

Juan San Juan Resistance

Eloy Tarcisio*



Los Reyes Skies.



"Compu-defense" 03.



"Compu-defense" 18.



"Compu-defense" 09.

In resistance as part of art, we see a large number of images that hark back to a rebellious stance against the establishment. Graffiti has been one of the attitudes linked to art that has been situated within resistance through its interventions in the city streets of the world.



"Resistance" is a word that has become commonplace, from the highlands of Chiapas to the Museum of Science and the Arts, passing through the streets of the globalized world: resistance to the modern world, to economic power, to neo-liberal governments, to the corruption of white-collar politicians, to the directors of museums, companies, schools and every place headed

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up by anyone authoritarian or despotic who represents the law. In resistance as part of art, we see a large number of images that hark back to a rebellious stance against the establishment. Graffiti has been one of the attitudes linked to art that has been situated within resistance through its interventions in the city streets of the world. Then, it is no longer only street graffiti artists who use these languages; publicists and designers have found in street languages an appropriate way of saying what they think in the form of art. Street artists have

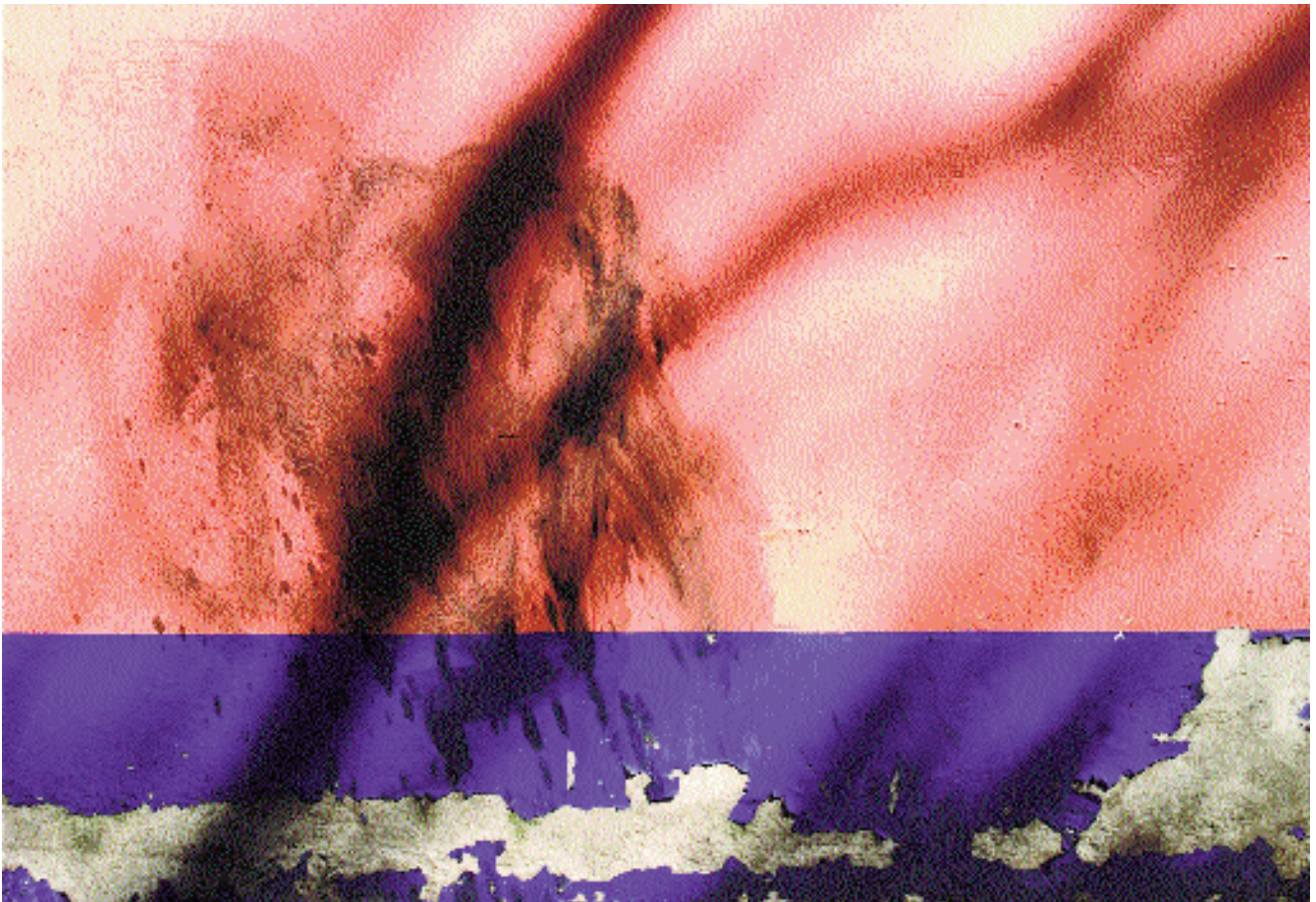
developed a stance through self-taught learning. What is to be learned in the experience of the street with no other aim but to mark territory, reveal yourself to the authorities by appropriating walls and creating a language of your own linked to that of your brothers and sisters in action? Career designers, students of visual languages have also been tempted to flirt with these forms of expression as a form of resistance to their state of education, their limits as creators for the market, creators limited by the instruction of whom to address.

Graffiti, stencil and sticker artists work in the street to get noticed, be recognized, leave a mark on their surroundings and say to society, "This is me. This one who is me was here."

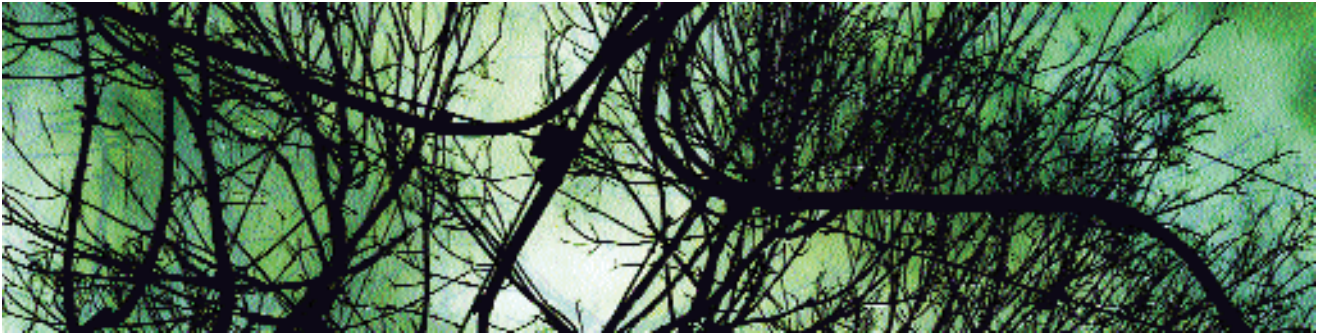
Juan's workshop is a computer lab where he processes images that are the product of his surroundings, invented landscapes that are the result of superimposing images of bodies and day-to-day objects, visual textures that are microscopic photographs of waste, kitchen grease, animal skin, his own eye, self-portraits in a-temporal circumstances as a young man, an old man, a sailor or an explorer.

Juan San Juan shows me a series of pieces of work developed on the computer, a series of images in which the main tool is software that becomes the raw material that makes creative reflection possible. It is not canvas or oil paint, or chisel and stone. It is the eye trained by the lens to see in his

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Neighbors.



surroundings the raw materials that can be transformed into a piece of art.

San Juan's works make it possible to understand the process of appropriation and re-signification of our everyday surroundings through digital media. That in turn allows us to appropriate the visual language and results in a symbiosis of what we might not see on the street because we have gotten used to not seeing anything amid the chaos and visual contamination of our city.

Then, what was someone else's experience becomes Juan San Juan's; the camera lens is the eye of the viewer appropriated and digested in the lab in an exercise of assembling, relocating, redesigning, a message coded and re-assembled into a particular content. He processes the image like an alchemist in a laboratory with techniques and digital media, restores its value as an object of art to be viewed in the prints that can be mounted inside a room or gallery and that allows the reflection of the act that on the street is part of daily life that no longer moves anyone because no one

sees it anymore to the sphere of the art of contemplation and the aesthetic. He restores the power of speech to those who seem anonymous in the eyes of viewers who immediately erase what they see as something that they do not see: "My natural work happens to me. Grafitti calls to me, attracts me, traps me; I see them, I encounter them and I make them mine through the lens in order to reassemble them in the laboratory."

The selection that Juan San Juan presents here is a series that I consider on the front lines of making his surroundings his own, and is resolved in the computer as work that is printed in different media and allows the viewer to see what is no longer visible on the street.

I present the work of Juan San Juan with the commitment that his professionalism is reflected in how his work is produced, with great quality control, rigorous care in the selection in the means of reproduction and care in deciding the formats and sizes of each piece according to the space selected so they can be shown. **MM**

