

Spraycity.at – graffiti archive and online map

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Spraycity is a documentation archive dedicated to the graffiti writing movement in Austria. The archive was founded in 2001 by art historian Stefan Wogrin in order to react to the transience that goes hand in hand with writing. The works of the writing movement are usually ephemeral, short-lived and not destined to last forever. The Spraycity archive aims to record, archive and catalog the resulting works as photographs and makes them accessible to the public for a longer period. While some works have already disappeared from the public, photographs are often the only possibility to let them remain.

The archive currently includes about 300,000 image documents from all over Austria, Europe, Asia and the USA. The Spraycity.at website forms an interface through which a selection of around 90,000 photos can be accessed online. Each photo contains metadata and is also searchable through its categorization and keywords. Since many works are only visible for a short time, there is a constant, systematic documentation. The geographical center is the city of Vienna and its surroundings. Specific locations with increased frequency, such as the Danube Canal or certain Wienerwand areas, are recorded every three days on average.

To simplify the presentation of the archive material and to locate legal graffiti areas, Spraycity creates interactive maps that can be accessed using OpenStreetMap or Google Maps. With the map „Graffiti Map Vienna“ nearly all existing but also already disappeared graffiti spots in Vienna can be displayed online.

The large number and geographically wide spreaded distribution of the works created makes a total coverage almost impossible. Some works disappear without even being visible to the public. However, in order to enable a representative documentation, SPRAYCITY also collects external photos. Furthermore Spraycity explores the history of the writing movement in Austria, which includes the collection (and first time digitalization) of photos from the beginning of the writing movement in Austria until now from all kind of archives.

The presentation will show how Spraycity is documenting and archiving graffiti but also which issues Spraycity has to tackle in the process.