, where touching the exhibits is forbidden, or in the case of "interactive" works, highly circumscribed and monitored. For Derrida, graffiti breaks the "law of untouchability" in that it invites viewers to touch – and even to leave one's own trace on the wall.

Work on the street offers an invitation to engage in the city's incessant ephemeral dialogue. As Lachlan MacDowall has noted, any particular piece of street art creates the conditions for its own interactivity, 'authorizing' further unauthorized use of urban space, and thus often provoking a series of works in situ. Alison Young suggests further that street art may afford unexpected opportunities for ethical engagement as it arrests our otherwise smooth motion through urban space, which may provide productive fissures in our ordinary ways of seeing, and being with others, in the city. Conceived as a "tangle in the smooth spaces of the city out of which comes the potential

for enchantment," this moment of "arrest" need not necessarily involve visual pleasure, but may indeed be experienced as troubling, unsettling or unheimlich. Enchantment may afford a moment of seeing other possible ways of being in the city that may fall outside of viewers' conventional expectations. The enchantment of street art provides a point of potential connection with others, or a sense of attachment within a potentially dehumanizing urban space. In this sense, a "moment of enchantment" may afford the potential for ethical, material, and political engagement.

Street art provides the conditions of possibility for new forms of ethical engagement and indeed the radical realization of one's own right to write the city. However, this invitation to engage in 'destructive' democratic dialogue is antithetical to both conventional notions of the passive reception of art and to traditional heritage frameworks that attempt to 'protect' particular works of value against such destruction – although this may be congruent with an understanding of street art as a living tradition, or as intangible cultural heritage. In a forthcoming book (with Lachlan MacDowall and Sam Merrill) on *The Contested Heritages of Graffiti and Street Art*, we critically examine the implications of an understanding of street art as a form of intangible cultural heritage for recognising its essentially ephemeral nature – as the collective expression of a living culture that places a high value on the fleeting nature of its material traces.¹

¹An earlier version of sections of this discussion appeared in *Public Art Dialogue*.

Susan Hansen

is Convenor of the Visual Methods Group and Chair of the Forensic Psychology Research Group in the Department of Psychology at Middlesex University, London. She has research interests in viewers' material engagements with, and affective responses to, street art and graffiti; in the analysis of street art and graffiti as a form of visual dialogue; and in the promise of an archaeological approach to understanding uncommissioned independent public art.

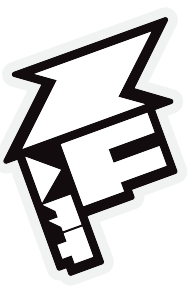
With Phil Healey, Head of Visual Art at London's Middlesex University, Susan recently convened a symposium on Creative Responses to the Urban Environment. Held at the Institute of Contemporary Art, and open to the public, this interdisciplinary symposium explored the diversity of creative responses to our urban landscape – from street art and graffiti to yarn bombing and urban photography. The symposium brought together leading international contemporary researchers, curators, artists and photographers in the field of urban creativity.

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- An earlier version of sections of this discussion appeared in *Public Art Dialogue*.



**BEAUTY IS
IN THE
STREETS.**



Street art as heritage: right to the city?

Laima Nomeikaite

In recent years individual street artwork and graffiti have been framed as cultural heritage. However, attempts to integrate street art and graffiti into heritage frameworks have not provided answers to the philosophical and practical problems of the preservation of street art. One of the limitations of those framings is that unsanctioned street art and graffiti value “right to the city” and its components; such as “the right to everyday experience”, illegality, transcendence and anti-commercialism, have tended to be not considered. Andrzej Zieleniec (2016, pp. 10–11) asserts that unsanctioned graffiti and street art can be understood as an “expression or embodiment of Lefevre’s cry and demand for the “right to the city”, the right to appropriate, appreciate, know and use its spaces and places (...) a free art or politics which challenges the normal, banal, functionalized and increasingly commodified and privatized space”. With the “right to the city” concept,

Henri Lefebvre (1996) had aimed to provide an alternative vision for a city in which inhabitants are entitled to the right to manage urban space for themselves, a possible city beyond the state, capitalism and consumer society.

David Crouch (2010, 57) asserts that “the problem is not with heritage, but the way it is thought about and institutionalized in contemporary culture, often through dominant visual representations”.

Laurajane Smith (2006) presents that the key limitation with institutionalized or conventional heritage is related to “authorized heritage discourse” (AHD). In her conception of AHD the UN World Heritage Conventions and all other authoritative bodies in the heritage field are included. Such discourse is steered by officials or experts with the power to define and legitimize the meaning and understanding of heritage. Here, the emphasis on preserving material



Banksy

things often marginalizes the practices and beliefs of source communities. AHD focuses attention on the aesthetically pleasing material objects to be protected for its national significance; justifies tourist value as a support for the economic promotion, and defines heritage as material and non-renewable (ibid). AHD is path-dependent, which continues shaping perceptions and dissonant conceptions of heritage.

The AHD can be identified within the case of street art and graffiti, although the experts in charge of preservation or removal are not only experts within the heritage field, but also private actors and various state and city authorities. The most classical approaches of AHD were applied to street art and graffiti such as tangible framing (e.g. covering an artwork with Plexiglas or Perspex), preservation of ascribed historical, aesthetic and touristic value, and legal heritage frameworks. The academic literature illustrates that local authorities and heritage experts most commonly use value-based systems and tangible preservation techniques to justify the preservation of street art and graffiti (Avery, 2009, MacDowall 2006, Hansen 2016, Hansen and Danny 2015, Dovey, Wollan, and Woodcock 2012). However, street art or graffiti values like illegality, the 'everyday', public space, anti-commercialism and

transience are usually not considered. Susan Hansen and Danny Flynn (2015, 898) specify that local councils tend to preserve street artworks of famous street artists by fixing Perspex over the works; this marks them as 'being of value', 'adding value' and being worthy of conservation. However, they fail to consider its anti-commercial and "the right to everyday experience" value. They fail to understand that unsanctioned graffiti and street arts role is beyond bureaucratic or capitalist systems, beyond the elite space of the art gallery; a free form of art, which can be made by everybody and for everybody. For this reason, the tangible preservation strategy has proven harmful to street art and graffiti as it reinforces a division of high and local culture, and encourages vandalism rather than safeguarding (Hansen and Danny 2015, 899).

Street art and graffiti has traditionally fought for the urban commons and been intentionally accessible. Framing street artworks deprives citizens of the right to experience them (in the public space and ephemerally) in daily life and the broader right to engage with the city; it stimulates the privatization and commodification of culture, which street art by its nature is opposed to. Moreover,

Argus 'Smiley' stencil before and after framing.
Source: Argus/ argusgate.wordpress.com.
Permission obtained from Argus.
The framed photo is taken by Latima Nomeikaite.



AHD tends to averse the meanings of certain street artworks neither does it consider the opinions of local people.

The photo below shows the consequence of the preservation of Argus' Stencil "Smiley" with Plexiglass in Bergen, Norway. Smiley was a famous city character; Smiley symbolizes the free expression of the choice to live on the streets of Bergen, his lifestyle represents the right to a different experience and the right to the city. The figure (who also belongs on the street) is very close to the essence of the philosophy of street art. Despite the symbolical meaning of the painting and despite the negative reactions by local people against tangible preservation, which were expressed in local media with the titles "The ugliest gallery in the city" (Bergens Tidende 03 February 2014) and "City council prisons street art" (Bergens Tidende 20 November 2014) street artworks by Argus ('Smiley' and 'Otto') are continuing to be imprisoned with Plexiglass.

Heritage approaches for street art and graffiti

In order to protect the value "right to the city" of unsanctioned street art and graffiti, there is a need to move away from formal heritage frameworks, tangible preservation techniques and expert-based approaches which attempt to legitimize the meaning of heritage. Firstly it needs to be understood, as Laurajane Smith (2006, 44) argues, that



'heritage is not a "thing"; it is not a "site", building or other material object with defined meanings and values'; rather, heritage must be experienced, and 'heritage is the experience' (Smith 2006, 45– 47). Furthermore, drawing on the theoretical position of the more-than-representational aspects of social life, Laurajane Smith (2006, Chap. 2) provides a new understanding of heritage as a process or a performance. Conception of heritage as a process refers to a shift from material representations, static objects and sites, towards heritage as a relational and socio-cultural process in the present. Thus, heritage is always in the remaking process, it is re/ created, it is a cultural process or performance in which the values and meanings are identified and negotiated; this process always emerges in the present not the past (Smith 2006). Heritage is vital, changeable and relational, as David Crouch (2010, 64) presents that heritage closely engages in dwelling, identity and belonging (...) "a dynamic process through which heritage emerges at particular times, moments, durations and feelings of belonging".

Instead of focusing on formal heritage frameworks, value based systems and stakeholder approaches to street art and graffiti, heritage management practice could engage with the performative everyday practice. The turn towards "practice" in heritage studies emphasizes the ways in which people interact routinely at heritage sites, landscapes and museum spaces in everyday life (Auclair, 2015; Crouch, 2010; Haldrup & Boerenholdt, 2015; Schofield, 2009). John Schofield (2009) expresses that, in order to achieve more inclusive heritage management, researchers must analyse the interactions between people and their physical environment in everyday life. In his opinion, '[t]he heritage should be about: the everyday, the everywhere and something for (and of) everybody' (Schofield 2009: 112). Schofield asserts that studying the everyday is a symmetric approach to heritage conservation, accommodating multiple views and perspectives; everyday practice provides the views about heritage as people actively engage with it rather than a selective heritage expert group managing the change.

Graffiti and street art is not only imagery, but it also concerns urban life – its

atmosphere, its public space and its 'everyday' sensory, affective and embodied experience. Thus, there is a need to engage with the multiple views and perspectives related to not only street art images, but also to its relations to the cityscape.

Performative and affect-based approaches might capture different perceptions and sensory experiences of street artwork and its relationship to the physical environment. Performative research methods were developed for exploring performative practice and the sensory inventory of urban life, including 'soundwalks' and bodily interactions (Paquette & McCartney, 2012); 'smellwalks' (Henshaw, 2013); and rhythm (Edensor, 2012). Charlotte Bates (2013), for example, uses video diaries to capture embodied experience in everyday life.

To conclude, street art and graffiti does not need to be managed by experts, the law or Plexiglas; instead, there is a need to engage with multiple views and perspectives and to understand the role and the relationships between street art/graffiti and its place, people and space. Following Guy Debord's (1957) statement that 'what changes our way of seeing the streets is more important than what changes our way of seeing painting', in the context of heritage management practice it could be said that: what changes

our way of approaching heritage is more important than managing said change.

Laima Nomeikaite

is a city planner and human geographer, engaged at The Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) since 2016. She has a master's degree in human geography with a particular focus on heritage, tourism and local/regional development from the University of Bergen.

In recent years she has worked on a variety of projects related to culture, urban development, heritage research and urban planning. She has experience from diverse planning processes in the field of urban planning, including public consultation, policy recommendations, implementation and management of municipal and commercial developments. She has carried out projects related to policy impact assessments, concept development, location analysis and land-use planning. Her main work experience in the heritage field is related to research and urban planning projects aimed at the planning and management of cultural heritage and the use of cultural heritage as a cultural, political, societal and economic resource.

She is particularly interested in the interlink between heritage, arts, city and space/place.

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THE PASSION 4 DESTRUCTION



FALL IN
LOVE
NOT IN
LINE

IS A CREATIVE JOY



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Stavanger Kommune

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