

OTTSTUFF (Estella, 1990) is an urban artist and graphic designer from Navarre (Spain).

Mixing the languages and tools of graffiti and graphic design, he develops an oneiric and minimalist universe around the mutable icon, through an endless game of fusion and experimentation with the elements and principles of image theory, where visual poetry and rhetoric meet iconographic post-graffiti. The face silhouette is OTTSTUFF's flagship, a mutable icon which allows him to address different topics related to the human essence from equity, disregarding stereotypical differentiations.

Iconographic graffiti, surrealism and minimalism are his main creative influences, also inspired by architecture and nature. Germinated in the public space, his artistic language approaches iconographic post-graffiti to a minimalist surrealism, addressing his interventions to the improvement of our daily relationship with the environment, throughout a constructive-affective transformation of it.

Playing and circular experimentation are the beginning and end of his creative work.

Mutable icon

OTTSTUFF's face silhouette stands out as his main icon, which allows him to address different topics related to the human essence from equity, disregarding stereotypical differentiations, also reinterpreting the environment as a semantic element. The dot, basic element of artistic expression, is another of the artist's most characteristic iconographic elements, which is recurrent in most of his artworks. Iconographic graffiti is based on the repetition of a graphic element or constant style along the different interventions. The mutable icon is constant and easily recognizable, but it differs from the static icon in its flexibility and wider capability to develop different narratives. So, even though it is different in each of the artistic interventions, it maintains a common thread that allows us to perceive each intervention as part of a whole.

Visual poetry and rhetoric

Along with the use of color, visual poetry and rhetoric are essential contributions of graphic design to OTTSTUFF's creative language. The search for an autotelic aesthetic experience, originated through playing, means both the starting and ending point for the artist: the creative process is an end in itself. The use of certain literary figures such as the anaphora, constitutes a meeting point between the languages of graffiti and graphic design. Other literary figures such as the prosopopeia, metonymy or synecdoche, are recurrent given the intrinsic human morphology of the main icon. Throughout OTTSTUFF's work, the icon evolves as a liquid rhetorical element, whose deep understanding and advanced reading requires repeated encounters with different artworks, thus establishing a link, a sense of continuity that characterises iconographic post-graffiti. Also, the public space acquires a fundamental semantic value in his work, completing the meaning of the piece, and acting just as an important compositional element.

About visual poetry. Visual poetry develops nonverbal poetics, closely linked to graphic design and typography. Among its antecedents, ancient calligrams such as "The Egg", by Simmias de Rodas, stand out for their precocity. Throughout the 20th century, visual poetry was greatly influenced by avant-garde poetic movements, such as concretism, surrealism or lyricism, which focused on the visual and plastic aspect of letters, far beyond their value as linguistic signs.

About visual rhetoric. Widely used in graphic design and visual communication, visual rhetoric channels stimulations of verbal origin in images, being considered as an exercise of pure imagination. The goal is to evoke figurative meanings, implicit ideas derived from the analysis of the context and the symbolic relationships between its elements, rethinking literary figures through the semiotics of the image, and exploring the expressiveness of non-conventional forms through creative play. An effective visual rhetoric requires extensive knowledge of visual language.

Why post-graffiti?

Behind graffiti, there are different people, circumstances and creative concerns, and creativity does not understand of watertight compartments. Unavoidably, graffiti evolves and merges with other passions and knowledge, in parallel with the individual's both personal and professional development, generating new variants. However, at a collective level, it is necessary to differentiate and safeguard the term 'graffiti' as an independent phenomenon.

The term 'post-graffiti' allows us establishing a precise contemporary link between certain urban interventions and graffiti culture, differentiating its spheres though. Post-graffiti is a discipline parallel to graffiti, which reinterprets part of its language, just as graffiti reinterprets other coexistent visual languages (comic, cartoons, mass culture...). However, post-graffiti is developed outside the limits of graffiti, requesting more plastic experimentation, dialoguing with a wider audience, and orienting interventions towards an harmonious integration within the public space. In summary, it is a term that protects the original meaning of graffiti against its distortion and misappropriation, without denying graffiti as a key influence and starting point in certain contemporary artistic interventions, allowing also to differentiate different artist's backgrounds and starting points.

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