

# 5 DAYS OF WORK

Streets are home not only to all sorts of signs and a great deal of advertising, they also function as a medium for yet another form of communication. One that defies the prevailing linguistic code of the city as it doesn't urge us to abide by the law, or lure us into irrationally purchasing things we don't need. Instead, it encourages us to think critically and challenge the status quo, arouses our curiosity and – if we're lucky – even makes us smile. I'm talking about word-based messages that are illicitly sprayed on, or attached to, walls, drainspouts, lampposts, and traffic lights.

Like image-based street art, text-based street art demonstrates that there is more to the cityscape than standardised architecture, chain stores, and omnipresent corporate logos would suggest at first sight. Read between the official lines of the urban fabric and you will discover plenty of grassroots efforts to reappropriate and reinterpret the streets by according new meaning to specific objects. Put more dramatically, every single dissident message in this category can be considered a battle cry in the struggle over public space, as it relentlessly ends up in private hands.

## FOR

Shepard Fairey once called these messages 'secret subcultural handshakes', implying that they may easily be overlooked by those not directly involved in the street art scene. Do such small acts of subversion catch the eye of ordinary passers-by (not glued to their smartphone)? Could it be that an overexposure to adverts outdoors has numbed people's senses, rendering many unsusceptible to images outside commercial parameters? Whatever the case, in most cities, a sticker, tag, or tile containing a message that makes daily life a little less monotonous and a little more bearable, is never far away.

Light-hearted, scriptural interventions are rarely as conspicuous as paste ups or stencils, let alone murals, but once encountered (at close range), they too make us more aware of our urban surroundings, and that, arguably, makes our relationship to the city more exciting. This photo essay presents a selection of street messages that I've spotted in cities in various countries. It goes without saying, however, that flicking through images online or on paper, naturally doesn't trigger the same sentiments that are likely to occur in the open-air gallery. Or, as one artist from Amsterdam asserted on a parking meter; 'the emotions of the street are something museums can't buy'.

# 1 NIGHT OF GLAMOUR



FitLike (main) & Mood of Collapse (mirror). Aberdeen, Scotland. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh



Artist unknown. Stockholm, Sweden. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh





'More Kandinsky, less Kardashian.' Artist unknown. Oslo, Norway. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh



'Art is dead, consume its corpse.' Artists unknown. Arles, France. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh





Artist unknown. Stockholm, Sweden. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh



Artist unknown. Stockholm, Sweden. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh



Lot Madeleine. Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh



Artist unknown. Stavanger, Norway. Photograph ©Daniël de Jongh