



A MONUMENT OF
(TEENAGE) LOVE?

SACHE

QUE

A MESSAGE
ON THE WALL?

WHO IS THE AUTHOR
AND WHO THE RECEIVER?

JE

T'AIME

A MESSAGE TO THE TOWN
AND ITS PEOPLE?

A TAG

TURNED

MURAL



During my three-month artist in residency in La Charité-sur-Loire in the summer of 2021, Cité du Mot – the cultural centre which had invited me – suggested I leave a trace somewhere in town. I wondered what would be an appropriate public work of art in a small city in the heart of France during the pandemic, so I started roaming around, looking for sources of inspiration.

I discovered that sometimes the idea is already there, in a simple, tiny, banal, everyday form. You just have to be lucky enough to encounter it. On the edge of the town, I spotted a small, anonymous message tagged on a road sign that read *Sache que je t'aime* ('Know that I love you').

I found this to be an honest, sensitive, empathetic, encouraging, kind, inclusive, poetic, timeless yet relevant, and ultimately necessary phrase. An intimate personal thought that is often kept secret transcended the private sphere and entered the public domain as it was inscribed on the skin of the city. Whoever used that marker pen remains an open question. Saying I love you is never easy, so maybe writing it will do the trick – or so the author may have thought.



As for me, instead of putting up my own message or aesthetic, I decided to precisely replicate this already existing phrase on a large scale on a wall just 50 metres away from the road sign. By making my work the mouthpiece of the message, I hoped I could assist the original author reach out to the person the amorous note was intended for.

Simultaneously, through this work I wanted to raise a number of questions, such as what is a representational painting, and what is a conceptual painting? What is a tag, what is a mural, and what is a public artwork? And what is the relationship, distance, and hierarchy between them?

ALEXANDROS SIMOPOULOS is a multi-disciplinary artist from Athens, Greece. He obtained a BA in International Relations and Humanitarian Law at the Panteion University in Athens and received an MA in Visual Arts and Illustration from the Camberwell College of Arts in London. He is the receiver of a significant number of awards, scholarships, and grants and has worked with NGOs, galleries, museums, and cultural institutions in various countries. He is one of the founding members of Sarri 12 Gallery in Athens (2012-2016), one of Greece's first galleries to showcase the work of artists working in public urban space. Simopoulos is active both indoors and outdoors, having exhibited in over 15 solo and group shows in institutions and galleries at home and abroad, and having created murals in countries worldwide, including Spain, Germany, Turkey, Greenland, and India.