

Street art as a form of art

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“ Art isn’t the legality of something, but the creativity and meaning behind it” (Galan). There is plenty of graffiti and most people don’t normally think about the meaning behind it. You really can’t go a day without seeing graffiti. You will mainly see it on freight trains, alleys, railway tunnels, and even in smaller places like school desks and bathrooms. Most people tend to think “ Oh, it’s just those dumb kids making messes” but some things have meaning.

Let’s take a look at some of the history behind graffiti and where its meaning started. It’s something that had started back in the Stone Age which was 2.5 million years ago. Of course, it wasn’t anything like today with Banksy, Keith Haring, C215, Evol, and many more. It started with cave drawings, paintings, that tell stories of their ancestors, or just some lewd humor. Some also had to keep track of the generations and family ‘ pictures’. One of the first true graffiti was when Lewis the sixteenth statue was graffitied. The word ‘ Resurrexit’ was graffitied on the pedestal of his statue. Now, this graffiti has turned into what is known today as street art.

Let’s get back to a more advanced time. Today there are more people doing it and more reasons to. Not all have reasons, they just do it for the thrill of being out all night in front of a wall creating something beautiful. That’s not when they find it the most beautiful though. They find it the most beautiful seeing everyone’s reaction to it when they finally see it in the light. They also have a lot of freedom to what they can do and what they can’t. For them to find what style they enjoy and want to continue doing. It may not be just one thing, they can be inspired by so many things. These could be things from their childhood or things they see on a daily basis and want to change

them. They can also have a very strong opinion for something and want to spread the word on how they feel about the topic. It all really depends on how they are feeling and how they want to say something. It could have a really deep, strong meaning, like children that are homeless or starving. Yet we decide judge by what we see and we do not exactly see the true meaning behind it. It does not even have to be something deep. They may just want to express their feelings, stories, hopes, and dreams to the world. There usually is always a deeper meaning. Those with a creative eye see it before most ordinary people.

The placement of it matters too. If you see ‘ Art is a Crime’ in the middle of nowhere. Most will think ‘ Wow, that’s really ugly and disrespectful’. Yet if you see it in the middle of a big city most will think ‘ Wow, It’s so beautiful yet simple at the same time’. Placement shouldn’t really matter. There are some other things artist want us to do but never say it. They want most people that walk by to be inspired or get inspired like how they were when they were younger.

One of the most famous street artists, Banksy, wants to inspire so many people to do so much. He enjoys using the walls and his paints as a weapon to the society to show a difference and spread the love. No one really knows who he is but he has inspired many, like students looking for inspiration, or even more street artists that want to make a bigger mark on something. Most artists like him have a shared love for art and feeling united in the adventure of doing all the street art out there. Some people think of the art as a mirror and only pull out what they see in themselves and feel how they

relate to it. One of Banksy's quotes is, " There is graffiti and vandalism. They are two very different things. The problem is they are confused" (Galan).

Now let's take a look at the other side. Let's start with the definition of vandalism — the act of defacing or marking premises or others property without permission. Yet not all artist have permission but they usually know the people around there and talk to them and say stuff along the lines of ' I wish Banksy had marked here' so he comes upon himself to do so. Another thing is it could be dangerous. It may be affecting: the health of those who do it, the environment with the chemicals being used to do it, and where it is placed can be very dangerous. " The majority of recorded rail fatalities are trespassers on the rail network" (ITSRR). Some of these can be fixed. Most street artists wear gas masks or facial masks to keep breathing clean air. Almost all artist also throw all their remains away. Including their paint cans, old stencils, and anything else they decide to bring, sodas, food, etc. It could also be fixed when the government goes to clean it, they could find a more environmentally safe mixture. They could also not clean it at all knowing that people put their hard work and time into it. Not only is it hard work and time but money and part of their heart. If they can't get it to work they will find some other way to make it. Some artists are crushed when it gets cleaned up only a day after they did it. They want to keep it for as long as it can.

Street art always has some type of hidden meaning, as far back as the stone age. It almost always has some type of deep meaning, from hopes and dreams to taking their stance on a political topic. They all want us to be inspired by their artwork. It may not be a big thing. It could be something small saying something huge. It could even be just one word. Change, it

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means a lot. Everyone changes. The artists change how their art is every year. Yet we do not realize it. It could be something small, from how they tag their name to how they make their art, where they place it, and how they feel about it. They will always have stuck with it. Even if they do not stick with it, it will always stick with them. From people not wanting to ruin it, to people posing in front of it wanting the world to never forget them. That's another thing they want us to do. Never forget them. They want to be known worldwide as long as they can. " Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known" (Galan).

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