

## **Conservation of Graffiti: Ethics and Practices**

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The conservation of Graffiti has been a topic of study seldomly addressed by researchers, practitioners, and the public. This is in part to its alternative nature –free, momentaneous and in continuous change– and part of a lack of consideration in mainstream society which may impede thinking about practical possibilities in certain cases.

As Graffiti has been a cultural phenomenon worldwide since the 70s/80s, the preservation and dissemination of the pieces and murals have been always present. Through photographs, we can collect, admire, and exhibit what pioneer graffiti writers did, and what later generations have overcome. However, although documentation can maintain the essence of what is seen, the reality of admiring a piece in the flesh goes always beyond that. That has been the reason why over the years Graffiti writers and followers have worked in maintaining some throw-ups, pieces and murals in situ. Other cases, simply luck has given us the opportunity to rediscover and appreciate lost works in the location where they were created.

In most of those cases, the condition of the works are unstable and slowly fading until disappearing completely. However, becoming valuable parts of the environment plays an important role in open possibilities regarding extending their life and appreciation. The same tools conservators use to conserve public or gallery works can be adapted and applied to accomplish that.

This proposal will aim to present the opportunities and limits of conservation of Graffiti, taking into consideration ethical and respectful approaches and the importance to advocate and extend the conservation practice to the support and understanding of Graffiti as a part of the Contemporary Art repertoire.