

Street Art in Dublin

Challenges and Opportunities

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HISTORY OF STREET ART & GRAFFITI

- Graffiti emerged in New York in the early 70s. It was quasi legal for a period as the City couldn't afford to clean the tags and pieces from the streets and trains that graffiti writers (as they became known) were painting.
- It emerged into public consciousness in the 80s after it got packaged with the emerging musical hip hop / breakdancing scene as one of the "Four Elements" alongside Hip Hop MCing (rapping), B Boying (Breakdancing,) & Dj-ing.
- Over the next 20 years the art form expanded from mainly letter based art form – a group of letters which formed a "tag" - alongside characters to include other forms of spraypaint art - often political statements, stencils, abstract forms of spraypaint art. This became known as "Street Art" popularized by Banksy.
- Broadly speaking - Graffiti was usually illegal, Street Art was more often commissioned by the owner of the space or a company for an advertisement

PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

- Outline the different forms of Graffiti – Street Art that we can see in Dublin
- Some of the problems facing the practitioners and the community at large with regards to it
- How the Council can help to encourage what is a popular participatory and extremely inclusive pastime for some, and living for others.

GRAFFITI PIECE

- “Pieces” usually consist of a “tag” which is the alias of the writer
- A background such as city scape etc which is the canvas for the letters
- A character or other illustrative additions
- Depending on the “style” it can be easy to read or hieroglyphic in its complexity!



WORLD CLASS GRAFFITI WRITER – HIGH LEVEL LETTER FORMS

- As this is a relatively new art form – in Ireland at least – there is not a great level of critical appreciation.
- All Graffiti / Street art is not the same – there are many different levels of skill!
- The two examples below are two pieces from Dublin's Tivoli Theatre. They were painted by an artist called Rime. It may surprise you but both these pieces consist of an R , I , M and an E to make his tag.



GRAFFITI PRODUCTIONS – THEMED PIECES ON ONE WALL!

- Street artists & Graffiti writers often work in close collaboration – usually called Productions
- These would be a series of “pieces” usually colour themed with an extensive background



Richmond St, Dublin 2



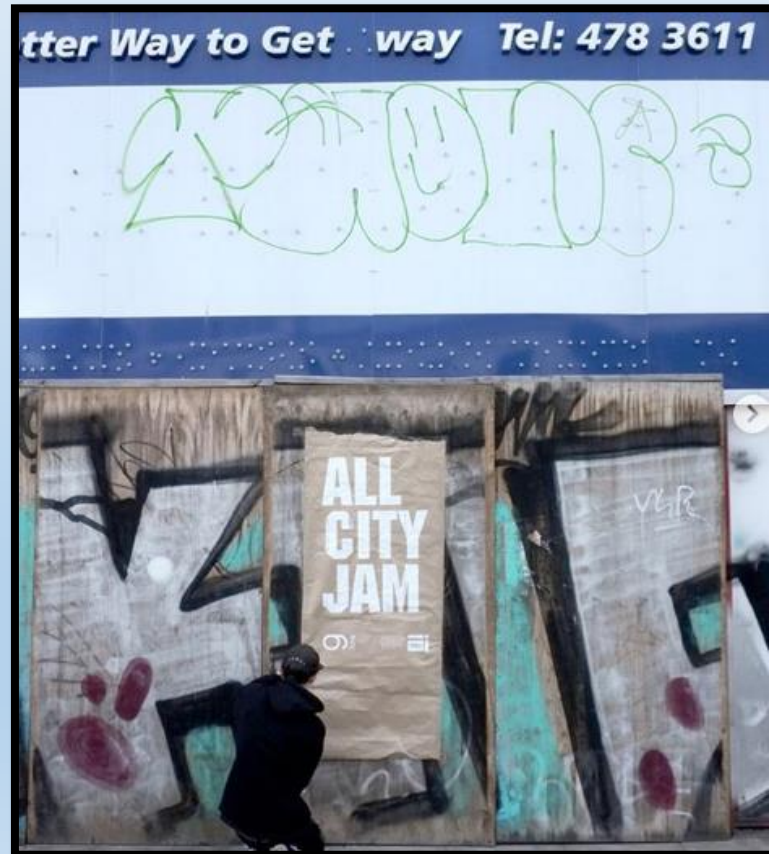
Tivoli Theatre, Dublin 8



Sandyford, Co. Dublin

Tags & Throwups

- What people think of when they think Graffiti is often “tags”
- Illegal graffiti tags are usually quickly done with markers
- Throwups are quick illegal pieces usually done with paint





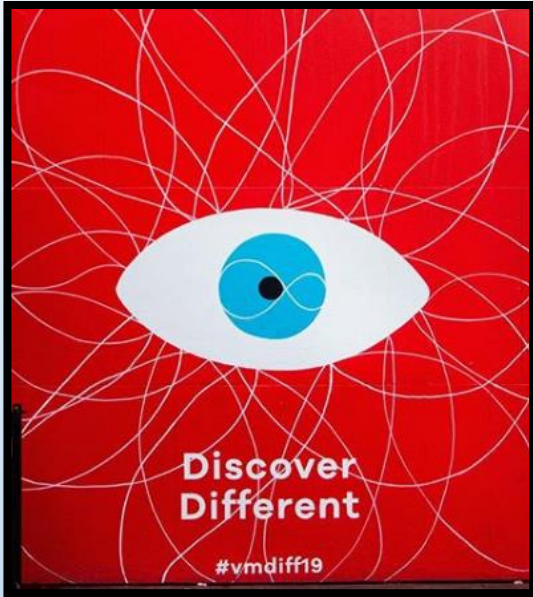
STREET ART – CHARACTERS / STATEMENTS

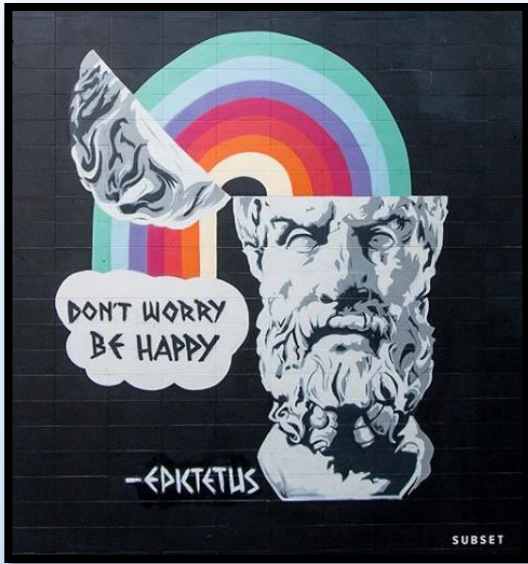
- Usually devoid of letters Street Art is probably more closely related to conventional art forms
- “Photo realistic” characters
- Playful colouring & comic style characters
- Readable simple slogans – such as Repeal 8 etc fall under this banner
- All these images below are taken from Tivoli Theatre, Dublin 8



COMMISSIONS / ADVERTISEMENTS

- Over the last few years there has been an explosion of advertisements & commissions
- Some are very obvious (see the Rolling Stones and Freddie Mercury below!)
- With others it's not so obvious it's an advertisement.





Less Obvious forms of Ads on walls in Dublin

- In the main this advertising is done by a very small number of artists and Advertising & Marketing agencies.

This is very different to Productions & Pieces etc

Problems Facing Graffiti – Street Art & Local Communities & Councils

- Lack of Legal Walls – A legal wall is an area – sometimes known as a “Hall of Fame” where anyone can paint regardless of level.
- Problem of Tagging
- Lack of Understanding of the wider Graffiti culture I’ve just outlined
- Planning Permission procedure

How the Council Can Help

- Engage in dialog with Graffiti – Street Art Hobbyists as the dialogue is often regarding the commercial work.
- The Council can help provide legal areas to paint such as Richmond Lane, Dublin 2.
- Clear communication regarding Planning Permission procedure for the professional artist.
- What DCC are doing: Street Art Forum, Street Art Working Group. Partnership Planning Actions

