

# The Introduction of Street Art's Etymology-Related Context and Discipline Against An Artwork in the Public Space

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper provides an introduction and overview of the term 'street art'. Related artwork in outdoor public areas such as 'graffiti', 'murals', and 'public art' are also debated to gain an understanding of the terms. Since the late 1960s, graffiti has developed in the United States and had a huge impact on the atmosphere of Western art and the development of art knowledge. The distinctions between different terminologies reflect the understanding of artists, scholars, academics, researchers, and the public. This review will be investigated using a conceptual of etymological perspective. This discussion also considers the publication and influence of artists such as John Fekner, David Wojnarowicz, Richard Hemberton, and Keith Haring at the beginning of the existence of artistic genres. This is necessary because the term "street art" is frequently used interchangeably in a few publications and discussions. Based on this review, three additional recommendations are made for the following researcher to do a series of studies.*

**Keywords:** Street Art, Graffiti, Mural, Public Art, Etymology



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The literal interpretation of street art is creativity enacted in an urban environment. It would be a good starting point for sharing the expression and idea. Many examples of street art can be found on buildings and walls. They also appear on paving stones or "street furniture" ornaments that often accompany our cityscapes, such as electric boxes, benches, post boxes, hydrants, and lampposts.

Artists who have worked on the streets have moved their work away from simple bricks and mortar and into other open-air locations. For example, Banksy has decorated beaches and livestock, while Saltburn's yam bombers have knitted over the town's pier and even taken to decorating trees with their creations. All of these locations have one thing in common: they are public spaces rather than art galleries or other formal establishments built specifically for seeing and experiencing art. Instead, they are open to all, free to all, and simple to use for both the viewer and the artist while creating the artwork (Thorne, 2014). According to Jerome Catz (2014) Street art does not try to blend into its surroundings; on the contrary, its ultimate goal is to be seen. As its name indicates, its arena is the street, including billboards, buildings, and other unexpected but prominent places (Catz, 2014).

The works of street art can also be categorised as "ephemeral art." This is because artistic expressions are conceptualised with the idea of transience within a certain time frame and not

perseverance as a tangible and preserved work of art. It can be eliminated by time factor, weather, deleted or expired (refers to commissions artwork). This work, which began as uncommission artwork, eventually gave rise to a wide range of names, types, and functions. However, in view of its emergence in the late 1960s (referring to modern street art), several terminologies have been used to deduce the genre of the work produced.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Etymology is the study of the relationship between other historical language sciences and symbiotic words. The sound correspondence that serves as the foundation of the formal evolutionary study of language is derived from a large number of approved and validated etymologies. For the reconstruction or identification of the etymology of numerous words in a language whose origin is obscure, contested, or altogether unknown, deep knowledge of formal and semantic evolutionary patterns recognised on the basis of well-established etymology is required. The study of the etymology of a language's terminology is typically studied in reverse order from the current language (Dworkin, 2015).

According to Robert Mailhammer (2004), etymology consists of four stages, namely First, etymology is the foundation of historical linguistics, the starting point of the historical investigation of a language and at the same time one of its subfields. To determine an item's etymology, one must travel back to the time when it was initially developed and account for the changes that have occurred since then. Second, etymology differs from explaining synchronous processes like word creation. Relating one chronological stage of a language to prior ones is an intrinsically diachronic perspective. Third, etymology is concerned with the origin and history of linguistic elements, it can be applied to larger and smaller linguistic units with appropriate stability. As a result, a distinction between lexical and structural etymology can be formed, with methodological implications. Fourth, etymologies can be graded according to quality, i.e., the likelihood of their correctness (Mailhammer, 2014).

In conclusion, etymology is a branch of linguistic theory that studies the history of words and their constituents to determine their origin and derivation. However, for this review paper, I did not follow the narrative theory of etymology in finding the melting point of the word "street art." I just saw, from historical context, the use of the term "street art" through the comparison of terminology in the area where the artwork is presented.

Street art is a form of artwork that is displayed in public on surrounding buildings, on streets, and on other publicly viewed surfaces. Many instances come in that are intended to make a personal statement about the society that the artist lives within. During his early existence, this form transitioned from vandalism to new art styles. A common motive is that creating art in a format that utilises public space allows artists who may otherwise feel disenfranchised to reach a much broader audience than other styles or galleries would allow. Some artists may use this form of style as a way to raise awareness of social and political issues, whereas other artists use urban space as an opportunity to display personal artwork. Artists may also appreciate the challenges and risks associated with installing illicit artwork in public places.

When addressing the term "street art," the phrase "graffiti" will almost certainly come up because their existence dates back to the same late modern age. Graffiti has been around for quite some time. According to Fiona McDonald (2013), it is separated into two major eras, beginning with the prehistoric era and progressing through the ancient civilization and mediaeval graffiti. The present stage ranges from the twentieth century (modern graffiti) through street art and urban artists (McDonald, 2013). Although this street art is always related to graffiti art because it is created in a public location and is usually not allowed, but in terms of ideology and application it is two different genres. Some additional

viewpoints will be covered in more detail in the next part that follows so that its actual application and functionality can be seen.

### 3. DISCUSSION

The term “street art” has an etymological history that is ambiguous. Since the late 1960s, the graffiti movement has grown in the United States and had a huge impact on Western forms of public art. It affects the arts community, researchers, and the government. The concept of “art on the street” has also started to gain attention in other countries, especially among artists who produce open artworks without restrictions from galleries and arts institutions. Therefore, in this part, artists, various terminologies, book publications, and theoretical perspectives will be discussed in order to comprehend and relate to the context of established street art vocabulary.

#### 3.1 Context by artist

The first street art pioneer to use the technique of stencilling self-authorized art directly on public walls was not Blek le Rat. It was started by his fellow Frenchman, Ernest Pignon-Ernest, in 1966. A few years later, in 1969, it was the start of illegal street art stencilling in the United States. Early activity was detected in Los Angeles by Chaz Bojórquez around 1970. Then, stencil high time in New York. Before the mid-1980s, begin being active. There were many other stencil artists active in New York City from 1969 to 1985, most notably artists such as Christoph Kohlhofer, Eric Drooker, or Anton van Dalen, who worked with the ideas of political, concept art, pop art, and a "do it yourself" punk attitude. Later, a few artists, such as John Fekner, David Wojnarowicz, and Alex Vallauri, used street stencilling as their main artistic output to share their form of artwork with the public (Blanche, 2021).

According to Cedar Lewisohn, the term "street art" was probably frequently used in the late 1970s. "Detective Show" was curated by artist John Fekner in an outdoor park in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York, in 1978. The phrase "street museum" appeared on the event invitation card. He says he learned about it while making jokes with group members. "If you had a degree, you did "street art" instead of "graffiti." That's because John Fekner is a fine artist who exhibits his work in public spaces. The term "street art" became fashionable among fine painters a few years later (Lewisohn, 2008, pp. 17-18).

Another artist from the same era who also used the street as an open gallery (exhibit location) was Richard Hambleton. In 1976, Hambleton appeared on the scene with his “Mass Murder series”. For these works, he produced 600 artworks in 15 locations. The American-Canadian artist would anonymously chalk the contours of volunteers’ bodies on US sidewalks, thereby generating dramatic images of murder scenes. The character known as "Shadowman" was a menacing, life-sized, black-silhouetted figure. That propelled him to fame. He also painted some 450 of them on the walls of New York City (Gallery, 2020). However, the production of his work is more of a graffiti concept -"paint and run." There's no proper event; just produce the work and leave it in that place for public viewing. It's not the same as John Fekner, who organises the common exhibitions.

The latest artist is Keith Haring; he was an American pop artist who emerged from New York City in the early 1980s, during the peak of the graffiti culture. Haring made nearly 5,000 pieces of graffiti art in New York subways between 1980 and 1985. His art style had a significant impact on the art movement (Istivan, 2022). By referring to a book by Robert Farris Thomson (2010), even though Keith Haring is referred to as a "graffiti artist" in a few articles at the time, his notion of art is similar to that of a street artist. This is due to the fact that his artworks are diametrically opposed to graffiti ideology. It just so happened to be amid the height of New York's graffiti explosion, and he used the street to express ideas and artwork (Thomson, 2010).

Artists, on the other hand, prefer to be recognised as individuals and avoid external classification. They simply ignore the rules that have been put in place to define them. It's in their nature, and they don't categorise art in any way. Although these artists did not officially contribute to the establishment of the term, their artwork reflects on the development of the word "street art."

### 3.2 Book Publication

Meanwhile, in the world of book publishing, two books have been identified using the title "Street Art." This was an early publication identified in the context of the artwork's genre. Robert Sommer was one of the first to use the term "street art" in a book. "Street Art" is the title of the book. The year of publishing is 1975. This book is about murals in metropolitan communities in the United States of America. As a result, artworks were created by indigenous or non-resident artists who collaborated with a community to represent its cultural values and aspirations. It is concerned with the symbiotic relationship that exists between art and the environment. Sommers' argument against commercial developers destroying these people's artworks was compelling and well-considered (Enstice, 1977).

Another book titled "Street Art" was written by Allan Schwartzman. The year of publication was 1985. The book combines graffiti and wall painting. Among the artists represented in this book are Keith Haring, Richard Hambleton, and Futura 2000. Most of these artists reject the tradition of the gallery. The artwork collected represents a variety of approaches and issues (Schwartzman, 1985).

When we look at the artwork examples used as references in these two early publications, we can notice that they are significantly different. Robert Sommer refers to mural and earthwork. While Allan Schwartzman refers to a new genre of artwork that is exploding up in urban areas. This indicates that the classification of artwork genres in urban areas (open space) began to evolve, but the title, which incorporates the enormous theme of the range of artworks in both books, has begun to be utilised.

### 3.3 Graffiti vs Street Art

According to Jacob Kivall (2014), the term "graffiti," which is relevant to street art, is connected to modern graffiti, underground graffiti, or subculture graffiti, as well as a specific type of graffiti termed "style writing." Graffiti is a type of writing that begins with "tags" and progresses to "pieces," which are larger and more complex words that are typically written using a spray can or a marker pen on bare walls in public places (Kivall, 2014). The graffiti movement is seen as a major starting point in the structure of street art terminology.

According to Ulrich Blanche (2015), Street art varies from graffiti in that graffiti focuses on written letters, whereas street art focuses on pictorial communication, despite the fact that both exist on and move along the same continuum between writing and pictures. He also stated that paper-based street art is more visual than pieces sprayed directly onto a surface (Blanche., 2015)

In street art, the image frequently takes precedence over anonymous name writing or "style writing." In contrast to the aforementioned description of street art, which consciously seeks communication with a broad circle of people, "Style writing" graffiti frequently communicates with the artwork of other style writers and does not intend to speak with the general public. Even street art that relies extensively on language is more akin to advertising than style writing in that it prioritises legibility for the broad public.

According to Cedar Lewisohn (2008), Street art is less constrained by established stylistic principles and a limited range of artistic materials such as spray paint and markers than style-written graffiti. Lewisohn's remark, while exaggerated, can be affirmed at least in general, albeit examples to the contrary are abundant, both in terms of quality and number. These same cautions apply to another of Lewisohn's theses, namely that street art relies more heavily on studio preparation than the technically demanding and perilous fabrication of stylized handwork on the street (Lewisohn, 2008, p. 48).

Political or social commentary artworks on walls is the precursor to modern graffiti and street art. Graffiti is a pseudonym name or cartoon character drawing. It is a piece of writing (known as a letter among them). Graffiti can range from simple to complex letters. Street art, on the other hand, is a combination of text or iconic visual symbols with messages to communicate. It will be produced in a variety of styles, according to the creativity of the artist. The difference between graffiti and street art ideology is demonstrated here. It's just that the location of the presentation of their work is the same, so the use of terminology sometimes overlaps with each other.

### 3.4 Street Art vs Mural

A mural is any piece of artwork that is painted or applied directly to a wall, ceiling, or other permanent substrate. Fresco, mosaic, brush paint, and camouflage are a few examples of common mural techniques.

According Norfarain (2022), Murals have existed for a thousand years, as evidenced by the methods and shapes utilised to convey messages or tales of former lifestyles or routines. Murals were popular during classical times and were used by the Egyptians for their tombs; other popular arts during this time period included Minos (castles), old Greek (temples, houses), Etruria (funeral arts), and Old Roman (public institutions, houses). Nonetheless, the typical mural paintings discovered in Pompei show that Roman mural painters were far more skilled than interior decorators. Murals were also a popular art form among the Christians, especially at the graveyards outside of Rome (Rahman, 2022)

The modern mural was popularised by the Mexican Muralism art movement, which spanned between the 1920s and the 1970s. A group of artists known as "The Big Three" managed the muralist project. Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros founded this group. Murals come in a variety of styles and methods. The most well-known method is fresco, which involves combining water-soluble paints with a damp lime wash and swiftly applying the resulting paste across a large area, sometimes in small parts (Anreus, 2012) .

According to mural studies carried out by Marschall (2016), The murals appeared in South Africa's major cities and towns across the country. Urban mural art is tied to and promoted as a continuation of a century-old indigenous South African wall painting tradition that began with San rock art. Contemporary urban murals are classified as "street arts" by another source, with literature, song, dance, parades and carnivals, ornamented vehicle bodywork, popular theatre, and poetry. Murals, too, are frequently thought to be closely related to, if not identical to, graffiti since they have a similar artistic aspect and are supposed to be inspired by a similar dynamic. Others associate murals with advertisements, yet murals are often referred to as "people's art" or a popular type of cultural output by journalists and artists (Marschall, 2016).

In terms of technique, many murals begin with white-washed walls, as opposed to street art, which works with the physical context of the wall. Murals are enormous. The human scale is important in street art (and its physical extensions, like ladders, etc.). Murals make use of superhuman instruments such as cranes and lifting ramps. As an observer, you can estimate the scale of a street art piece with your own body. The human scale becomes an element of the street environment. Murals include less interaction between context, place, and the artist or observer (Blanche, 2021)

The term "mural" is frequently used in the context of street art to describe labour-intensive, multicoloured, massive works done with an airbrush, spray cans, or walls. The majority of the time, murals get approved. Murals are therefore "big format paintings" that are put directly on the wall, typically in public places. Material techniques and technology, manifestations or messages, and artistic styles can all be used in street art works. Murals, according to Quzaimi, are now a sub-genre of street art (An-Nuur, 2020) .

### 3.5 Street Art vs Public Art

Public art has existed for thousands of years in a variety of cultures and societies, serving a wide range of purposes. During ancient Greek and Roman culture, it was an aesthetic medium for communicating between the state and the people. Public art appears in various forms that mimic various art products, starting from traditional art such as sculptures and installations, site-specific installations, murals, architecture, graffiti, action, intervention, land, and environmental art and performance. It also includes architectural work in urban landscapes such as lampposts, benches in parks, public paths, and so on. The main goal, however, is its potential to be experienced in the field of visible free art without going through narrow and specialised institutions and galleries.

The purpose of public art was originally to inspire historical pride and foster community connections through accessible culture, but as the civil rights movements gained traction, the idea of using public space as a democratic canvas led to an extension of the practise in the 1970s. The definition of public art has expanded to include unlicensed street art, artist-initiated public interventions, commissions for urban revitalization, and modern artists' personal statements that go beyond commercial or partisan constraints. Many modern pieces are being designed with the relationship between the work and its audience in mind, as public art has grown to not just depict but also engage with the public realm. This relationship becomes part of the artwork's intended message, influencing both the artist and the viewer and providing the framework for a variety of experience and interpretation options. These practises inform a broad range of contemporary artistic categories, including new public art genres, relational aesthetics, discourse art, and participatory art (TheArtStory, n.d.).

Public art became ordinary, having less to do with a spirit that expands as it collectivises and more to do with normal, overall simulation people in common locations and the everyday occurrences of their commonplace lives. Public art became more abstract at the same time that it became more clearly communitarian. The audience was no longer a passive viewer, but rather an active participant in the creation of the work of art (Hein, 1996)

The distinction between public and private uses of space is blurred as a result of street art practises that invade cities as unapproved initiatives. Magda Sayeg and Blek le Rat are two artists whose street practises eloquently demonstrate the expressive possibilities of art in the public sphere (Waclawek, 2010, pp. 65-78).

According to Jasmi (2016), the term "public art" has many different interpretations and has been used to refer to any artwork that is located outside, from a national statue or monument to a mural or graffiti sprayed on a wall by the public. Public art is sometimes used as an umbrella word for any artwork that is not presented in formal museums or art galleries (Jasmi, 2016)

## 4. CONCLUSION

"Street art" and other terms discussed may have had very similar origins in the past, both stemming from a similar place with some congruous ideas and cross-pollination, but they are different in terms of form, function, and intention. This term "street art" is also seen as a term for distinguishing graffiti works. Style-writing graffiti is less constrained by set stylistic norms and a few artistic materials such as spray paint and markers. Even street art that heavily relies on language is more akin to advertising than style writing in that its top priority is legality for the general public.

Murals are large format artworks that are multi-coloured and labour-intensive, such as wall, airbrush, and spray can paints. Street art is mostly about what they say about themselves or commission work, which may come from a small group or groups.

Street art is also seen as a new terminology that is distinct from the term public art. By looking at historical context, the term "public art" exists in Greece and Rome, as well as in the Christian works of the Middle Ages and the age of fresco that followed them. These works do not so much exalt the private vision of individual artists as they speak to the shared values and convictions of cultural communities and are therefore located in buildings and open spaces where people regularly gather to commemorate those same values and convictions.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

The definition and classification of street art are ongoing processes. Its meaning varies according to its setting and is still up for debate as numerous groups and actors participate in the conversation. Even further, available resources distinguish individuals who belong to and represent the street art scene from those who interfere from the outside. External organisations, such as the mass media, politicians, and users of social networking sites, also characterise street art by reporting on it and classifying it in broad terms. For further recommendations, a series of studies can be carried out, among which:

1. Focus on the specific topics discussed above. By examining the chronology and variable factors of the terminology, we can gain a deeper understanding.
2. By looking from the formalistic point of view of the application, we can see the difference in the type of work produced to clearly distinguish the term.
3. A complete comparison viewpoint of the three major groups, namely researchers, street art performers, and the audience of the public who appreciate the artwork.

It is hoped that the introduction of artists, book publications, and nearly all of the terms used in open spaces will make it clear that changes to this terminology will continue to occur. Other terms found are "independent art," "post-graffiti," "neo-graffiti," and "guerrilla art," but they are less popular. While the term "urban art" is also used and seen as gaining a place among academics, researchers, and art historians,

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There are no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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