

From Street to Art: The Journey of Public Art towards Galleries

Mila Tenaglia (June 26, 2014)



Ten internationally famed artists and their works represent Italian Street Art at the Italian Cultural Institute in New York. From Street to Art: a project by Simone Pallotta, Public and Urban Art curator. Amongst the sponsors: LaFondazione NY.

From the heart of Rome, one of the world's most ancient and fascinating cities, Simone Pallotta brings to New York, cosmopolitan capital and graffiti and Street Art mecca, "[From Street to Art](#) [2]".

The Opening took place on June 20th at the [Italian Cultural Institute](#) [3] and was a success amongst young and not-so-young audiences alike.

The exhibit seeks to explore Italian Public and Urban Art with the names that have marked the Italian and international Art scene, including: [Agostino Iacurci](#) [4], [Aris](#) [5], [BR1](#) [6], [Cyop&Kaf](#) [7], [Dem](#) [8], [Eron](#) [9], [Hitnes](#) [10], [Sten&Lex](#) [11], Ufo5, [2501](#) [12].

According to what Simone told us, although they have completely different attitudes towards art and artistic research, these authors have a common, deep sense of authorship.



Born in Rome in 1979 and raised in Nuovo Salario, a neighborhood of the city, Simone has always dedicated himself to Street Art, gradually becoming a curator and critic.

“My artistic foundations come from Street Art, from the graffiti of the 90’s. Once I had specialized in Art in Udine in 2000, with my cultural baggage, I looked around and I noticed that a lot of the people coming from the world of graffiti had started looking for ways to express themselves by initiating a dialogue with the city rather than confronting it.

In Italy I’ve been the curator of many festivals and projects involved in presenting Contemporary Art in public spaces. Here in New York I’ve worked with the Italian Cultural Institute for the first time.

The exhibit “From Street to Art” has been made possible by [Fabio Troisi](#) [13], with whom I have found it easy to see eye to eye.” Simone relates.

Fabio, cultural attaché to the Italian Cultural Institute in New York, walks amongst the art pieces, satisfied.

“Right as I entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs I dreamed of bringing a collective Street Art exhibit here to the Institute. I selected Simone as the curator and I have to thank the cultural association ‘[Walls](#) [14]’ and Chiara Mariani for everything relating to logistics. I have always loved Art and Street Art and I was familiar with Simone’s project works already in Rome. “From Street to Art” is a dream come true for me”.

The Italian Cultural Institute, supported by [LaFondazioneNY](#) [15], stepped out of its institutional attire to be literally covered by the paint and the works of the artists, to give the idea of continuity between the outside and the inside.

The wall that follows the staircase up to the second floor has in fact been painted by Hitnes, one of the two artists present: a huge turkey surrounded by a spiral of feathers takes up the center stage. Numerous tiny sharks float in the background.

We find Hitnes at work inside the Institute. Animals have always been included in his themes. His hands are covered in paint as he holds a paintbrush. He is at ease in his solitary work.

A few days ago, in collaboration with the gallery Exit Room, he worked on a wall on the rooftop of a building in the colorful Bushwick neighborhood. This gallery organizes Public and Street Art events and has come to represent a significant reality for Bushwick. Its founders, the videomaker Daniela Croci and Dariel Martinez, didn’t hesitate to collaborate with Simone and to look for a large wall for Hitnes.

Hitnes tells us a little about himself as he puts the finishing touches on the wall of the Institute.

“I started out in a traditional manner, with illegal graffiti, on trains for example. I then moved from letters to animals. It’s what always came easiest to me and I’m happy in doing it.

Traveling has always been important to me, I like the idea that the walls I do are seen by people casually passing by.

In Italy Street Art experiences a very powerful scene, there’s an interesting originality. It’s a Country where there are masters of the abstract, the figurative, of just about anything”.

BR1, the other artist present, is from Turin. His works, which focus on the theme of religions and the effect they have on people, have a strong emotional impact.

“I seized the opportunity, provided by the curator’s invitation to the United States, to create a piece aimed not only at Islamic population but also at Jewish people, seen as, right here in Brooklyn, there is one of the world’s biggest Jewish communities”

“I spent quite some time on Bedford Avenue, examining the community, I looked for inspiration on



those streets and I focused on the encounter-collision between the Jew and the Muslim in Palestine. The work was produced on posters I found on those Brooklyn streets. With time, I have started to also focus on the impact that publicity and the mass culture of the western world has on religious communities”.

The great work so artfully put together is very representative of the way in which Urban Spaces have become a new human and artistic bridge, allowing exchanges between artists and people.

The exhibit will be open through August 20th at 686 Park Avenue.

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Links

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- [3] http://www.iicnewyork.esteri.it/IIC_Newyork/
- [4] <http://www.agostinoiacurci.com/>
- [5] <http://www.unurth.com/Aris-Berlin>
- [6] <http://br1art.blogspot.com/>
- [7] <http://www.cyopekaf.org/?lang=en>
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