

Katja Glaser

The 'place to be' for street art nowadays no longer is the street, it's the Internet

My paper is about recent developments of local, situated street art practices in the context of globally networked media technologies. For, in the course of ongoing globalization processes and mobile, portable and digitally networked media technologies one can definitely detect significant changes in both the perception and production of street art.

Street Art *leaves* the streets. Somehow.

Instead of languishing its temporary and ephemeral existence in the street, street art gets more and more both located and situated in the Internet.

This global conception of street art leads to a reconfiguration of both the global and the local, and therefore, to new normativities and power relations: Within the street art world('s network), central bloggers, street art photographers and administrators of central Facebook pages position themselves – and are positioned – as decisive experts, opinion makers and gatekeepers. These recently mentioned street art 'experts' always make choices considering *what to show* and *whose work to promote* on their blog or Facebook page. Although their choices apparently seem to represent the 'present state of the local streets', they only show a subjective selection. In doing so, they somehow define (the global view of) singular cities and influence the formation of a somehow globally accepted street art canon. This fact has to be seen contrary to the background that street art originally runs counter to the logic of gatekeepers. Thus: One of the main reasons street artists used to use the streets as their presentation platform was to undermine the central and selective role of gallery owners, curators and methods of getting up that surrounded institutions in general. Street art photographs, subsequently, must be understood as digital documents or 'goods' which do not only incorporate subcultural capital, but are also closely linked to economic and (art) market-related interests.

In my paper I particularly want to highlight the reciprocal constitution of local street art practices and global art discourse, with special attention to the concept of location and placement. Street artists are aware of the benefits online documentation and circulation can bring for them. With this in mind, local street art practices change: If street artists want to make sure that their work will be seen, they place it on so-called 'street art hubs'; or on spots, where local street art-tours pass.

Generally speaking, there is no need for street artists anymore – if ever – to frequent risky spots. A backyard, if well documented, can be valued equally. This also leads to the development of so called 'street art for the Internet'. With this term I refer to works which (almost entirely) get along without physical presence. *Their* place to be is the internet; what *now* matters is not the physical 'location', it's the digital – that is: its URL. For the 'street artists of the internet' the digital audience seems to be the far more attractive one, from which they often expect the 'instant internet fame'.

Situating Global Art

Katja Glaser is a PhD candidate at the DFG Research Training Group 'Locating Media' at the University of Siegen. She is currently writing her PhD thesis "'Street Art' in the digital road network", dealing with street art *and or in combination with* new media technologies: <http://locatingstreetart.com/>. Her research interests are: Street Art & Urban Art, Media Aesthetics, Mobile Media, (Mobile) Interface Theory and Social Networking.