

now

The word "now" is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Each letter is composed of a different image: 'n' is a textured gray surface, 'o' is a yellow circle with black horizontal stripes, 'w' is a black and white photograph of two people, and 'e' is a blue square.

FOR

The word "FOR" is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Each letter is composed of a different image: 'F' is a gold-colored metallic surface, 'O' is a white circle with black horizontal stripes, and 'R' is a red surface with a small green plant at the bottom right.

Now

The word "Now" is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Each letter is composed of a different image: 'N' is a dark gray surface, 'o' is a red circle with black horizontal stripes, and 'w' is a blue surface.

Icons for Now

Århus Kunstabning, den 28. august 2008

Icons for Now

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Icons for Now viser 10 af de mest markante og nyskabende navne på den danske og udenlandske street art-scene fra de sidste tre årtier.

Kunstnerne er blevet inviteret til at udføre værker i dialog med Århus by, dens arkitektur og indbyggere. Med navnene André alias Monsieur A (FR), Blu (IT), Faust (DK), Herbert Baglione (BR), HuskMitNavn (DK), Miss.Tic (FR), Steve Powers (US), Søren Behncke alias papfar (DK), Victor Ash (PT/FR/DK) og Zevs (FR) præsenterer udstillingen en bred vifte af nogle af de ypperste kunstnere fra denne scene.

Street art er blevet en del af vor tids bymiljø og hverdag.

I samtidens byrum, der domineres af kommersielle og informative billeder og signaler, bliver gadekunsten et tiltrængt alternativ og en konkurrerende tegnverden, der strækker sig fra det æstetisk forførende over det tankevækkende til det udfordrende. Intentionen bag disse kunstneres værker er ligeledes alt fra forsøknelse over humoristiske opråb og samfundskritik til direkte konfrontation.

Begrebet street art blev første gang anvendt om en række kunstneres arbejde i 1980'ernes New York. De mest kendte kunstnere fra denne tid er Keith Haring og Jean-Michel Basquiat. Begge var inspirerede af graffiti, men deres udtryk og strategier var anderledes og talte til et bredere publikum. I dag bruges begrebet også som paraplybegrebet for alskens uautoriserede interventioner på gadeplan, herunder graffiti. De fleste af kunstnerne på *Icons for Now* har en baggrund som 'skrivere' eller graffitimaler, men enkelte har også andre inspirationskilder og baggrunde såsom politisk aktivisme og grafisk design. Et fællestørk er, at deres virkemidler er umiddelbart effektfulde, og at de kommunikerer direkte til folk, der passerer. Et andet fællestørk er, at de ikke er blevet båret frem af et netværk af etablerede kritikere, kuratorer, kunstskoler, institutioner og gallerier. Det er blandt andet gennem alternative kulturmagasiner, specialiserede hjemmesider og gallerier og ikke mindst gadens publikum, at disse kunstnere først har opnået anerkendelse.

Street art er flygtig og forgængelig, fordi den opstår og forsvinder i den moderne by her og nu. Siden graffiti dukkede op i Philadelphia i 1960'erne, spredte sig til hele New York i 1970'erne og til resten af verden fra og med 1980'erne, har bekæmpelsen af samme også grebet om sig. Anti-graffiti kampagner har dog ikke sikret en by uden uautoriseret skrift og uautoriserede billeder på væggene. Til gengæld har anti-graffiti politikken været en anledning blandt andre for deltagerne på *Icons for Now* til at revurder deres praksis. Mest synligt er det i deres materialevalg og fremgangsmåde: HuskMitNavn har skiftet spraymaling ud med mere forgængelige plakater, der meneres at belaste bymiljøet mindre. Zevs er gået fra at bruge spraymaling til slidstærkt vejmalning, der ikke kan spules væk. Steve Powers har arbejdet på byens mest forfaldne og negligerede overflader og her-

med promoveret graffiti som lokalt renoveringsarbejde. André har udbudt graffiti som en service for elskende, der offentligt vil tilkendegive deres kærlighed til deres udkåre. Søren Behncke har under sit alias papfar fra starten valgt pap som materiale, der sættes op i byrummet lige så let, som det tages ned igen. Miss.Tic og Faust har søgt om tilladelser til at lave det, de alligevel laver. Herbert Baglione har påtaget sig udsmykningsopgaver, og Victor Ash og Blu har lavet store vægmalerier til udstillinger på kunstcentre, der har spredt sig ud i byrummet.

Med *Icons for Now* præsenteres alle ti kunstneres lovlige bidrag i det offentlige byrum. Med en etableret institution bag sig har kunstnerne fået mulighed for at skabe unikke værker til Århus by over en længere periode end de måske er vant til, men også med en anden varighed for øje end de ofte kan forvente. Værkerne, der kommer til at udgøre *Icons for Now*, vil for en periode blive fastholdt og ikoniseret i byens rum, hvorefter de vil blive overladt til byen på ubestemt tid. De er "for Now" - fordi de er nedslag i en samtid, som af natur er flygtig.

Icons for Now udstikker andre rammer for gadekunstnere, deres publikum og byen overhovedet. Ofte bliver kunstnerne inviteret ind i kunstinstitutioner og galleriers udstillingsrum, når de er blevet anerkendte andetsteds. *Icons for Now* hiver dem ud i byrummet igen. Udstillingen præsenterer således en række kunstnere i deres naturlige element, hvor naturligt det end er. *Icons for Now* skal være med til at skærpe blikket for og kvalificere holdningerne til det, som udstillingens kunstnere og deres kolleger kan.

I et strengt administreret byrum er det, man har brug for, ikke mere design, flere anvisninger og reklamer, men pauser, der vækker til eftertanke og har en effekt.

Miriam Nielsen & Toke Lykkeberg

Icons for Now

Aarhus Kunstabning, August 28, 2008

Icons for Now shows 10 of the most significant and innovative names on the Danish and international street art scene from the last three decades. These artists have been invited to produce work in dialogue with the city of Århus - its architecture and its inhabitants. With the names André alias Monsieur A (FR), Blu (IT), Faust (DK), Herbert Baglione (BR), HuskMitNavn/RememberMyName (DK), Miss.Tic (FR), Steve Powers (US), Søren Behncke alias papfar (DK), Victor Ash (PT/FR/DK) and Zevs (FR), this exhibition presents a wide selection of some of the most brilliant artists to have come from this scene.

Street art has become an intricate part of urban environments and the everyday lives of our time. In contemporary urban space, which is dominated by commercial and informative images and signals, street art becomes a necessary alternative as well as a competing world of signs, its expression ranging from the aesthetically seductive to the thought-provoking and challenging. The intentions behind the works of these artists vary from the desire to transform ordinary places into beautiful environments, to making humoristic statements, social criticism and direct confrontation.

The term street art was first used to describe the work of a number of artists in New York in the 1980's, out of whom Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat are the most famous today. Although these artists were both inspired by spray can art, their expression and strategies were different and appealed to a wider audience. Today the term is also used as an umbrella term, which covers various unauthorized interventions at street level, among these - graffiti. Most of the artists participating in *Icons for Now* share a past as 'writers' or graffiti painters, still some of them rely on other sources of inspiration and some of them have a background in political activism and graphic design. The artists are united by their talent for creating attention-grabbing works that have an immediate effect on the passer-by. Additionally none of them have relied on having their career pushed forward by a network of established art schools, art institutions, art critics, curators or galleries. Initially they became recognized through alternative art magazines, specialized homepage and galleries but especially through the audience in the street.

Street art is fleeting, a transitory phenomenon in flux, because it arises and disappears in modern urban environments here and now.

Since street art appeared in Philadelphia in the 1960's and spread to New York in the 1970's and to the rest of the world from the beginning of the 1980's, the fight against graffiti has developed along side it. But anti-graffiti campaigns have not been able to guarantee cities void of un-authorized writing and images on its walls. Quite the contrary, anti-graffiti politics have inspired street artists including the participants in *Icons for Now* to reconsider their praxis, especially concerning their choice of materials and methods.

HuskMitNavn/RememberMyName has exchanged his spray can with more impermanent posters, which are thought to do less damage to urban environments. Zevs has moved on from using spray can paint to using strong durable road paint which is impossible to wash off. Steve Powers has worked on some of the most neglected and decayed surfaces of the city, and thereby promoted graffiti as local renovation work. André has offered graffiti as a service to lovers, who wanted to express their love for their partner in public. Søren Behncke has right from the outset, under the alias papfar ('cardboard daddy') chosen to use cardboard which is as easy to put up in the city space as it is to take down again. Miss.Tic and Faust have applied for permission to do what they do anyway. Herbert Baglione has been assigned to do large decorative works and Victor Ash and Blu have both done large murals for exhibitions in public spaces and at art centres.

Icons for Now presents the legal contributions of ten artists within the urban space of Arhus. With an established institution behind them, the artists have been given the opportunity to spend more time creating their works than they are probably used to, and the works will be more permanent than what is usually the case within this scene. Consequently the works, which make up *Icons for Now* will be preserved and 'iconized' for a period of time - where after they be given over to the city indefinitely. They are 'for Now' because they make a mark in an age which is fleeting by nature.

Icons for Now will set a different framework for street artists, their audience and the city in general. Often these artists are invited indoors because they have become recognized artists. We pull them outside again. By doing this *Icons for Now* presents these artists in their natural environment, however natural that might be. *Icons for Now* should partake in both sharpening the eye, and qualifying opinions towards that which these artists, and their contemporaries, are capable of.
In an urban space which is strictly administered what is needed is not more design, more signs and more billboards, but thought-provoking pauses that make an impact.

Miriam Nielsen & Toke Lykkeberg

André alias Monsieur A (FR)

Blu (IT)

Faust (DK)

Herbert Baglione (BR)

HuskMitNavn /

RememberMyName (DK)

Miss.Tic (FR)

Steve Powers (US)

Søren Behncke alias papfar (DK)

Victor Ash (PT/FR/DK)

Zevs (FR)

André alias Monsieur A

I 1985 dukkede en ny signatur op i Paris, der ikke var lige så cool som de andre. På dette tidspunkt havde de første franske graffitiimålere navne, der mindede om de amerikanske skrivere, og de amerikanske skrivere havde navne, der sædvanligvis var usædvanlige. Det var ikke tilfældet med André, der ikke havde noget pseudonym men brugte sit civile formavn som signatur. Med sit navn og sin enkle stil, der forblev let læselig for de uindviede, var André fra starten interesseret i at åbne graffiti for et stort publikum. André ville ændre opfattelsen af graffiti - eller dele sin egen med andre. "Selv om jeg lavede mange ting i metroen, var det aldrig ondskabsfuldt. Jeg var del af en gruppe, som jeg var eneste medlem af. Gruppen hed *TVB* for *Tout Va Bien* (Alt Vel, red.) Denne attitude var det modsatte af mentaliteten dengang. Det lykkedes mig at introducere selvironi i mit arbejde".

I 1989 skiftede André sin signatur ud med en figur, Monsieur A, malet med fri hånd og høj hast først i Paris og siden mange andre byer verden over. Hemed foregreb André, bl.a. inspireret af franske skabelonmalere og amerikaneren Keith Haring, bølgen af graffiti og især street art centreret omkring figurer frem for bogstaver ved årtusindskiftet. Selv beskriver André sin figur med høj hat og lange ben som den første systematiske bearbejdning og distribution af en figur som logo med graffitiers virkemidler. André's skarpe design har gjort hans figur så let genkendelig, at visse af figurernes enkeltdeler kan gøre det ud for helheden og dette uden at miste genkendelighed - et traditionelt graffiti-tema, som André har udviklet mere end de fleste.

Monsieur A har på flere måder iscenesat sig selv som en evindelig tilsynskomst, man ikke kan slippe af med: Som en herre, der på lange ben stormer hen ad byens vægge, imens hans smiler og vinker til forbi passerende; som en herre, der overraskende springer op og ud af byens flader og sprækker, og som en herre, hvis lange krop lumsk ligger på lur i byens vertikale linier. André har også reduceret Monsieur A til få distinktive træk, nemlig grinende tænder og øjne som henholdsvis bolle og kryds. Med tilpasningen af ansigtet til kvadraterne på de gode postkasser i Paris og bagender på varevogne har André været med til at udforske graffititens samspil med alternative overflader i byrummet.

I 1997 åbnede André i samarbejde med galleriet Air de Paris en hjemmeside, hvor folk kunne købe såkaldt love graffiti med deres udkårmes navn. Så snart André havde fået en bestilling, designede han den udkårmes navn, som han efterfølgende malede et sted i byen. I forlængelse heraf producerede han fotografier ledsgaget af certifikater, der mimedde politirapporter med oplysninger om forbrydelsens gerningssted, tidspunkt samt de farver, som maleren havde anvendt.

Andrés leg med opfattelsen af graffiti har også resulteret i forretningstiltag så som salg af graffitimålet lært per meteren og butikken BlackBlock på det parisiske kunstcenter Palais de Tokyo, hvor man blandt andet kan få merchandise af en lang række franske og udenlandske graffitimålere og street artists. For André, der har lagt mere energi i sit arbejde på gaden end i arbejdet på gallerier og kunstinstitutioner, har "en T-shirt produceret af en kunstner lige så stor værdi som et litografi".

TL

André alias Monsieur A

In 1985 a new signature, which wasn't as cool as all the others turned up in Paris. At the time the first graffiti painters in Paris had names, which resembled the American writers' names, and the American writers usually had names, which tended to be unusual.

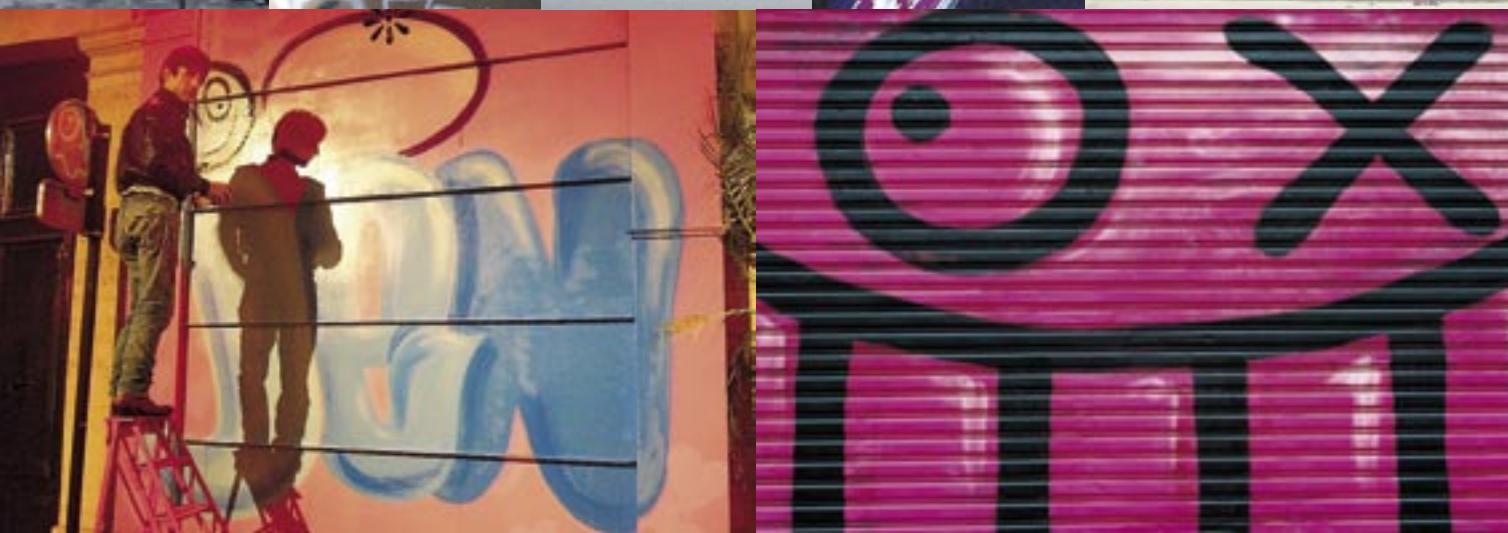
In André's case it was different. He didn't have a pseudonym, but used his civil name as a signature. With his name and simple style, which remained easy to read for the uninitiated, André was right from the start interested in opening up graffiti to a larger audience. André wanted to change the understanding of graffiti - or to share his own view with others. "Although I did many things in the metro, it was never vicious. I was part of a group with me as the only member. The group was called *TVB* for *Tout Va Bien* (All well, ed.) This attitude was the opposite of the mentality at the time. I succeeded in introducing self-irony into my work".

In 1989 André replaced his signature with a figure, Monsieur A, who was painted fast by free-hand, first in Paris and then in many other cities all over the world. Inspired by the French stencil painters and the American Keith Haring, André hereby anticipated the wave of graffiti and especially street art, which was to become a trend at the turn of the millennium, and which centred around figures rather than letters.

André describes his work with Monsieur A as the first systematic adaptation and distribution of a figure as logo, using graffiti methods. Because of André's sharp design, even certain parts of the figure, seen on their own, can still be recognized and stand for the whole. This is a typical graffiti trait, and one, which André has developed more than most.

In more ways than one Monsieur A has staged himself as an unavoidable perpetual appearance: As a long-legged gentleman rushing across the walls of the city while laughing and waving to the passer-by; as a gentleman who surprisingly jumps up and out of surfaces and cracks, and as a gentleman, whose long body lies deviously in wait, in the vertical lines of the city. André has also reduced Monsieur A to a few distinctive features, namely grinning teeth and eyes made from circles and crosses. By fitting the face to the squares of the yellow post boxes in Paris and to the back ends of vans, André has examined how graffiti interacts with alternative surfaces in the city space. In 1997 André opened a homepage in collaboration with the gallery Air de Paris. Here people could buy so-called 'love graffiti' with the name of their beloved. As soon as he got an order, he would design the name of the loved one. In addition to this he produced photographs accompanied by certificates, which mimicked police reports containing information about the scene of the crime, the time of the crime and the colours, which the painter had used. André's play with the perception of graffiti has also resulted in business ideas such as selling graffiti on canvas by the meter and the shop BlackBlock in the Parisian art centre Palais de Tokyo, which sells merchandise by a large number of French and foreign graffiti painters and street artists. To André, who has put more energy into his work in the street than in galleries and art institutions, a "T-shirt produced by an artist has the same value as a lithography".

TL



Blu

Blu er en ener inden for gadekunsten i mere end én forstand. Han maler stort – større end de fleste - og er i direkte kontakt med byens fysik, når han med en kæmpe malerulle giver sig i kast med mure og facader. Blu har fjernet de elementer fra traditionel graffiti, som ikke passede ham; navnet, spraymalingen og farverne og beholdt det han kunne bruge, nemlig hastigheden, størrelsen og gaden. Derfor er hans værker rå og uundgåelige, samtidig med at de afspejler hans utrolige sans for delikate og overraskende detaljer - de lader ingen forbipasserende gå urørt forbi.

De mandlige skaldede figurer med lettere opsvulmede kroppe ses ofte i gang med mere eller mindre makabre udfoldelser, der opfordrer til eksistentialistiske spekulationer. Ting, der fortærer hinanden, ses i et værk, hvor en mandlig figur liggende på knæ drikker med sugerør direkte af et sort dysr hjerne, som så igen drikker af en mands hjerne, der ser ud som om han er ved at tage en sluk rottegit. I det hele taget er menneskekroppens indre - hjermer, tarme og tænder der rasler ud - et gennemgående tema hos Blu.

Selv siger han om sine værker til tider ubehagelige men altid humoristiske karakter, at han som barn så mange tegneserier, og at de var mindst lige så makabre som hans eget billedunivers. Tegneserier og tegnere er blandt hans hovedinspirationskilder, og han nævner den hollandske grafiske kunstner M. C. Escher, som er kendt for sine umulige matematiske konstruktioner og udforskning af det uendelige, blandt forbillederne.

Det er sandsynligvis derfra inspirationen til et andet gennemgående træk hos Blu stammer, nemlig brugen af motiver der relaterer til andre motiver, og som transformeres til andre historier eller tanker, på en måde så der skabes kæder af associationer. I 2008 skabte han det helt unikke værk *Muto*. *Muto* er en tegnefilm, der er udført som et kæmpe vægmaleri under udfoldelse. Filmen er optaget over flere måneder i Buenos Aires og består af en lang kædereaktion af tegnede hændelser, der leder ind i hinanden. I *Muto* som i andre af Blus værker indgår mennesker på lige fod med dyr og objekter i et surrealistisk og meningsløst univers, hvor alt har lige værdi. Det er den evige cirkel af fødsler og genfødsler eller den evige trædemølle, der beskrives, og der er tilsyneladende ingen vej ud af dette trods alt komiske univers.

Blu er indenfor de seneste år begyndt at arbejde indenfor mere etablerede rammer og har senest udført arbejde på *Backjumps the 2007 live Issue*, Berlin og Tate Modern, London i 2008. I en alder af kun 25 år har Blu formået at rejse verden rundt og har udsmykket mure i Italien, Spanien, Tyskland, England, Argentina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala og Brasilien. Om det at 'efterlade' arbejde alle disse steder siger Blu: "Når jeg er færdig med at male, tilhører mit arbejde byen og alle de mennesker, der bor i den. Derfor er maleriets skæbne deres beslutning".

MN



Blu

Blu is unique within the world of street art in more ways than one. His murals are larger than most – and he goes into direct contact with the physique of the city, when he works on its walls and facades with a huge roller. Blu has removed the elements from traditional graffiti that didn't suit him; the name, the spray paint and the colours and kept the ones that suited him: the speed, the size and the street. This makes his works raw and unavoidable, while they at the same time reflect his astounding sensitivity for delicate and surprising details. No one walks past his works unmoved.

The bald headed male figures with often slightly bloated bodies are often seen executing more or less macabre acts that inspire to existentialistic reflections. Things that devour each other appear in a work, in which a male figure lying on his knees is drinking with a straw directly from the brain of an animal, which again, is drinking from a man's brain, who looks like he is about to swallow rat poison. Generally the inner workings of the human body - brains, intestines and teeth falling out - are recurring themes in Blu's work.

Commenting on the often unpleasant but always humoristic character of his work he explains that he watched too many cartoons as a child, and that they were at least as macabre as his own image world. Cartoonists and drawers are among his main sources of inspiration, and he mentions the Dutch graphic artist M. C. Escher, who is famous for his impossible mathematical constructions and explorations of eternity as being among his heroes.

This is probably where the inspiration for another common trait in Blu's work stems from, namely the use of motifs that are transformed into stories or thoughts, in a way that creates chains of associations. In 2008 he created the unequalled work *Muto*. *Muto* is a cartoon film, which is created in the shape of a huge wall painting in development. The film was recorded during several months in Buenos Aires and consists of a long row of events. In *Muto* as in other of Blu's works, humans, animals and objects form part of the same surreal and meaningless universe in which everything has equal value. The work describes the eternal circle of births and rebirths, and there is apparently no way out of this sinister and comical world.

Lately Blu has done an increasing number of assignments, working for street art events and art institutions, among these *Backjumps* the 2007 live Issue, Berlin and Tate Modern, London, England in 2008. But it is still the unauthorized work in the street that inspires him the most. At the age of just 25 Blu has managed to travel around the world and has painted walls in Italy, Spain, Germany, England, Argentina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Brazil. About 'leaving' work in public space he says; "Once I stop painting the work belongs to the city and the people who inhabit it, and the fate of the paintings is their decision".

MN



Faust





Herbert Baglione

Herbert Bagliones kunst er en af grundene til at brasiliansk gadekunst begejstrer og inspirerer folk verden over. Hans stærke, distinkte stil og de komplekse temer, der er at finde i hans illustrationer, malerier og gadeinterventioner, har gjort ham til et internationalt anerkendt navn i både kunst- og designverdenen.

Baglione maler ikke bare i gaden men også på gaden. Han er blandt de få, der bruger både fortov, gader, tage og selv græsplænere som læred. Som graffiti-skriver er han lyrisk og elegant som en kalligraf, og samtidig slægter han de brasilianske såkaldte pixadores (brasiliansk term for graffiti-skrevere) fra hjembyen Sao Paolo på.

I vægmalerierne udendørs og indendørs finder man den samme elegance og definitive stil. Hans foretrukne farver er sort og hvid altså mørke og lys, der til tider brydes i prismens regnbuefarver.

De sonthvide strømlinede og extraterrestrialt udseende figurer, slynger sig langs med kurven af et asfalteret fortov eller kanter sig efter formen på et teglfag. I et stort vægmaleri flyder en overvægtig kvinde - infiltreret af elegante botaniske former - i et sort udefinert barum. Gennem Bagliones ikoniske, figurative og til tider mystiske stil synes disse eksistenser ophøjet til noget fra en anden verden. Selv nævner han kaos, død og individualisme som de gennemgående temer i værker som disse.

Det er især storbyen og fødebyen Sao Paolo, der inspirerer og frustrerer Baglione, og det er dens væsen, der ånder gennem hans arbejde, hvor værkerne bliver til i kraft af byens form. Baglione beskriver Sao Paolo som 'the crib of confrontation', konfrontationernes vugge, og som et sted hvor kolig individualisme er i højsædet. Det er det kaos i form af daglige konfrontationer mennesker imellem, der gennemtrænger værkerne. Her kræver hver dag en genfødsel eller en ny maske, som han udtrykker det.

For Baglione er byens arkitektur ikke bare et sceneri, der udgør en baggrund for hans arbejde. I hans øjne er alt omkring os en organisme, pulsrende og levende som en krop, hvor fra elementerne kommer indefra og blander sig med hinanden. Derfor beskriver han sig selv som det redskab, hvorigennem arkitekturen får en stemme, og værket er det moment, hvor den fysiske by møder sine indbyggere. På denne måde er byen og dens arkitektur en del af Bagliones arbejde, og hans figurer understreger og fremhæver det, der allerede er.

Bagliones kunstneriske udtryk udvikler og ændrer sig konstant. Han har skabt utallige vægmalerier verden over, og senest har han udstillet på New Image Art Gallery, Hollywood, Fifty24, San Francisco, Galerie de Pury & Luxembourg, Zürich og Q! Gallery, Glasgow.

MN

Herbert Baglione

Baglione's art is one reason why Brazilian street art excites and inspires people across the world. His strong distinctive style and the complex themes visible in his illustrations, paintings and street interventions have made him a recognized name within the world of art as well as design internationally.

Baglione doesn't just paint in the street but also on the street. He is among the few who use pavements, roofs and even lawns as his canvas. As a graffiti writer he is poetic and elegant like a calligrapher and at the same time he resembles the Brazilian so called pixadores (Brazilian term for graffiti writers) from his hometown, Sao Paolo.

A similar elegance and distinctive style is seen in his paintings. He uses black and white or darkness and light, which is at times broken into the rainbow colours of a prism.

The black and white straight standing extraterrestrial like figures bend themselves round the curved corner of a pavement or edge themselves in shape with a tiled roof. In a large painting an overweight lady floats in a black undefinable room tangled up by elegant botanical shapes. Through Baglione's iconic, figurative and at times mystical style these beings are elevated to become something from another world. He mentions chaos, death and individualism as the persistent themes in works such as these.

The city, especially his hometown Sao Paolo, is what inspires and frustrates Baglione. It is its being which breathes through his work, which always takes its shape from the shape of the city. Baglione describes Sao Paolo as 'the crib of confrontation' and a place where cold individualism prevails, and where the chaos of daily confrontations between people demands a rebirth or a new mask everyday.

To Baglione the architecture of a city is not just scenery, providing a background for his work. In his eyes, everything around us is a single organism, a living and pulsating body from which elements develop and blend with each other. This is why he describes himself as a tool through which architecture finds a voice, and it is in this moment that the physical city meets its people. In this way the city, its people and architecture are integrated in Baglione's work, and his figures underline and expose what is already present.

Baglione's art is constantly evolving and changing. He has created numerous works all over the world and has recently exhibited at New Image Art Gallery, Hollywood, Fifty24, San Francisco, Galerie de Pury & Luxembourg, Zürich, and Q! Gallery, Glasgow. MN





HuskMitNavn



I 2001 lancerede HuskMitNavn den første af mange plakatkamper. Plakaterne var udklippe tegninger af mænd med heftig skægvækst og opfordringen "Gro skæg." Forneden kunne man rive en snip af med et nummer på en intetanende sekretær på Frisørskolen. Imens vissefolk løb med en snip, løb andre med hele plakater. Som konsekvens handlede næste kampagne om sin egen flygtighed. På plakaterne stod der nu "væk i morgen" og "HuskMitNavn" - heraf navnet.

I løbet af en periode på fire år lancerede HuskMitNavn 16 plakatkamper overvejende i indre København. Problematikkerne, der blev behandlet, var mangfoldige: Figurer i T-shirt med påskriften "Sig nej til krig" ledsaget af taleboblen "Ja" kommenterede 'forvirringen' efter Danmarks deltagelse i krigen i Irak. De indskrumpede vinterpikke, der blev klæbet op hver vinter fra 2002 til 2004, illu-

strerede, hvordan årstiden påvirker mandekønnet. I kampagnen *De sultne børn i Afrika tænker også på dig* blev udmagrede kroppe med store hoveder ikke blot lagt kampagnens titel i munden; nogle talebobler så som "På beløbet tak" gjorde pludselig disse gespensters umulige tilstedeværelse i Danmark nærværende.

Med plakatkamperne satte HuskMitNavn for første gang kunst under betegnelsen 'street art' på dagsordenen i den brede danske offentlighed. Hvor der startede på gaden blev snart et fænomen, som også medierne fulgte intenst. I dag er HuskMitNavn ikke blot et velkendt navn, men bliver også opfattet som en vigtig del af ny dansk kunsthistorie, hvilket feks. hans indlemmelse i Statens Museum for Kunsts samling vidner om.

Selvom det skarpe grafiske udtryk og plakaternes umiddelbare gennemslagskraft i byrummet vidner om en skriver, der har malet graffiti siden 1993, er HuskMitNavns kunst efter hensigten blevet modtaget som andet end 'spraycan art': "Jeg var meget bevidst om, at jeg ville lave noget, der blev set af flere end bare mine tre graffitivenner. Jeg ville bringe kunsten ud til folk, frem for at de selv skulle opsoge den i galleriernes lukkede økosystem", har HuskMitNavn forklaret.

Siden har HuskMitNavn imidlertid lavet adskillige galleriudstillinger så som *Illustreret lidenskab* og *Muhammedansk* i det københavnske galleri V1. Det har givet ham mulighed for koncentreret at eksperimentere med forskellige maleriske teknikker samt arbejde med installation og bearbejdet fotografier, der fungerer mindre godt i byrummet. Men ambitionen om forudsætningløst at møde publikum i deres hverdag viser sig stadig i projekter så som HuskMitNavns design af etiketten til Wiibroe Årgangsøl 2007 og hans ugentlige stribe i Politiken.

Et gennemgående træk ved HuskMitNavns store produktion er udsagn i billede og tekst, der er så simple, at de taler til alle – men også så forsimples, at udsagnene er fyldt med tvetydigheder, paradoxer, selvmodsigelser og tvivl.

TL

RememberMyName

In 2001 HuskMitNavn a.k.a. RememberMyName launched his first poster campaign cut-out drawings of men with a heavy growth of facial hair and the encouragement to "Grow a beard". At the bottom of the posters there were little snips with the phone number of a secretary from the hairdressing school, who had no knowledge whatsoever of the campaign. While some people ran off with a snip others took down the whole poster. In response to this, the next campaign dealt with its own impermanence. On the posters it now said "gone tomorrow" and "RememberMyName" - this was the origin of his name. During a period of four years RememberMyName launched 16 poster campaigns mostly in central Copenhagen. The issues they dealt with were manifold: Figures in t-shirts with the statement "Say no to war" accompanied by the speech bubble "Yes" commented on the confusion following the Danish participation in the war in Iraq. The shrivelled up 'winter-dicks' that was pasted up every winter from 2002 to 2004 illustrated the effect of the cold season on the male sex. The campaign *The hungry children of Africa are thinking of you too* showed skin-and-bone bodies with big heads. Speech bubbles such as "Even money please" suddenly made the appearance of these ghostlike figures tangible to the Danes. With the campaigns RememberMyName brought art under the label 'street art' to the attention of a broader public in Denmark. What started off in the streets was soon to become a phenomenon, which was followed intensely by the media. Today RememberMyName is not just a well-known name but his recent inclusion into the collection of The Danish National Museum of Art also testifies to his importance in contemporary Danish art history. Even if the sharp graphic style of the posters and their immediate penetrative power in the public space bear evidence to a writer who has painted graffiti since 1993, RememberMyName's art has in line with his intentions been received as anything but traditional 'spraycan art': "I was very conscious that I wanted to create something which would be seen by more people than just my three graffiti friends. I wanted to bring art to the people instead of relying on them to seek it out within the closed ecosystem of the galleries", RememberMyName has explained. Since then RememberMyName has nevertheless created a number of gallery exhibitions such as *Illustreret lidenskab* (Illustrated Sensuality, ed.) and *Muhammedansk* (Muhammedanish, ed.) at V1 gallery in Copenhagen. This has given him the opportunity to concentrate on experimenting with various painting techniques as well as working with installation and manipulated photography that might not have the same impact outdoors. His ambition to meet his audience in their immediate everyday environment is still manifest through projects such as his design of the label for the beer Wiibroe and his weekly cartoon strip in the Danish newspaper Politiken. RememberMyName's statements in words and pictures are simple enough to appeal to everyone and yet they still remain rife with ambiguities, paradoxes and contradictions.



TL



Miss.Tic

Miss.Tic begyndte at spraye sine skabelonmalerier og -tekster på Paris' bymure i 1985, da hendes kærlighedsforhold forliste. "Je ne peux plus te voir en peinture", sagde hendes mand til hende. Bogstaveligt talt betød det, at han ikke længere ville se hende i eller som maleri. Men i overført betydning betød det blot, at han ikke længere ville se hende.

Miss.Tic valgte imidlertid at tage sætningen bogstaveligt. Trodsigt begyndte hun at præsentere sig selv for sin eks-mand og alle mulige andre i netop maleri. Hun tog et fotografi af sig selv og skar det til som skabelon, hvorigennem hun spraymalede sit selvportræt på byens mure. Selvom andre franske kunstnere, de såkaldte 'pochoiristes', lidt tidligere havde genopfundet skabelonmaleriet, der i årtier var blevet anvendt til politisk propaganda, var Miss.Tics malerier anderledes. Ingen skabelonkunstner havde før arbejdet med sammenspillet mellem tekst og billede som hende. Til gengæld er der mange verden over, der siden har forsøgt at gøre Miss.Tic kunsten efter.

Selv har Miss.Tic formuleret sit sammenspil mellem tekst og billede som en bestræbelse på "at give sproget krop". Det har blandt andet resulteret i et billede af en kvindes torso på hvis hofter, der hviler to mandehænder ledssaget af teksten: "Du tager mig for en anden". Hos Miss.Tic illustrerer billedet ikke teksten ligesom i en ordbog, og teksten forankrer ikke billedet ligesom i en avis. Hos Miss.Tic sætter billedet gang i teksten og teksten gang i billedet. Hun deler ikke blot surrealisten René Magrittes filosofiske interesser for forholdet mellem ordene og tingene. Hun er også interesseret i at gøre det private offentligt i ånden fra studentoprøret i maj 1968 og med afsæt i sit eget liv at tale om kvinders liv overhovedet.

Miss.Tics kunstneriske løbebane taget afsæt i hendes eget liv, men det er ikke længere kun hendes eget billede, hun bearbejder. Mange af hendes skabeloner er variationer over modeller i kvindemagasiner: "Jeg bearbejder ikke et bestemt billede af kvinden for at promovere det, men for at stille spørgsmål til det". Som konsekvens kalder Miss.Tic sig "mere feminin end feminist". Nok er hendes kvinder ofte stærke, men de forbliver velskabte og forførende bejitere til mandens opmærksomhed - om end på kvindernes ofte svære præmisser. "Gør med mig hvad jeg vil", lyder en tekst, som efterhånden har ledssaget flere af Miss.Tics kvindebilleder.

Miss.Tics billeder på Paris' bymure har forført såvel kvinder som mænd på gaden. Dels fordi hun med klar tale forstår at fåbe sine vækers forbipasserende op. Dels fordi hun forstår at holde dem fanget, så snart de giver sig hen. "Jeg taler det sprog, som folk taler. Men jeg leder efter en lapsus", har hun forklaaret. I Miss.Tics ord gemmer der sig ofte andre. Kvinden ved hvis side, der står "Amazone", er også "a ma zone" - "i min zone".

På det seneste har Miss.Tic, der ofte har gjort udfald mod kunstverdenen, rettet blikket mod kunsthistorien. I 2000 udførte hun en serie af skabelonmalerier i Paris, der satte andre ord på kendte mesterværker: "For at smile må man have grædt meget", står der f.eks. ved siden af et maleri af Mona Lisa. Selvom Miss.Tic har udstillet på Centre Pompidou, er i Victoria & Albert Museums samling i London og har udgivet en lang række bøger, er Paris' gader stadig stedet, hvor man finder flest af hendes arbejder.

TL

Miss.Tic

Miss.Tic began spraying her stencil paintings on Parisian walls in 1985, when her love relationship collapsed. "Je ne peux plus te voir en peinture", her husband told her. Literally it meant that he no longer wished to see her in, or as a painting. In reality it just meant that he didn't want to see her ever again. Miss.Tic chose to interpret his statement literally. Despitefully she began to present herself to her ex-husband and everyone else, exactly as a painting. She took a photograph of herself and cut it out like a stencil, through which she spray-painted her self-portrait all over the city.

Even if other French artists, the so-called 'pochoiristes', had rediscovered stencil painting some time before, which for decades had been used for political propaganda, Miss.Tic's paintings were different. No stencil artist had ever worked with the interplay between image and text as well as her, but many have since tried to follow in her footsteps.

Miss.Tic explains the interplay between text and image, as an attempt "to give language a body." Among other things that has resulted in an image of a man's hands placed on the hips of a lady's torso accompanied by the text: "You take me for someone else". In a dictionary images illustrate texts and in newspapers text underlines images. In Miss.Tic's work the image animates the text and the text animates the image. She is interested in the relationship between words and objects like the surrealist René Magritte, and in making the private public in the spirit of the revolution of May 1968.

Miss.Tic's artistic trajectory runs parallel to her experiences in life, but she does not only work with her own image. Many of her stencils are variations on models from women's magazines: "I am not working on a particular image of women in order to promote it, but in order to question it". As a consequence Miss.Tic calls herself "more feminine than feminist". Her women may be strong, but they remain well-proportioned, seductive and potential objects of the male gaze. "Do with me what I want", says a text, which has accompanied many of Miss.Tic's pictures of women.

Miss.Tic has seduced women as well as men in the streets of Paris. She understands how to grab and maintain the attention of passers-by. "I speak the language of the people. But I am looking for a lapse", she has explained. There are often hidden words within Miss.Tic's words. Next to a woman it says "Amazone", a word that may also be read "a ma zone" - "in my zone".

Lately Miss.Tic, who has often denounced the art world, has cast her gaze upon art history. In 2000 she made a series of stencil paintings in Paris, which added different words to masterpieces. Next to a painting of Mona Lisa she added; "In order to smile one must have cried a lot." Even if Miss.Tic has exhibited at the Pompidou Centre, is represented in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London and has published a number of books, Paris is still the place where most of her work is to be found.

TL

L'HOMME
EST
LE PASSÉ
DE LA
FEMME

Miss-Tic



CARROSSERIE MÉCANIQUE AUTO

L'AVENIR
A UNE
EXCELLENTE
MÉMOIRE

Miss-Tic



Steve Powers

I 1997 påbegyndte graffitimaleren Espo, der var kommet til New York to år tidligere, et storstilet projekt, der snart skulle skabe furore i hans nye by. Ved højlys dag malede han et utal af graffiti bemalede jerngittere foran butiks vinduer over med hvid eller sølvgrå maling. Efterfølgende malede han sirlige sorte linjer på tværs af butiks facaderne, der til sidst skulle vise sig at danne bogstaverne ESPO. Dem, der spurgte, hvad manden bag, Steve Powers, egentligt lavede, henviste han til den nye skrift på gitterne: "Jeg er her med Exterior Surface Painting Outreach, og jeg rengør dette gitter". Projektets officielle tone forsikrede folk om dets officielle karakter, indtil han i 1999 blev slæbt for retten med seks anklagepunkter imod sig. På samme tidspunkt agiterede New Yorks borgmester Rudolph Giuliani for sin ligeledes storstilte anti-graffiti kampagne. Powers kunne dog ikke se problemet: "Nabolagene nyder godt af, at jeg renser dem, og jeg får mit navn op. Jeg er et sandt produkt af Giuliani-aeraen".

Sagen vakte stor debat i New Yorker-pressen. Selvom projektet kunne have været et kommunalt renoveringsprojekt og Powers' stil baseret en umiskendelig elegance, mente ikke alle, at idéen holdt: At han ikke længere bare malede graffiti, men også malede graffiti over. Powers blev idømt fem dages kommunalt arbejde. Dommen har dog ikke forhindret Powers i siden at lancere lignende projekter, der har været med til at rykke ved opfattelsen af, hvad gavnligt offentligt arbejde også kan være. I 2004 samarbejdede han med den offentlige kunstforening Creative Time og andre kunstnere på et andet renoveringsprojekt i forlystelsesparken Coney Island. Her udbød Powers nye håndmalede skilte og grafisk identitet til de små butiksindehavere, der ikke selv havde råd til at vedligeholde deres image. Året efter åbnede han sin egen butik på Coney Island, der dels udbød gamle håndmalede skilte, dels studieophold for kunstnere med samme interesse.

Powers' kærlighed for håndmalede skilte har tidligere blandt andet resulteret i en række graffiti-pieces på New Yorks mure, der lignede gamle reklameskilte for Espo. Æstetikken satte ham i stand til at tale med en anden stemme samt italesætte et andet publikum: "Skilte og tegn har autoritet. Graffiti har ikke nogen autoritet. Folk opfatter det som born, der råber efter dem. Skilte taler til én. Man lytter til dem. Man kan ignorere graffiti, men man kan ikke ignorere skilte og tegn. Man har brug for dem". Powers' arbejde med skilte har han også udfoldet i gallerireg i udstillinger hos Deitch Projects i New York samt V1 Gallery i København. I 2001 repræsenterede han USA ved Venedig Biennalen sammen med Todd 'Reas' James og Barry 'Twist' McGee. De sidste år er Powers begyndt at fortælle gribende historier i en socialrealistisk åre og håndmalet skilteæstetik bl.a. med bogen *First & Fifteenth: Pop Art Short Stories* (2005) og sidste år som Fulbright scholar med et socialt projekt med unge graffitimalere i byrømmet i Dublin.

Powers har ikke kun skrevet graffiti-historie som formyrer af udtryksformen men også som en af dens bedst informerede historikere med bogen *The Art of Getting Over* (1999). Sidste år havde Powers sin første museums-separatudstilling på Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts i sin fødeby Philadelphia, der også er graffitimens fødeby. TL



Steve Powers

In 1997 the graffiti artist Espo, who had arrived in New York two years earlier, initiated a grand project, which was soon to create a stir in his new city. In bright daylight he painted a vast number of graffiti-covered iron grates in front of storefronts with white or silver paint. Then he painted immaculate black lines across the storefronts until they spelled out ESPO. To the people who asked what he was doing, he referred to the brand new text on the grates: "I'm with Exterior Surface Painting Outreach, and I'm cleaning up this grate". The official sounding tone of the project ensured people of its official character until Steve Powers was taken to court in 1999 charged with six offences.

At the same time the New York-mayor Rudolph Giuliani was running his grandiose anti-graffiti campaign. Steve Powers didn't understand what the fuss was about: "The neighborhoods get the benefit of my cleaning it up, and I get my name up there", he said. "I'm a real product of the Giuliani era".

The case created a big debate within the New York-press. Even if the project in theory could have been a renovation project and Powers' style had a clear-cut elegance about it, not everybody indulged in the idea that Powers was no longer simply painting graffiti but also painting graffiti over. Powers was sentenced to do five days of community service. The sentence has however not kept Powers from launching similar projects that have added to the perception of what beneficial community work might entail.

In 2004 he collaborated with the public art group Creative Time and other artists on a different renovation project in Coney Island. Here Powers offered new hand painted signs as well as new visual identities to local shop owners who could not afford to keep up their own image. A year later he opened his own shop in Coney Island, which housed a residency as well as a shop selling old hand painted signs.

Powers' love of hand painted signs has earlier resulted in a series of graffiti pieces on the walls of New York, which looked like old advertisement signs for Espo. That particular aesthetics made him capable of speaking with a different voice and thereby reaching a different audience: "Signs have authority. Graffiti has no authority. People treat it like kids yelling at them. But signs they are the authority. They are talking to you. You're listening to them and you are forced to deal with that. You can ignore graffiti but you can't really ignore signs".

In 2001 Powers represented USA at the Venice Biennale with Todd 'Reas' James and Barry 'Twist' McGee. During the last few years Powers has become a grabbing storyteller in a social realist vein using the hand painted sign aesthetics. This new line of work under the heading "visual blues" defined his book *First & Fifteenth: Pop Art Short Stories* (2005) as well as a social project involving young graffiti painters, which he was involved in as a Fullbright scholar in Dublin (2007).

Powers has not only written graffiti-history as a practitioner of graffiti, but also as one of its most well-informed historians in the book *The Art of Getting Over* (1999). Last year Powers had his first solo exhibition at a museum, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, in his hometown Philadelphia, which is also the hometown of graffiti. TL





Søren Behncke alias papfar

I 2004 smuglede Søren Behncke alias papfar efter en mørksommelig og lang Olsen Bandenagtig planlægningsfase en gigantisk pap-slangebøsse ind på ARoS, Århus Kunstmuseum. Slangebøssen placerede han ved foden af Ron Muecks kendte skulptur *Boy*.

Aktioner som denne har gjort Behncke til noget helt særligt på den danske gadekunstscene. I hans univers foregår en antiautoriter leg med koder og referencer. Det gælder både, når han arbejder med objekter i aktioner, og når han skaber malerier, skulpturer eller installationer til et stigende antal galleridistillerier.

Den efterhånden legendariske historie om slangebøssen på ARoS sætter Behnckes virke i perspektiv. Historien om *Boy* og slangebøssen er historien om den lokale kunstner, der møder kunstinstitutionen, og det er historien om det umiddelbare, det spontane og det uetablerede, fremhævet af et værk skabt af forgængelige genbrugsmaterialer, der konfronteres med det museale og et kunsthistorisk ikon. Det er denne kontrast, der får os til at spærre øjnene op og se begge værker i et nyt perspektiv.

Behnckes gadeaktioner går som det var tilfældet med aktionen på ARoS ofte ud over 'det etablerede', monumenter, skulpturer og bygninger. Som når havmanden i skulpturen *Agnete og Havmanden* i Århus bliver kleddet en papkopi af Krøyers flittigt reproducerede Skagen fisker. Her møder det folkelige det etablerede, og to verdner eller parallelle kunsthistorier bliver fremhævet i Behnckes altid humoristiske stil.

I en anden aktion placerede han en 4m lang sav af pap ved *Den lille Havfrue*. Det var så op til hende selv eller en fortjapasserende at beslutte, hvad der skulle ske med saven. Værket kaldte han ironisk *Homage to Nash*.

I "hit and run" gadeaktionerne sættes fokus på det, som allerede er. Som Behncke selv udtrykker det: "Jeg ønsker at kile de her pauser ind i den vaneting, det er at være menneske. Alle de ritualer. Alle de ting, vi gør, som vi gør, fordi det plejer vi at gøre". Gennem Behnckes værker kan vi se det, der umærkeligt er blevet normen i et andet lys.

Pap og genbrugsmaterialer er det centrale element hos Behncke. Værkerne er således for-gængelige, og i aktioner varer de kun så længe, offentligheden eller de ufrivillige aftagere af hans værker tillader det. Hans malerier og skulpturer i pap så som serien af *Pink Ladies Tools* fra 2006 eller kopien af Ferguson traktoren i naturstørrelse fra 2005, har også en begrænset levetid, selv om de naturligvis lever længere inden for galleriets beskyttende vægge end i det offentlige rum. Om det forgængelige siger han: "Jeg har det vel egentlig stadigvæk sådan med de ting, jeg laver, at når jeg har lavet dem, så er jeg virkelig ligeglæd med dem. Pap er gratis, og Århus er min nyttehave, hvor jeg finder pappet alle mulige steder. Hos grønthandlere, hos Skousen eller i containerne ved Universitetet".

Søren Behncke har inden for de seneste år vundet anerkendelse inden for gadekunstens verden, fordi han har tilført denne kunstform sin helt egen originalitet. Med brugen af pap har han om nogen gjort det flygtige til essensen i sine gadeaktioner og dermed fremhævet det, der er det blivende og for ham det vigtigste, nemlig fortællingen.

Søren Behncke alias papfar

After a long and meticulous 'cops and robbers style' planning procedure in 2004, Søren Behncke smuggled a gigantic cardboard slingshot into ARoS, Århus Kunstmuseum. The slingshot was placed at the foot of Ron Muecks famous sculpture *Boy*. It is actions such as this one, which have earned Behncke his reputation as an unparalleled artist on the Danish street art scene. His world is defined by a playful anti-authoritarian attitude. This is true when he works with objects in 'hit and run' actions, and also when he creates paintings, sculptures and installations for a rising number of gallery exhibitions.

The by now legendary story of the slingshot in ARoS puts Behncke's activities into perspective. The story of *Boy* and the slingshot is the story of the local artist who meets the art institution. It is the story of the immediate, the spontaneous and the unestablished, emphasized by work made out of impermanent recycled materials, which confronts a museum and an art historical icon. It is this contrast, which makes us open our eyes and see both works in a new perspective.

Behncke's street actions often have 'the establishment' in the shape of monuments, sculptures and buildings as their target. In 2004 he dressed the famous sculpture *Agnete and the Sailor* in Århus in a cardboard copy of the popular and widely reproduced fisherman from Skagen. Here the fisherman, an icon of popular or 'common' culture, meets the establishment and both worlds or parallel art histories become emphasized through Behncke's always-humorous style. In another action he placed a 4m long saw next to the *Little Mermaid* in Copenhagen. It was left up to her or passers by to decide what to use the saw for. He gave this work the ironic title *Homage to Nash*. (Nash is a Danish artist supposed to have sown of the mermaid's head in 1964). The hit and run street actions focus on that which is already there. Behncke puts it like this; "My wish is to create small pauses in the normal way of thinking which defines being human. All those rituals, all those things that we do because we always do them". Through Behncke's work we are able to see that, which has gradually become the norm, in a different light.

Cardboard and recycled materials are a central element in Behncke's works. Consequently the works are impermanent, and in the actions they only last as long as the public or the involuntary receivers of his works allow them to. His paintings and sculptures in cardboard such as the series *Pink Ladies Tools* from 2006, or the copy of the Ferguson tractor in natural size from 2005, are not everlasting objects either, even if they do last longer within the protective walls of a gallery space, than they would in public space.

Regarding the perishable aspect of his work he says; "Concerning what I do, I still really feel that once I have created something, then I don't care about it anymore. Cardboard is free and Århus is my garden where I find the cardboard in all sorts of places. In vegetable shops, at Skousen (a local shop, ed.) or in containers at the University".

Within the last few years Søren Behncke has gained recognition within the world of street art, because he has added his own originality to the art form. In using cardboard he has if anyone made the perishable the essence of his street actions and thereby accentuated the permanent aspect of his work, namely the story.



MN

Victor Ash

På en mur i det centrale Berlin svæver en gigantisk astronaut vægtløs omkring over byen. En imponerende ansigtsløs figur i overstørrelse. Værket er et klassisk vægmaleri, men er udformet så det ligner en kæmpe stencil med den sorte maling stadig dyppende ned af væggen. Det er et af den slags billeder - sort på hvidt - som på enkel og effektfuld vis indtjener sig hos den forbipasserende. Efter man har passeret astronauten, filmrer han stadig på netthinden i en stund. I den forstand er Ashs værker umiddelbare men bliver hos én til eftertanke, irritation eller refleksion.

Ash arbejder mest i gaden, og værkene er 'in your face' og synlige for alle, også for dem der ikke bevidst har opsogt kunsten. Selv siger han; "Det er meget spændende for mig som kunstner at arbejde på denne måde. Når man placerer en gave (værket) i det offentlige rum, skaber det en interaktion med folk, man normalt ikke taler med. Det er noget, man giver til folk - og det at skabe malerier udendørs på denne måde er en gave til offentligheden". På denne måde er hans kunst demokratisk og uundgåelig og tager form af offentlige statements helt i gadekunstens ånd.

Med Ashs egne ord er hans værker altid en direkte refleksion over, hvad der rører sig i samfundet her og nu. Ash giver ikke svar eller løsninger på de dilemmaer, værkene beskriver, i stedet peger han på samfundstendenser og stiller spørgsmålstegn ved tingenes tilstand og det bestående. Værkene har ofte kontrasten mellem land og by, natur og kultur, og de anekdoter der udspringer heraf, som omdrejningspunkt.

Hans seneste vægmalerier i bygningen VM-bjerget i Ørestaden i København kan ses som en direkte kommentar til byens udvikling og den tiltagende urbanisering. Her ses henholdsvis en ged, en ulv og en kronhjort malet i sort på den rå beton. Dyrene troner på toppen af bjerge, der består af gamle smadrede bilvrug. I disse apokalyptiske værker består bjerget af forfald, og naturen er rykket ind og har overtaget. I realiteternes verden forholder det sig anderledes, her er det ifølge Ash ofte mennesket, der tankeløst tager fra og eksanderer på bekostning af naturen uden at give noget tilbage.

Et andet tema hos Ash er unges jagt på identitet i subkulturer illustreret ved vægmaleriet *Punks Are Not Dead*, skabt til udstillingen *Backjumps 3*, Kunstraum Bethanien, Berlin, 2007. Værket reflekterer over punken som en måske overstået epoke, og samtidig handler det ifølge Ash om unges evige identitetssøgning.

Her fomemmer man Ashs fortid som en af den europæiske graffitis pionerer. Allerede som 13-årig blev han indfangt af den leg med identiteter og den energi, som kendtegner graffiti. Selvom hans teknik vidner om hans fortid som skriver, er intentionen bag en helt anden for ham i dag. Selv siger han, at hvor det i graffiti ofte handler om at gentage sig selv, handler det for ham i dag om at udvikle sig som kunstner. Med den rå stencil- og silhuet lignende stil, som han tilpasser forskellige overflader fra mur over papir til glas, har Ash udviklet en markant signatur, indenfor hvilken han konstant fornyer sig, og har i stigende grad manifesteret sig som kunstner gennem en lang række udstillinger og begivenheder.

MN

Victor Ash

A gigantic weightless astronaut floats above the city in the centre of Berlin. The astronaut is an impressive figure, faceless and oversized, which cannot be overlooked. The work is a classic mural but painted in the style of a huge black stencil, black paint still running and dripping down the wall. It is one of those images - black on white - which in a simple and effective manner imprints itself in the mind of a passer-by. After one has passed by the astronaut he still lingers on the retina for a while. In this sense Ash's works are immediate but will stay with you for a while to make you think, to annoy you, or to make you reflect.

Ash works mostly in the street and the works are 'in your face' and visible to everyone, also to those who have not actively sought them out. He says; "It's very exciting for me as an artist to work in this way. When you're placing a present like that in a public space, it creates an interaction with people you'd never talk to otherwise. It's something you give to the people - and making paintings outside like this, is a gift to the public".

In this sense his art is democratic and unavoidable and manifests itself in the form of public statements completely in line with the spirit of street art. In Ash's words, his works are always a direct reflection of what takes place in society here and now. Ash doesn't give answers or solutions to the dilemmas, which are described in the works; rather he points at certain things in society and questions the present state of things. The works often deal with the contrast between the urban and the rural as well as with those anecdotes, which rise from this dichotomy. His latest murals in a building called VM-bjerget (VM-mountain) in Ørestaden (a new suburb of Copenhagen) can be interpreted as a direct commentary on the development of the city and increasing urbanisation. Here he has placed a goat, a wolf and a deer painted directly on the raw tarmac. The animals stand on top of mountains made up from old, smashed up car wrecks. In these apocalyptic works the mountain consists of decay and nature has moved in and taken over in triumph. In the real world things are quite different. Here it's often humans who, according to Ash, take from nature and expand themselves into nature in a thoughtless manner and without giving anything in return.

Young people's search for identity in subcultures is another reoccurring theme in Ash's works. This is seen in the mural *Punks Are Not Dead*, created for the exhibition *Backjumps 3*, Kunstraum Bethanien, Berlin, 2007. In this mural Ash reflects on punks as something from a possibly bygone era, and at the same time the work deals with young people's eternal search for identity.

Here we sense Ash's past as one of the pioneers on the European graffiti scene. When he was 13 years old he was fascinated by the play with identities and the energy, which defines graffiti. Even if his technique reveals his past as a writer, the intention behind his work is something completely different now. He says that graffiti is often about repeating oneself, but these days he is more concerned with developing as an artist. With his raw stencil style and his use of figures that look like silhouettes, which he adapts to different surfaces such as walls, paper and glass, Ash has developed a new signature within which he constantly renews himself. He is increasingly manifesting himself through a large number of exhibitions and events.

MN



Zevs

I 1999 lavede pariseren Zevs sit mest omfattende maleri. Efter et døgs arbejde på broen ved Seinen, Pont du Carrousel, der forbinder Saint-Germain-des-Prés og Louvre, havde han optegnet alle skygger kastet fra gadelygterne med hvid vejmalning. Når lysene i byen blev tændt, blev alle konturene med et tydlig ud af skyggerne. Selvom Zevs året før var begyndt at male skygger op over hele Paris' vakte skyggemaleriet af Pont du Carroussel opsigts. TV og presse var dækket over, hvordan det var lykkedes at udføre et så stort maleri på et så befærdet sted uden autorisation – og uden at vække mistanke. Som Zevs først har forklaret senere, havde han camouflagelet sit arbejde som vejarbejde og sig selv i vejarbejderens signalstørke gule uniform: "Paradoksalt nok gør den gule uniform, son, jeg har fra vejarbejderne, mig usynlig i byrummet".

Den gule uniform trækker Zevs nu i af praktiske grunde, når han skridt til handling. Men dragen har også givet kunstneren uden ansigt en fremtrædelsesform, der er en kreation i sig selv. "Zevs er en personage, der udfører virkelige aktioner i stil med superhero-konceptet i den amerikanske mytologi", har Zevs selv påpeget.

Sit navn har Zevs dog fra færduguden i den græske mytologi, som han en dag i undergrunden i 1994 så skrevet på fronten af et tog, der var tæt på at køre ham over. Navnet blev et tag, hvis bogstaver også dannede en sky med et lyn igennem. Hermed faldt det man så og det man læste sammen - ligesom de gamle modsætninger i vor bogstavkultur mellem billede og tekst. Imens Zevs' arbejde med bogstaverne kun kunne læses af de erfame skrivere inden for graffiti-miljøet, talte billedet af skyen med lynet igennem til gengæld til alle. Zevs' fordybelse i det traditionelle graffiti-tema - at både se og læse skrift - åbnede derfor også graffiti for et nyt og større publikum. Først skyggemaleriene markerede dog hans brud med traditionel graffiti centreret om bogstaver til fordel for en mere tilgængelig kunst, nemlig street art'en. Skyggerne havde ifølge Rådhuset i Paris sikret Zevs en sådan 'anerkendelse', at hans arbejde fremover ikke skulle fjernes. Samtidig blev han bedt om at male skyggerne på Pont du Carrousel op igen. I 2000 vendte han sig mod et andet aspekt ved byrummet, nemlig dets kommersielle billedunivers. Det resulterede i 'visuelle angreb' på reklamerne billedskærme mannequiner, en "visuel kidnapning" af en ti-meter høj model på en kæmpe plakat for Lavazza samt 'likviderede logoer', hvor mærkerne syntes at smelte i byrummet. Zevs har sideløbende med sit arbejde på gaden også lavet en lang række udstillinger, herunder sin hidtil største på Glyptoteket i København i 2008. I de sidste år er Zevs vendt tilbage til sit tidlige arbejde med lys i vores tids overoplyste storby. Seneste eksempel er hans plakat for Århus Festuge under temaet Åben by, som han sagde ja til at lave, såfremt han kunne gøre det på sin 'egen måde'. Plakaten er et foto af en intervention på en anden plakat, nemlig et kort over Århus i en oplyst glasvitrine ved havnen. Først har Zevs viklet den ind i sort tape og derefter bemalt den med et lyn samtidig med teksten "Åben by", som han til slut har skåret fri. Plakaten er et eksempel på Zevs' arbejde med lys: Her er lyset ikke længere blot forudsætning for, at vi kan se overhovedet, men selve det vil skal se. Men plakaten er også endnu et eksempel på, at en gadeaktion kan være autoriseret i ét perspektiv og uautoriseret i et andet.

TL

Zevs

In 1999 the Parisian Zevs created his most extensive painting to date. After 24 hours work on the bridge Pont du Carrousel at the Seine, which connects Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Louvre, he had painted an outline of all the shadows cast by the street lamps in white road paint. When the lights of the city were switched on, all the contours were instantly filled in by the shadows.

Even if Zevs had already started painting shadows the year before all over Paris, the work on Pont du Carrousel attracted a lot of attention. The TV and the press were puzzled by how he had managed to accomplish such a large painting in such a busy place without permission – and without causing suspicion. As Zevs explained at a later date, he had used camouflage in order to make his work look like roadwork. He had disguised himself in a fluorescent yellow roadwork uniform: "Contradictory as it may sound the yellow uniform, which I got from the road workers, makes me invisible in the city."

Now Zevs wears the uniform for practical reasons when he is in action. With this outfit the faceless artist has acquired an appearance, which is a creation in itself. "Zevs is a personage, who carries out real actions in the style of the superhero-concept in American mythology," Zevs has pointed out himself.

Zevs has his name from the God of thunder in Greek mythology. In the underground in 1994 he was almost run over by a train, which had Zevs written on the front. The name became a tag, the letters of which formed a cloud with lightning through it. In this tag what is seen and what is read becomes one – just like the two opposites in our literate culture, namely the image and the text.

While Zevs' work with the letters were only readable to the most experienced writers within the graffiti scene, the image of the cloud with a blot of lightning going through it appealed to everyone. Zevs' occupation with the traditional graffiti theme – writing that works as image and text – also made graffiti accessible to a new and larger audience. But it was the shadow paintings that marked his break with traditional graffiti centred on letters, in favour of a more accessible art, i.e. street art.

According to the City Council of Paris the shadows had guaranteed Zevs recognition of such a nature, that his work was not to be removed in the future. Additionally he was asked to paint the shadows on Pont du Carrousel again. In 2000 he turned his gaze towards another aspect of the urban environment – the commercial imagery. This resulted in "visual attacks" on the strikingly photogenic models of advertising, a visual kidnapping of a ten-meter tall model on a huge poster advertisement for Lavazza, and a serial liquidation of logos, in which the brands seemed to melt in their urban setting. In recent years Zevs has anew started working with outdoor lighting. By manipulating light boxes, neon tubes and street lamps he has not only changed what we see in the lights of the city, but also made this light in itself visible. Alongside his work in the street Zevs has also made numerous exhibitions, the largest one at the Glyptotek in Copenhagen in 2008.

TL



