

The city as a canvas: The street tricks of the graffiti artists

城市當畫布 塗鴉客街頭搞怪



「很多人印象裡，刺青與混幫派、塗鴉與搞破壞，都被劃上等號，這對塗鴉藝術創作者來說，真是不可承受之重！」塗鴉藝術家Jimmy一語道破，塗鴉客在刻板印象下，爭取社會認同所面臨的困境。

原本以西門町為「創作」聚集地的塗鴉族，近兩年來，往東區移動的趨勢相當明顯，忠孝東路四、五段巷弄外牆、店家鐵捲門，甚至松山菸場、台鐵台北機廠圍籬，隨處可見塗鴉客即興創作的痕跡，北市府揚言祭出重罰令，仍擋不住塗鴉客希望表現自我的企圖心。

七年前，和國外塗鴉藝術家組成4CREW塗鴉團體的BOBO，還不到三十歲，已是台北塗鴉圈大師級人物。他說：「每個塗鴉客的作品、風格都是獨一無二，作品隱含的元素，不論字體、圖騰、記號，別人看不懂，但我們一看就知道是誰畫的！」

除了創作地標的西門町，塗鴉族的擴散，大有爭取認同的意圖，透過揮灑創意，讓冷冰冰的水泥叢林，展現更多生命力。

「我們既不是破壞狂，也不是反社會份子。」BOBO說，窗明几淨的大樓、捷運站，他們不會去碰，但城市裡有許多廢棄公寓、單調的河堤、變電箱，這些沒有生命的空間，「才是我們揮灑的園地」。

BOBO坦承，北市大多數的塗鴉，都是浪跡國際的塗鴉客來台所留下的紀念品，「很多創作者把行動視為重點，甚至專挑高難度的地點，體驗塗鴉的原始反體制精神」。

以一般三公尺高、六到七公尺寬的店家鐵捲門，對專業塗鴉客而言，就像標準畫布，不論是抽象字體、鮮豔圖騰，「差不多一兩個小時就能搞定」！有些偏好bombing（像炸彈開花）技法的塗鴉客，喜歡爬上屋頂，挑選一般人爬不到的高處創作，「像打游擊一樣，一、二十分鐘內，只要兩色噴漆，噴了就走，創作完的作品，不容易重新粉刷洗掉，會更有成就感」。

西門町電影街一帶，近幾年來，也有不少店家，表達對塗鴉風格的喜愛，主動花錢讓這些塗鴉族，在店裡牆壁自由創作，店內及周邊巷弄的塗鴉創作，形成宛如塗鴉藝術大街的都會人文景觀，一到假日，附近已成為徒步區，吸引民眾駐足拍照的熱門景點。

(自由時報記者劉榮)

“In many people’s minds, the relationship between tattoos and gangsters is the same as the relationship between graffiti and vandalism. This is unbearable to creative graffiti artists!” said graffiti artist Jimmy, as he pointed out the difficulties this stereotype poses to graffiti artists trying to gain social recognition.

Graffiti artists used to use Taipei’s Ximending as a base for their creativity, but over the past two years, the trend has been to move to the city’s East District. Their impromptu creations can be seen everywhere from the walls of buildings and metal rolling shutters along the fourth and fifth sections of Zhongxiao E Rd to the fences of the Songshan Tobacco Factory and Taiwan Railways Administration’s Taipei Railway Workshop. The Taipei City Government has pledged to punish them heavily, but that has not stopped their ambition to express themselves.

Seven years ago, BOBO formed a graffiti group named 4CREW together with foreign graffiti artists. He is not even 30 years old and is already a master in this field in Taipei. “Every graffiti artist’s work and style are unique. The general public may not understand the elements in an artist’s work, like script, totems, and symbols, but we instantly know whose work it is when we see it.”

Apart from Ximending, the landmark of their creativity, the spread of graffiti artists is an attempt to gain recognition. This spread of their creativity has also added greater vitality to the cold concrete jungle.

“We are neither vandals nor anti-social,” according to BOBO, who claims that they would not touch clean and neat buildings or MRT stations. However, there are many abandoned apartments and dull riverbanks and power transformers. Such space without a soul “is where we paint freely.”

BOBO admits that most of the graffiti in Taipei has been left by graffiti artists wandering the world. “Many creators place their focus on action. They even pick highly-challenging locations so they can experience the original anti-establishment spirit of graffiti making.”

For professional graffiti artists, a 3m by 6m to 7m metal rolling shutter of a shop is a standard canvas. From abstract characters to brilliant totems, “the work can quickly be done in about an hour or two.” Some artists who prefer the technique of “bombing” love to climb up to a roof top to place their creations in high places beyond the general public’s reach. “Just like a guerrilla war, you spray paint in two colors in 10 or 20 minutes and then walk away. Since it is difficult to cover or clean such graffiti, you have a greater sense of achievement.”

In recent years, many stores around Ximending’s “movie street” have expressed their fondness for graffiti art, taking the initiative to pay graffiti artists to create freely on the walls of their stores. The creation in the stores and around the community has turned such graffiti art streets into urban artificial scenery. Since the area is now a walking district on holidays, it has become a popular scenic spot that attracts people who go there to take photos.

(LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY EDDY CHANG)

Top: Graffiti artists use empty houses that are difficult to climb and are awaiting demolition as a perfect target for their creations. With the rapid black and white spray painting technique, the work can be done in less than 20 minutes.

Bottom: As graffiti walls gradually become a special feature of Ximending’s “movie street,” some stores have taken the initiative to make contact with graffiti artists and let them show their works directly at the store.

PHOTOS: LIU JUNG, LIBERTY TIMES

上圖：塗鴉族視待拆、不易攀爬的空屋為創作的絕佳園地，黑白兩色的快速噴漆技法，只要不用二十分鐘就能完成。

下圖：塗鴉牆逐漸成為西門町電影街一帶特色，也有店家主動找上塗鴉創作者，讓塗鴉作品直接登堂入室。

照片：自由時報記者劉榮