

STREET ART como generador de Branding cultural en la Ciudad

STREET ART as Cities Cultural Branding builder

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Resumen

El Street Art como manifestación de ciudad creativa genera branding, identidad y reconocimiento a nivel mundial, mejorando su atractivo para ciudadanos talentosos. Estudiamos los objetivos que persigue la proliferación de este nuevo arte y demostraremos las hipótesis sobre su contribución a la cultura, arte, historia, branding de la ciudad, y como elemento de expresión social y cohesión, generando sentido de pertenencia y desarrollo económico. Se investiga su relación con el Branding tradicional (definido como KPI en el WW Observatory for Attractive Cities www.attractivecities.com), y compuesto por: Museos icónicos, Eventos internacionales, Deportes de masiva audiencia, Música relativa e incluso Películas basadas en la ciudad. Descubrimos como el arte callejero no guarda correlación con el branding tradicional, sino que es principalmente usado por ciudades de tamaño medio, no capitales y con escaso branding internacional, como mecanismo económicamente asequible para generar su propio nuevo branding y reducir la enorme brecha con ciudades con un tremendo impacto debido a sus monumentos, museos y otros atractivos masivamente conocidos. El Street Art es hoy un generador fundamental de nuevo branding, modesta pero constantemente, reivindicando la existencia de los barrios y portavoz de los últimos movimientos sociales. Es una inversión que toda ciudad debería fomentar.

Abstract

Street Art as a manifestation of a creative city generates branding, identity and worldwide recognition, improving its attractiveness to talented citizens. We study the objectives pursued by the proliferation of this new art and we will demonstrate the hypotheses about its contribution to city culture, art, history, branding, and as an element of social expression and cohesion, generating a sense of belonging and economic development. We research its relationship with traditional Branding (defined as KPI in the WW Observatory for Attractive Cities www.attractivecities.com) and made up of iconic museums, international events, massive audience sports, associated music and even movies set at the city. We found how street art does not correlate with

traditional branding, but is mainly used by medium-sized cities, not capitals and with little traditional branding, as an economically affordable mechanism to generate their own new branding and reduce the huge gap with main cities with a tremendous impact due to its massively known monuments, museums and other attractions. Street Art is today a fundamental generator of new branding, modestly but constantly, claiming the relevance of suburbs and giving voice to the latest social movements. It is an investment that every city should foster.

Palabras Claves

SmartArt; Ciudades inteligentes; Ciudades Atractivas; Identidad; Branding

Keywords

SmartArt; SmartCities; Attractive Cities; Cities Identity; Branding

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1. Intro. Why Street Art

The art, the citizen, the city, all connected. How can street art influence a city? Is it simply a way of showing your essence, is it part of your identity? Can it influence economic and social aspects? To what extent is it part of your traditional culture or just another attractive addition?

This research aims to raise awareness about the importance of street art in the generation of urban branding at an international level. Street art is part of the culture of a city, but not in the form of traditional culture that is studied in models such as our World Observatory for Attractive Cities (AttractiveCities 2022). A city with a traditional culture that has created and shaped the city throughout its history does not feel the need to paint its streets to capture the attention of visitors, since its iconic walls and monuments, construction and history already speak for themselves. But not all cities treasure this traditional cultural heritage, some because of their youth (barely more than a century) or because they are included into those types of medium-sized or intermediate cities, excellent for living but without the main capital cities magnificent monuments or wonderful museums. Currently, street art increasingly captivates the attention of people, investors and governments as an asset that contributes to making culture, adds flavor to the city essence and enhances its identity and, therefore, its appeal to talent. It pops up as a new way of communicating the urban collective new ideas, thoughts, and feelings. It's a fresh, accessible culture, affordable to modest city budgets, rooted in the neighborhood, with that suburb nobody cares about which doesn't have much more art than that painted wall near the train station reflecting their way of life.

1.1 Main objectives:

- a) Enhancing urban aesthetics: Street Art aims to transform urban spaces by adding visual appeal and artistic value to the built environment. Artistic installations and creative interventions can breathe life into public spaces, making them more vibrant and inviting, turning inert gray concrete walls into suggestions for the sight, even into invitations to reflect on very human subjects. (Sandusky 2018)
- b) Fostering community engagement: Street Art encourages citizen participation and interaction. Artworks can serve as gathering points, catalysts for social interaction, and platforms for public dialogue and expression. (Gattupalli 2022). It makes a *Sense of Place*: Street Art helps create a sense of place and fosters a strong connection between the residents and their city. (LANZL 2020). Art installations that represent the city's history, landmarks, or natural elements evoke a sense of pride and belonging among the community. This emotional connection strengthens the city's brand by building loyalty and attachment among its residents. Street art definitely humanizes urban spaces that are forgotten, despised, considered useless or even ugly, turning them into spaces of social cohesion.

- c) Promoting sustainability: Street Art usually raises awareness about sustainable practices and environmental issues. Art installations may incorporate renewable energy sources, repurposed materials, or highlight ecological themes to promote sustainable living and urban development. (Urban Design 2023)
- d) Creating cultural identity: Street Art can reflect the cultural heritage, values, and aspirations of a city or community. Artworks may celebrate local traditions, history, or represent the diversity and identity of the population. This cultural expression creates a unique brand narrative that highlights the city's values and traditions. Street Art installations and creative interventions provide cities with a distinctive visual identity. (Muiruri 2022) They can become iconic landmarks or symbols that are associated with the city, making it memorable for both residents and visitors. A unique identity helps differentiate the city from others and contributes to its branding efforts, attracting talented citizens from the emotional point of view. (DHENIN 2021)
- e) Frontline for social movements. Some artists use Street Art as the first line of promotion for social movements, using artworks as a communication of protest / dissent and in some cases as an invitation to participate in civil disobedience. It is a cheap means of expression to create city branding, but it is also affordable for the community to exercise its "soft power" in an impressive and peaceful way. The main purpose of protest artworks in urban spaces is to align with social needs, such as opposition to situations of oppression, lack of freedom or simply, lack of investment and attention from the city government to that neighborhood. Street art is positioned as a manifestation that is constantly leaving a new mark/footprint between the traditional city history and a new culture in boiling evolution. (Gattupalli 2022)



Figure 1. Protest Artwork Anti-FIFA Football Cup in Brazil. Paulo Ito. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pauloito/> (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

- f) **Attracting Tourism and Investment:** Cities with a strong artistic presence and vibrant cultural scene tend to attract tourists, visitors, and businesses. Street Art installations serve as attractions, drawing visitors who are interested in experiencing the city's artistic and creative offerings. This influx of tourists and investment contributes to the economic growth of the city and reinforces its brand as a cultural and innovative hub. (Howard 2019). It also helps to spread the word about the city in a viral way, generate more awareness, and resonate more in the minds of potential citizens who could consider going there to develop their potential.
- g) **Social Media Buzz and Virality:** In the age of social media, visually striking art installations have the potential to go viral, generating significant online buzz. This exposure amplifies the city's brand reach beyond its physical boundaries and attracts attention from a global audience. (Paul 2015) Positive social media coverage further strengthens the city's brand reputation and generates curiosity and interest in visiting or exploring the city, a first won position to attract talented citizens. StreetArt is gaining relevance in the social media. We can see from (Top-Hashtags 2023) that the term “streetart” drives as many posts as “smartcities”.

1.2 WHAT is Street Art

Urban art could be defined as any artistic practice or expression found in private or public urban places. It is defined as art since it can transmit emotions, special sensations that the artist would like to share as a form of claim, declaration of love, passion or other feelings. However, there has always been some disagreement about what to consider art. The art speaks for itself. It gives a good understanding about different cultural movements, about specific events, historical actions. Some people may feel that contemporary art may not be considered art, but special pieces of art can mean a lot, they may look simply, but they carry quite an inspiring message. On the other hand, what could we say about graffiti? Can graffiti be considered art? They are mainly highlighted as a form of vandalism, an illegal act of painting without permission. However, in recent years a new expression has appeared: street art as an urban art form but regulated and generally more visually appealing painting. Now it is becoming more and more important and attracting more interest. There is a desire to bring art to urban spaces. Making art accessible to others, enhancing the streets of a city and captivating people's attention.

The Street Art Cities Organization (StreetArtsCities, 2023) is the World's largest urban art community which aims to connect artists, photographers, festivals, galleries and cities through urban art. Have you ever imagined exploring cities through street art? There have gathered around 44.000 different locations to enjoy these pieces of art, in 1300 cities from 96 countries and growing every day! You can also know about the verified artists who made many of them.

Should city governments care more about attracting this art? The arts and culture sectors provide enormous benefits to cities, contributing notably to the enhancement and consolidation of their identity and branding, and therefore helping to make

themselves known and compete to attract talent. Due to these reasons, cities should adopt strategies that support these creative activities as they will foster economic development. (Arts & The Economy 2009)



Figure 2. Street Art in Brussels. Source: Author

2. WHAT WILL BE STUDIED. HYPOTHESIS

2.1 Art contributes to city culture.

What makes a city attractive? The people, the landscape, the monuments, historical figures born there, its power and economic strength? What is it? It is a mixture of all these components, which contribute to a greater or lesser extent to the attractiveness of a city. In previous articles we have already talked about what can make a city more attractive, for example, research was done in which, backed by data, it was shown that music contributes to the branding of a city (Herrerros de Tejada, Meneses & Ondiviela, 2022). Music as an expression of art, that is, a way of expressing what is inside human beings, but not in any form, but accompanied by a melody, by an instrumental base. But like music there are many other expressions of art. Art is made up of many components. Nowadays urban art has become more relevant, has more visibility and is considered an art form that enriches the city and its culture. As already explained, it can be a way of expressing the emotions of today's society. It can express the most relevant theme of today's society, concerns or happiness.

Street art is not a term that refers to a scribble, a drawing on a wall, but a specific moment in time, the motif of the drawing, the tools used, and much more can be reflected through a work of urban art. As will be covered in next sections, we should not refer to street art as a graffiti, Italian "*graffo*" which means scratch. Even though some people may attribute the boom of graffiti to the famous movements in New York (Brooklyn as hubs of graffiti), it was in Italy where it started. Before the early 20th century in the USA during the great economic crisis of the 1930, the first expressions of drawing in the streets happened in Pompeii (LaFrance, 2016).

Urban art is a way of expressing oneself freely, without any kind of censorship. When graffiti started, it was made mainly by homeless people that used these as a mean of communication with others. Illegally, to show its presence of a person inside a ghetto, a subculture. There was a censorship to prevent graffiti, but urban art, as referred to nowadays, is different, it is not to express freely your feelings, or to go against any injustice, but to bring alive streets and tell something about them through its walls. Now a painting does not have to be on a canvas, it does not have to be made of small brushstrokes or charcoal to be appreciated, valued and admired, but as in everything in society, it is innovated with new tools and techniques. It is now about making art more accessible to both the artist and the viewer who enjoys it. An avenue, a building, a white wall or a battered and old wall can come to life thanks to a work of urban art that speaks for itself in the streets. Isn't this culture? Isn't it a way of telling the secrets and the history that these streets hold? A regularized urban art that allows artists to freely share what they intend to convey with their painting. Do people feel identified with a particular scene?

A city can start to become more relevant in the art sector in our modern world thanks to street art, without the need to build a new museum and exhibitions at exorbitant prices. An example could be the graffiti of Julius Caesar in Lugo, Spain, a work by Diego AS, awarded for being organized by the Street Art Cities community (Street Art Cities, 2021). A mural that might take the viewer to the victorious Spain of the Roman

Empire. He is accompanied by ten other works in Spain among the 25 most voted murals. It can be said that Spain could gain some recognition in this field.

Not only this, but research carried out by the Romanian capital Bucharest on how street art contributes to a city's identity is also worth mentioning. They define it as an efficient tool contributing to the culture of the city. They claim that street art highlights remarkable moments, the city's heritage and enhances its culture. In Bucharest you can find some paintings with messages about communism. Romania's ascension to the European Union started opening the way to street art. Other murals and paintings started to reflect the Romanian's prosperity and enrichment of the city. The key point of these investigations is based on research, documentation and data. It is curious how they speak of a subculture created by street art, subculture being that which can be defined as a cultural group within a wider culture. Culture encompasses shared values, beliefs in a society, a shared history, a history made of art.

According to some research, art is part of the history of a city since the beginnings and therefore, contributes to its culture (Acrylgiessen, 2021). As art being part of the culture, and street art a subgroup in art, it could be considered a subculture. Street Art often reflects the cultural richness and diversity of a city. It can showcase the local traditions, history, and contemporary art movements, thereby expressing the city's cultural identity. This cultural expression becomes an integral part of the city's brand narrative.

2.2 New, affordable and accessible art expression.

Urban art is relatively new compared to the forms of culture that come from centuries ago in different cities. There are many ways to enhance the attractiveness of a city. As mentioned above, street art allows a street or building to, in an original way, call to curiosity.

According to Richard Florida, one of today's most famous specialists in urban development, creativity drives economic growth (Hospers & van Dalm, 2005). He believes a creative city cannot be built from scratch, but policy makers can take some actions in order to enhance the creativity and attractiveness of their cities. Being the creative class a group of artists, designers, writers, media people, even entrepreneurs, that think, innovate, design and produce, urban art should also be taken into account in order to contribute to a creative city. Street art aims to convey symbols and messages and should be considered part of a new subculture (Cercleux, 2022).

But, how could policy makers raise enhance the creativity of the city? Recent research states that although not all museums are a destination choice for tourists, a great museum or exhibition can be considered a remarkable national or international attraction. (Codignola & Mariani, 2017). However, it might be more effective and efficient to allow an artist to create art in a space than to build a museum. Based on historical data and rough estimates, the cost of building a museum can range from a few million dollars to hundreds. Some world-renowned and iconic museums have had construction costs exceeding \$1 billion. For instance, the latest expansion of the Modern Museum of Art (MoMA) in New York, which was completed in 2019, had a cost of \$450m. Also, the Louvre Museum in Abu Dhabi cost \$650m.

Artworks by prominent artists were difficult to obtain and maintain in museums, as well as expensive. In general terms, museums tend to be expensive construction projects due to the need for specialized spaces such as exhibition halls, storage areas, security installations, and climate control systems suitable for the artworks or exhibits. Street art, on the contrary, is a way of arousing curiosity about streets and neighborhoods that would not be visited other way. Some research states that it does matter the location where the pieces of art are placed in order to be an effective attraction (Codignola & Mariani, 2017). Street art can be placed in almost every corner of a city where there is a blank space to let creativity glow. In the same way, it would be impossible to allocate the space of the Cathedral or an iconic building for this purpose, since these are already contributing to the branding of the city. The purpose of street art is to call to attention those neighborhoods or buildings that go unnoticed.

Graffiti and street art speak to everyone in their own language. They are not elitist or classist or exclusive. They are democratic and accessible to everyone. They are a form of art for people to express themselves, challenge the status quo, create beauty and give meaning to the urban environment.

2.3 Cities are using it to improve their branding

Therefore, street art can contribute to the creation of cultural identity, reflecting the cultural heritage and its legacy. Street art may not be the goal, but a means to become iconic landmarks or symbols associated with the city, making it memorable to residents and visitors alike. This form of cultural expression creates a unique brand that highlights the values and traditions of the city.

Now that street art is gaining more and more attention, it can be used as a means to promote innovation in a city by incorporating technology, new techniques and tools in ways that promote how they are committed to creativity and vitality. Culture, as well as sustainability and innovation in art installations, a city can show its commitment to being a smart destination, in the sense of new technologies, data collection and finding the images that can attract more attention in every corner of the city and oriented to the future. This unique positioning helps the city stand out and attract the attention of tourists, businesses and talent. In this way we would say that street art is a valuable asset of the city. They can appear in promotional materials, city campaigns and digital content. These efforts help attract visitors, business and investment, further strengthening the city's brand. According to the data extracted from the Street Art study, it can be seen how cities around the world are investing in Street Art to improve the branding of their cities (STREETSART, 2021).

Street Art works contribute to a city's visual identity and aesthetics. The unique and visually appealing art pieces become associated with the city, creating a recognizable and memorable brand image. The art can reflect the city's culture, values, and aspirations, reinforcing the brand identity (Gattupalli, 2022).

2.4 Street Art is relatively new. It builds branding and identity but it's relatively contributing little to main historical iconic cultural cities.

We could say that the essence of street art dates to prehistoric times. Back then, cavemen would depict hunting scenes in cave walls as a celebration of their clans' prosperity. However, graffiti, or street art as we know it increased its presence in the early twentieth century. The history of street art dates back to the gang wars in New York in the 1920s-30s, where gangs used name tags and graffiti to mark their controlled territories. In the 1960s, New York was going through a deep recession and had enormous unused built areas (boarded-up buildings, abandoned lots, semi-destroyed old factories, etc.). These surfaces became the perfect canvas, first in Spanish Harlem, and then spreading as an art form that covered all the neglected walls of marginal areas and finally the subway wagons. Later, in the 1970s, styles began to improve, and artists appeared who wanted to be noticed, signing their works with their nicknames or pseudonyms. (TheArtStory, 2023) Since then, street art has spread beyond the streets, to reach t-shirts, posters used in all types of commercial communication or even in presidential campaigns, and even museums, with very famous artists such as Keith Haring, Shepard Fairey, Jean Michel Basquiat, CornBread, Lady Pink, Blu or Banksy. (Artland, 2023)

As recent as this art form is, our hypothesis was correct. There is no correlation between street art and traditional culture, history, or branding identifiers for largest world cities in the Worldwide Observatory of Attractive Cities (ATTRACTIVECITIES, 2022). We will see little correlation in the findings section. We should consider this to mainly help modern non-traditional, and mid-sized non-capital cities to create their own art and new branding.

2.5 Smart art helps to bring neighborhoods together. It is an expression of neighborhoods. We won't see smart art on the most important streets.

Main big cities do not need to invest that much money in street art. Data reveals how mainly smaller cities, or cities with low branding score are the ones that invest more money in street art. By the way, it is also noticeable how cities in China and Japan, do not have, if very little, any street art representations. It may be related to the culture of those countries. But the fact is that there are many cities interested in enhancing their culture, and attractiveness through street art.

(Lefebvre, 1970) predicted that the future of art would not be inside buildings, but urban, something like a triangulation between spectator, the city and the art. Art serves to create the city, builds its identity (Whybrow, 2011). It is not just something that adorns it, but a fundamental component that shapes it and contributes to urban life.

So why not enhancing also some neighborhoods which are not visited?

Street art has an important positive impact on the regeneration and revitalization of neighborhoods that are rarely visited (almost abandoned). Street art can create a sense of identity, community and culture in these areas, as well as attract visitors and

tourists interested in the artistic expressions and messages from local artists. Some examples of how street art has been used to improve neighborhoods around the world:

In Turin, Italy, street artist Tellas created a mural called Blooming in a non-central parking lot (turned now into the courtyard of the ARTiglieria Contemporary Art Center).

In Civitanova Marche, Italy, in a decaying former industrial port area, architect and street artist Giulio Vesprini designed a skate park called Kuka. This is now part of an open-air urban art museum called Vedo a Colori. (Trombetta, 2023)

The suburb of Shoreditch, London, was completely unknown in tourist guides. Famous street artists such as Banksy, Shepard Fairey and Stik have made it a popular destination for art lovers and tourists. Street art in Shoreditch reflects the diversity and creativity of the local community, as well as the social and political issues that affect it.

In Valparaíso, Chile, street art is a vital part of the city's identity and heritage, with its colorful houses and murals covering the hills and valleys anywhere away from the center. (Capodimonti, 2020)



Figure 3. This Is Not A Good Sign, Street Art Under A Bridge In Downtown Calgary, Canada, 24 December 2017. Public Domain Image.

<https://www.rawpixel.com/image/6111453/photo-image-public-domain-art-kid>

2.6 History of the city thanks to the Smart Art (Banksy, Berlin Wall)

We are not talking about Graffiti, about a token of love...art has been present since the beginning. Expressing a style of life.

In the city there is permanent construction and destruction of history. Street art is a clear form of construction, history and identity of the city, although much has also been

stolen or destroyed, or simply ruined with more graffiti over. Let's study two examples of how this art has changed the form and essence of the city.

On the one hand, Banksy. Banksy is a famous and anonymous street artist who has created many works of art in Bristol and London, as well as other cities around the world. The neighborhoods of Bristol and London where he developed his work have become a very powerful artistic and tourist attraction. His artworks often have political and social messages and sometimes challenge authorities and the artistic establishment. Some of his works of art have become landmarks and tourist attractions. Banksy is also very famous for “destroying” his own painting “*Girl with Balloon*”, one of his works sold for \$1.4 million at Sotheby's auction in 2018. And once sold, it was purposely electronically shredded. It was part of his artistry and his notoriety to create this concert. The European art collector who bought it, despite seeing how the painting was destroyed, continued with the purchase at the same price since it was a unique work of art. The painting was supposed to be completely shredded, but the mechanism malfunctioned, leaving half the canvas intact. The buyer decided to keep the work of art, which was renamed “*Love is in the Trash Can*” and its value increased.

In Banksy's hometown of Bristol, he has painted several murals that reflect the city's culture and history, such as *The Mild Mild West*, which depicts a teddy bear throwing a Molotov cocktail at three riot police, and *Well Hung Lover*, showing a naked man hanging from a window while a woman and her husband look outside. His artwork has made Bristol a popular destination for street art enthusiasts and has inspired many local artists to follow in his footsteps. In 2009, he held a major exhibition at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, which attracted more than 300,000 visitors and boosted the local economy.

In London, Banksy has also left his mark on many walls and buildings, such as *Girl with Balloon*, which shows a girl reaching for a red heart-shaped balloon, and *Kissing Coppers*, which depicts two police officers kissing. His artworks have often sparked debate and controversy, as well as admiration and appreciation. Some of his artworks have been preserved and protected by their owners or the authorities, while others have been sold or stolen. In 2008, Banksy's “Cans Festival,” a play on the Cannes film festival, encouraged visitors to add their own art to a south London railway tunnel on which he and 40 international artists had painted with airbrush. (Mancoff, 2023)

BERLIN WALL. In 1989, the Berlin Wall fell as a result of the peaceful revolution in East Germany and the opening of the borders by the communist regime. People celebrated by climbing the wall, cutting off pieces and painting on it. Many sections of the wall were demolished or sold, but some were preserved as memorials or monuments. One of these sections is the East Side Gallery, which is located next to the Spree River in Friedrichshain. It is the longest remaining part of the Berlin Wall, measuring 1.3 kilometers long. It is also the longest open-air urban art gallery in the world, with more than 100 paintings by artists from 21 countries.

The idea of saving this piece of the wall and turning it into an art gallery was started by Bodo Sperling, a German artist and activist who participated in the protests against the wall. He organized a group of artists who painted the wall in 1990, shortly after its

fall. They wanted to commemorate the historical event and express their messages of peace, freedom and unity. Some of the East Side Gallery's most famous paintings include:

- Dmitri Vrubel's *Brotherly Kiss*, depicting a socialist kiss between Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and East German leader Erich Honecker.
- Birgit Kinder's *Trabant*, showing a car passing through the wall.
- *The Test the Rest* by Birgit Kinder, which shows a woman testing a piece of wall with a hammer.
- *The Peace Chain* by Günther Schaefer, showing people holding hands along the wall.

The East Side Gallery is a popular tourist attraction and cultural landmark in Berlin. It is also a protected monument and a site of historical importance. However, it faces many challenges such as vandalism, weather, and development projects that threaten its existence. Several initiatives have been launched to preserve and restore the gallery, such as the East Side Gallery Association and the Wall Museum. (EastSideGallery, 2015)

2.7 Creativity evolution from graffiti to art recognition.

Many people will wonder what the difference is between Street Art and Graffiti. Graffiti has been seen as acts of vandalism. Urban art began with large murals and graffiti on the walls of buildings, train stations. Companies and even governments have spent thousands of euros to erase these graffiti.

Illegal? People want to be seen, get fame, express their creativity. (Gastman, 2011) wanted to give an opportunity to many children and adolescents in Manhattan, and therefore, in 2011 he organized an exhibition "Art in the Streets" at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (MOCA) in 2011, which was the first major US museum survey of graffiti and street art. Apart from exhibiting featured paintings, sculptures, and installations by 50 of the most influential artists from around the world, such as Banksy, Shepard Fairey, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, and Os Gemeos¹², it also highlighted the role of Los Angeles in the evolution of graffiti and street art, with sections dedicated to local movements such as cholo graffiti and Dogtown skateboard culture¹². (Lewisohn, 2008). The exhibition was a huge success, attracting over 200,000 visitors and becoming the most attended show in the museum's history. It also sparked a lot of debate and controversy, as some critics and authorities accused it of glorifying vandalism and crime.

Street art definitely has its origins in the graffiti found in numerous public spaces. But graffiti has more to do with personal identification. Graffiti is more related to words. We can see names, declarations of love --> other forms of its verbal expression. Graffiti is created during the night. Once graffiti started adding value to some people, others decided to start. The new situation became so popular that around 1985, more laws were put in place restricting the sale of aerosols to minors in US. In the 1990s, this subculture was increasingly taken to Europe and expanded with other representations such as postal stickers, label development, graffiti stencils, posters, etc. Also in Europe, anti-graffiti laws emerged to control

the phenomenon, especially after the year 2000 (Germany, France, United Kingdom, Spain, Netherlands, etc.). Since 2000, graffiti has evolved towards street art (by gaining in graphic quality) and in parallel, evolving its verbal expression.

Art is different. Art has a context. As an example: Street art is made with the intention of permanency. Based on an expert opinion, El Rey de La Ruina – Madrid-based artist, Smart art is open while Graffiti is restricted, also graffiti degrades the streets' aspect while street art turns them into an inspiring and motivating place. Javier Garía, CoolToursSpain's CEO, says the difference lies in the feelings with which the art was created. Paint legally and paint illegally, the intentions are different and the feelings while painting are also different. (Cooltourspain, 2021)



Figure 4. Pøbel street art in Henningsvær (Norway)

Wikimedia Commons. Author: Frode Ramone from Oslo, Norway

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:P%C3%B8bel_street_art_in_Henningsv%C3%A6r_%2820657977224%29.jpg

2.8 Attracting Tourism and Investment

Cities with a strong artistic presence and vibrant cultural scene tend to attract tourists, visitors and businesses. STREET ART installations serve as magnets, attracting visitors interested in experiencing the city's artistic and creative offerings. This influx of tourists and investments contributes to the city's economic growth and reinforces its brand as a cultural and innovative center. We should also think about the digital notoriety that these expressions have. Its reflection in the virtual world generates traffic and branding, inviting the user to physically visit the city.

We could explore how many digital visits a street artwork has. Not only this, but it could also be interesting to analyze the curiosities of a city, how many tourists it has due to interest in art.

Definitely, we could say it contributes to a city's cultural status and boost the economy of a city. Art is something inspiring. It moves a lot of money. Science validates art is

sign of a healthy community. It improves the economy of local businesses. Creative industries such as fashion, music, films generate five times more business than agriculture in US (King, 2022).

What if this art became another reason to attract tourism? What if people from all over the world traveled to take the route of urban art, of art as the essence that emanates from the city? We can talk about art as an asset that cities use to promote themselves. When someone wants to do any type of tourism there must be something they are willing to discover, something new, a new experience. It is also useful to attract tourism through art. They may visit some cities because they are interested in certain works.

Street art works can be used as marketing assets to promote the city's brand. They can appear in promotional materials, city campaigns and digital content, showcasing the city's commitment to creativity, innovation and cultural vitality. These efforts help attract visitors, businesses and investment, further strengthening the city's brand.

We studied how tourists come to Bristol and London to discover Banksy, or how they attend organized excursions to visit Hispanic Harlem and see street art as a differentiating element, besides Godspell.

2.9 Social Media Buzz and Virality.

In the age of social media, visually striking and interactive art installations have the potential to go viral, generating significant online buzz. This exposure amplifies the city's brand reach beyond its physical boundaries and attracts attention from a global audience. Positive social media coverage further strengthens the city's brand reputation and generates curiosity and interest in visiting or exploring the city. In the case of street art, all visitors shoot a photo with that amazing artwork, then make it viral and social. Same way, we can see many cities creating their city name logo in colored letters and placed in a prominent street. Very clearly, city managers want you to take a photo there and spread the voice about the city beauties and great experiences you have enjoyed, attracting visitors and hopefully permanent talent to live there.

Street artists should be strategic and smart. Street art is not just about creating art, but also about promoting it. They need to have a clear goal and a plan for their street art campaign. They need to consider the timing, the frequency, and the duration of that street art. They also need to use social media and other channels to amplify their street art and reach a wider audience. They can also collaborate with other artists or influencers to boost visibility and credibility. For example, some of the best art influencers on Instagram are street artists who share their work and their stories with millions of followers. (TrendHero, 2021)

3. RESEARCH & FINDINGS

The main purpose of the article was to analyze how street art contributes to the attractiveness of a city. Based on the data gathered by the Street Art Cities Organization where they update every year the number of artworks considered street art for 141 cities, the aim was to find the comparison between cities ranking by number of street arts and Branding ranking from WW Observatory for Attractive Cities (AttractiveCities, 2022). This Branding indicator is gathering data coming from Main Museums, UNESCO World Heritage places, international events and main Sports awareness, Music or Movies set at the city. In this way, we would be able to understand if there is a correlation between a city with an outstanding branding and its investment in Street Art.

It has not been a surprise the fact that a correlation has not been found between StreetArt usage (#Artworks/10kinh) and Branding (from WW Observatory for AttractiveCities). It shows $R^2=0,007$. Cities with a high branding do not find a need to invest in Street Art. It seems obvious that for every 10,000 inhabitants, it is not those cities such as London, Paris, Madrid that have the best values for Branding, but on the contrary, it is those smaller, intermediate cities, with less population, and in general, worse values in terms of branding. If we take a look at top cities using StreetArt as branding generator, we can find most are non-capitals mid-sized cities with little external Branding recognition. This means Street Art it is being a choice for those mid-sized or small cities that are investing to enhance the branding and attractiveness of their cities.

For those with the highest number of street art for every 10,000 inhabitants, this being clear evidence that if you invest in this, it has value. Examples of these cities are cities like Basel in Switzerland, Stavanger in Norway or Antwerp in Belgium. Rich cities, but with little branding that have decided to take advantage of their skills in technology and innovation to gain a foothold in this sector and contribute to the culture of their cities and thus make them more attractive and attract talent attention.

Looking at those with more than 1 artwork/10k inh, we can find (Table1) that main SmartArt cities (in number of artworks/10k inh) are scoring very poorly on Branding (10-Branding). For example, top city is Basel (Switzerland) with 10,2 artworks/10k inh, but this city scores 9,63 on 10-Branding, thus its Branding is 0,37 in a scale 0..10 for Top 175 world Cities! Imagine how far Basel is in terms of Generic Branding from most recognized London, Paris or NYC.

By looking at the top cities investing on SmartArt, we can recognize their main characteristics:

- .- Mid-sized or intermediate, non-capital cities.
- .- From Western Civilization, meaning that Street Art hasn't found yet a place in Asian, Chinese cities. It must be illegal there, so no way to allow citizens to express themselves. Also, let's consider the lack of freedom in this term in many of those countries.

.- Rich cities with capacity to invest on creating a better shape and physical environment. Although Street Art is spontaneous and most times done for free, keeping and maintaining it and preserving it from vandalism needs some kind of investment from the city. Also, many of these cities are periodically organizing contests with generous awards to obtain more pieces of smart art from best world artists.

.- Cultural appreciation and respect. Citizens vote most of times to keep those expressions of art as part of city image. If citizens are not appreciating them, then they will be destroyed, graffitied over or dismantled. On the other hand, cities with high cultural level are promoting and incentivizing this and keeping it untouched as a valuable asset.

.- Although the Graffiti to Street Art movement originated in Los Angeles / NYC, the main cities investing on smart art today are European, demonstrating the traditional respect for culture, tradition and roots. Also, the European values (first the citizen) in comparison with Asia (first the state) or US (first the business) are giving more value to these individual expressions and cultural movements.

City	Country	Smart Art	SmartART NOR	10-BRAN
Basel	Switzerland	10,20	9,91	9,63
Stavanger	Norway	8,66	9,83	9,85
Bergen	Norway	6,03	9,74	9,37
Antwerp	Belgium	3,99	9,66	8,72
Belfast	United Kingdom	3,94	9,57	6,17
Minsk	Belarus	3,37	9,49	9,67
Oslo	Norway	2,54	9,40	7,07
Eindhoven	Netherlands	2,52	9,32	9,69
Tallinn	Estonia	2,38	9,23	9,41
Canberra	Australia	2,34	9,15	8,81
Bristol	United Kingdom	2,23	9,06	7,71
Bordeaux	France	2,13	8,97	8,25
Wroclaw	Poland	1,94	8,89	9,43
Berlin	Germany	1,84	8,80	7,02
Brussels	Belgium	1,68	8,72	8,37
Vienna	Austria	1,64	8,63	8,07
Valencia	Spain	1,56	8,55	7,61
Santander	Spain	1,50	8,46	8,86
Athens	Greece	1,41	8,38	8,23
Lisbon	Portugal	1,37	8,29	7,3
Zagreb	Croatia	1,31	8,21	9,26
Copenhagen	Denmark	1,23	8,12	8,24
Lille	France	1,20	8,03	8,32
Bern	Switzerland	1,18	7,95	9,39
Tbilisi	Georgia	1,13	7,86	9,55
Nottingham	United Kingdom	1,07	7,78	8,09
Gothenburg	Sweden	1,04	7,69	8,5
Belgrade	Serbia	1,00	7,61	8,93
Zaragoza	Spain	0,97	7,52	8,08

Table 1. Top Cities with StreetArts vs Lack of Generic Branding.

4. CONCLUSIONS. Discussion

Street art is an unquestionable opportunity for intermediate / mid-sized cities to improve and generate new branding around artistic and cultural expression in the city. For these cities, it is the fastest and most affordable way to reduce the enormous cultural gap they hold with the large capitals and their iconic museums and monuments. In many cases, this gap makes them unattractive from an emotional and human point of view, almost negligible when compared to the large capitals and their enormous cultural heritage. Obviously, you cannot build a new museum and fill it with the best works of humanity, basically because those artworks are already in other museum and you can't buy or steal them. Nor is the necessary investment in imposing city works feasible or attainable (except in the case of the extraordinarily rich cities of the Persian Gulf with the pharaonic new developments they are building).

Street art is a form of innovative cultural expression, a reflection of social movements, often demanding. It is a way of giving voice to the most marginal neighborhoods of the city, allowing them to show their feelings and needs in a graphical way. It is also a way of facing aspects of reality that we had not thought about or reflected on.

For its development, street art needs the city to have a minimum of freedom of expression, democracy, and cultural development. This form of expression needs to be encouraged and promoted, and understood by citizens.

In the constant construction and destruction of city identity, street art is one of the elements with the greatest dynamism and capacity for expression, becoming, in many cases, a current reflection of social challenges and problems, fundamentally urban or local, but also global.

Street art manages to activate our social conscience about the value of the city as the place for social development. Everything human happens in the city, and therefore, street art confronts us with problems that we do not see every day, due to the speed with which we think and move, and allows us to reflect on fundamental issues for our society. It is like a warning cry that we find, sometimes unexpectedly, when we stand in front of a wall converted into an artwork transmitting a powerful message. It often provides extraordinary power due to its fragility (it can be destroyed by vandalism or the elements) and its dimensions.

In the same way that the works of art and monuments of our cities are maintained and respected as symbols of their identity, the most relevant street arts, which best reflect the lifestyle and the cultural or protest movement they aim for, should also be preserved.

In summary, Street Art is a main topic to be considered by cities' management, a topic to invest in to create the city and branding, an element that enhances attractiveness for talent, and therefore, for investors who generate city prosperity.

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