

From “hic fuit” to hashtag. Documenting old and new forms of name writing within the Spraycity archive.

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ABSTRACT:

Spraycity is a documentation archive dedicated to the graffiti writing movement in Austria. The archive was founded in 2001 by art historian Stefan Wogrin and aims to record, archive and catalog graffiti as photographs to make them publicly accessible for a longer period. While some works have already disappeared in the public space, photographs are often the only possibility to let them remain. The archive currently includes over 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 112,000 photos can be accessed online.

For more than 20 years the main focus of the archive was dedicated to classical graffiti writing. Since 2022 the photo archive was constantly expanded and new categories were introduced. The category “[Historical Graffiti](#)“ shows graffiti photos which date back in the time before the writing movement appeared and can be found usually in churches or castles. Since about 2020 a new form of tagging seems to become popular. Those tags mostly start with an @-sign or a reference to a social media platform. Spraycity also started to document those in the category „[Social Media Graffiti](#)“. Since those tags were also evolving in the last years in some cases a comparison with the development of classical tags can be made. The talk will give an overview about the spraycity archive and the extensions added in the last years.