

Street ART



ALLAN SCHWARTZMAN



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BY ALLAN SCHWARTZMAN



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A collaborative mural by traditionally trained artists Keith Haring, Kenny Scharf and graffitiists A-One, Daze, and LA2, 1983. Bowery and Houston

Crash and John Fekner, The Suffolk Street Fallout Shelter, 1982, an ironic criticism of landlord abandonment, demolished less than two months after completion



For years urban dwellers have been encountering art in the most unexpected places—on the sides of buildings, on walls and sidewalks, and even while in transit. Now more than ever, artists are “taking to the streets,” using public spaces to ensure that their work will reach a large, general audience. Some of these artists are professionally trained and have rejected the traditional art-world avenues available to them; others, having grown up close to the street and wise in its ways, are self-taught. This art is political, personal, whimsical, serious, beautiful, controversial, challenging—and unsanctioned. Yet, these works have been embraced by the art world and can be seen not only on the streets, but also in prominent galleries and museums worldwide. We also see their influence on our culture—in everything from magazines, rock videos, and Hollywood films to fashion design, advertising campaigns, and merchandising. *Street Art* captures and explores the works and philosophies of the most prominent street artists of today, often in their own voices, revealing what is behind these familiar images—from the influence of Christo’s early public projects to Keith Haring’s chalk drawings, John Ahearn’s life-sized plaster casts, and Richard Hambleton’s shadowy figures, to the 50-foot-long graffiti murals by Lee, Futura 2000, and Noe 167 that have given new life to subway cars. These stunning images—from the most recognizable to the lesser known, but equally compelling—taken by the top photographers who have been documenting this work since its early days, are complemented by informative captions and a lively, anecdotal text. Written for both the art enthusiast and the general reader, *Street Art* is as accessible as the art it documents.

As a curator and art dealer, ALLAN SCHWARTZMAN has supported the work of street artists for a number of years. He has lectured on street art and other contemporary art issues at universities and museums across the United States, including the Rhode Island School of Design, the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston, and the University of California. He lives in New York City.

125 illustrations, 42 in full color

“This is art done in secret for the public. It’s art where it’s not supposed to be. It’s art on serious subjects put where anyone can see it. It’s art that’s extremely beautiful to show how good things could be.”—*Jenny Holzer*

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