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### **Street-art in the making**

In the last decades, graffiti and street art became wide-spread and now they constitute a significant part of urban culture. These phenomena as well have been common for sociological investigation. Studies of graffiti art usually focus on the communities' organization of writers and artists, hip-hop subculture, deviance of the activities on question, general attitude towards graffiti and policies that deal with it. In latest years, researchers' attention shifted towards regarding street art as a means of redefining urban space and undermining the routine of everyday life and as a form of contemporary art that demands corresponding approach. However, it is almost impossible to find works devoted to what graffiti writers actually do within their specific everyday activities. It is nevertheless crucially important to investigate them sociologically, for it is a case of modern creativity that both reflects city life and changes the city, and it is where principles of making, presentation and evaluation of art works are produced.

In this paper I will dwell upon the practices of graffiti writers and street artists. The main questions of my on-going project are *how these people learn, develop their "style" and perform graffiti writing*. To answer these questions, broader context has to be provided. Consequently, I will turn to institutional background that makes communication possible (for example, internet sites and festivals, where works and styles are discussed and standards are set), graffiti and street art careers and peculiar perception of space and surfaces and use of materials.

The paper thus contains some results of ethnographic observation during graffiti writing festival and analysis of interviews with graffiti writers and street artists. As far as I contacted members of Russian graffiti and street-art communities, it is also relevant to compare the overall street-art and graffiti scene with those of other countries that are vastly described in numerous research works.