

UNDERGROUND

NR34



2006

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Falck Security sentenced for unlawful data recording of graffiti writers

The security company Falck Security kept unlawful files on graffiti writers and have now been ordered to pay damages. The judgement, made in the Stockholm District Court, lays down that Falck registered suspected graffiti writers in a way that contravenes the Swedish data protection act.

In 2003, ten persons sued Falck Security for unlawful registration. The trial was held in the Stockholm District Court in the autumn of 2005. The judgement, which was given later that year, agreed with four of the plaintiffs. Falck have been ordered to pay damages of 5,000 SEK (circa 535 Euros) to each of the four. Falck appealed to the appellate court, who decided, however, not to take up the case.

The background of the case lies back in the time around the turn of the millennium, during which the Stockholm Transit Authority hired Falck to guard trains and walls. During this assignment, Falck collated information on the

suspected graffiti writers they apprehended. The information, containing such details as name, address, tag and occasion of arrest, was kept in folders, and later as searchable data files. The purpose was to map and document graffiti writers and graffiti culture.

In court, Falck Security admitted that four of the ten plaintiffs were in both registers. These four were awarded damages for breach of personal integrity. The other plaintiffs, who only figured in one or neither of the two registers, were awarded no compensation at all.

UP

Report om skadegörelse Datum 2002-05-03

Misstänkt person

Personnr [redacted]
Namn [redacted]
C/O [redacted]
Adress [redacted]
Postadress [redacted]
Telefon [redacted]
Arbete, skola/klass [redacted]
Idtyp [redacted] Idnr [redacted] Giltig [redacted]

Fler misstänkta

Plats för gärning

Adress Vändbyggn mellan Odenplan - St.Eriksplan
Tåglinje [redacted] Riktning [redacted]

Vittne/kontrollant

Anstnr [redacted] Namn [redacted]

Typ av skadegörelse [redacted] Tag [redacted] Crew [redacted]
Klotter [redacted]

Gärningsbeskrivning

En misstänkt person ses tillsammans med en kamrat när de kommer upp på tåget. Sedan flyr han tillsammans med sin kamrat in i tunneln och rör sig i rikamratens greps av väktaren.

C as in Cash, Code and CIA

Not since the subway bombing of the 80s have tags been as important in Stockholm as they are today. The trend has moved from train to street, though there are of course many exceptions. A walk through town has become much more interesting today as compared to a few years ago. New tags and throw-ups are popping up everywhere.

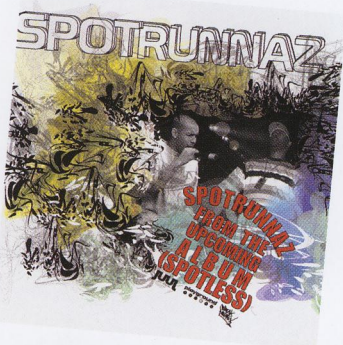
It's no coincidence. We hear the same thing from most big cities, whether it be New York, San Francisco, Berlin or Sao Paolo: Graffiti has become rawer and more elemental. Tags were its beginnings, so what could be more logical than to close the circle and start the next cycle.

In Sweden, there is a further reason for the tag renaissance. As the buffing company coffers burst at the seams, you need to get your name up faster than they can remove it. A burner that takes an hour to do takes twenty minutes to remove. A tag that takes ten seconds to do also takes twenty minutes to remove.

This 34th issue of UP is in C. We have met the young, stylistically confident bomber **Cash 87**, who talks about the ins and outs of graffiti. We've been shooting the breeze with south side upstarts **Hell** and **Ellr**, frontmen of **CIA** crew. And we had a coffee with oldschool legend **Code**, who told us, amongst other things, of his battle with **Akay** in the autumn of '88.

Enjoy, and don't forget that UP 35 will be out in November 2006.

Tobias Barenthin Lindblad



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 4. Don't send the same photos to other magazines.
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Tags made on Götgatan, one of the most crowded streets in central Stockholm

Cash Rules Everything Around Me

Since last December, a name both old and new has appeared on the streets of Stockholm. All through the spring, Cash 87's tag has stuck out like a plainclothes cop in a crowd.

Text: Björn Almqvist

"I never have any money. That's why I chose Cash when it was time to change my name. Since there's already another Cash in Stockholm, I added 87. It's important to have a name that means something. And Cash is something everybody gets," says Cash87.

He is an unusually nice and well brought-up teenager, who says he respects his elders.

"I guess it's a bit different when I'm drunk. When you're entering adult life, you can't always do what you like. But when you're writing, you can do your thing and be yourself. Maybe that's why I write so much."

What's the most important quality for a good tag?

"That it's highly visible. Then, if it's got style, that's a plus. There are so many people who paints in hall of fames and are really skilful. But there aren't many who can cut loose, go wild and do it hardcore. Not many people have the guts."

What makes you able to do it?

"I more or less live for graffiti. I think it

helps if you've been through a lot in life, had a hard upbringing, if that's the way to put it. 'Cause you've got to dare to go out into the big streets and bomb, bomb, bomb. It may also be an escape from reality. When you bomb, you don't have to talk so much. You concentrate on not getting caught and putting your tag up. That's what you have to concentrate on, not your problems. You live for the moment."

But that can lead to problems.

"Yes. I guess I'll write until I end up in jail. Then I'll see if it was worth it. That's where I can imagine my turning-point, because I find it very hard to stay away from graffiti. I'm hovering quite a lot between giving graffiti my all and giving up school or committing myself to some sort of career. You see how people style their lives. Start working and all. But I rather enjoy living for free and not paying for anything. And that's where I am now. Graffiti is the only thing in life I enjoy. That's why it's hard to choose between doing that and being poor with a lot of fines for the rest of my life



and quitting graffiti, but I find that almost impossible."

Is writing legally an alternative?

"That's not what I like. I want to be on top all the time. Either I do it whole-heartedly or not at all."



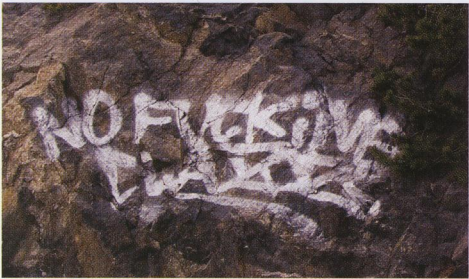
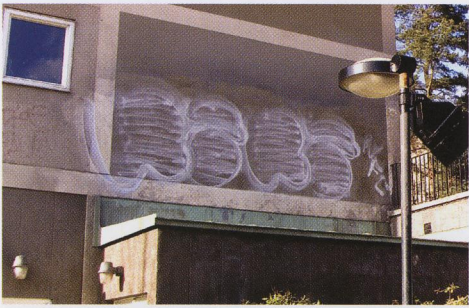


Chico and Miller pieces painted on the subway station Hägerstensåsen, winter 2006

Don't call it a comeback

He's been here for years. The NFC bad boy who never goes out of style continues on his mission. The following pages offer a selection of new pieces, tags and throw-ups from subway line 14 to Fruängen in south Stockholm. Completely in line with the mid-90s motto, The 14th Vandal.







Cia painted on a subway car in Stockholm

Ellr and Hell – Vision, Mission and Values

As one of the most ambitious crews, CIA have taken over the Södertälje line, one of Stockholm’s most tradition-laden. Frontmen Ellr and Hell talk about the Tumba commuter train lay-up, Stockholm’s impersonal stylistic trends and what happened when 37 kilometers of graffiti history became a thing of the past.

Text: Torkel Sjöstrand

Photos: Ellr, Hell

It is the end of March, and winter has lain heavily over Stockholm. At night, the temperature sinks to ten degrees below freezing, and the snow and ice won’t budge. Graffiti has been hibernating lately; some courageous few defy the cold, but most don’t. I meet Ellr and Hell, the two frontmen of the CIA crew, at a commuter train station some fifteen minutes out of town. Both are carrying unused spray cans: they couldn’t find a wall to paint.

Hell: But we painted a wall yesterday, except Ellr couldn’t cope with finishing, he thought it was too cold.

Ellr: My fingers were completely frozen. It was so damn cold. Once my fingers are frozen, I lose my sense of touch, and that’s it.

They discuss whether or not fingers get cold quicker once they have been frozen.

We pass a few pieces – CIA, 7DC.

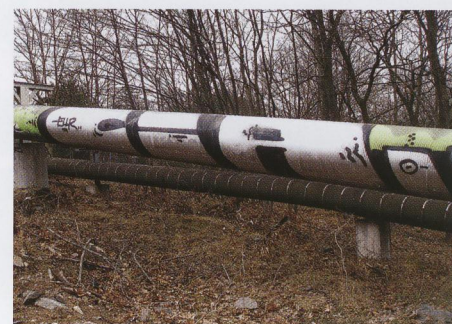
Hell: We did those the other night. You can see the cold in the lines, the paint is all fucked up. The temperature has been one of the main reasons I haven’t painted too much this winter. Another reason I can’t stay out all night is that I start work at seven in the morning.

“Last summer, they had to buff extra, because there was so much. We went a whole length between two stations doing throw-ups on every panel. It’s like a hundred panels.”

CIA crew have made their name during the past six years. First as ambitious train writers, then as capable stylists, but mainly as the most active crew along the southbound commuter train line, the Södertälje line.

Ellr and Hell started CIA in 2000.

Ellr: At first, CIA stood for Cops Is Assholes, and later Central Intelligence Agency after the



us intelligence service, which is phat. But now it doesn’t really mean anything any more.

Stockholm Central Station is the hub of the commuter train network, and four commuter lines start from it. The southbound line extends from Stockholm Central to Södertälje

Centrum, and is probably the most popular throughout the times. During the 80s and 90s, spray-painted images gave life to kilometer-long expanses of the concrete boarding that follows the line, which is close to 37 km (circa 23 miles) long. The walls are divided into panels about four meters long and two wide. The pieces that covered them were as a signpost



Ellr, Hell along the commuter tracks in Stockholm



Hell..



..Ellr in Stockholm

for the new arrival: you were approaching the big city and anonymity. It's not that way any more. The line is regularly buffed, and pieces don't remain longer than a month or so.

Ellr: They take the whole line in one go. Last summer, I built up pieces between a whole bunch of stations. Then they buffed the entire line, and that felt bad. One piece was eleven panels of the acoustic fencing. It took almost sixteen chromes to fill.

Hell: They almost always do a big buff before the summer and another after the summer. But last summer, they had to buff extra, because there was so much. We went a whole length between two stations doing throw-ups on every panel. It's like a hundred panels. But that only remained for a week. One piece doesn't matter, but a whole row is too much.

At the turn of the century, when Ellr and Hell started writing along the Södertälje line, there wasn't much room. The line hadn't been buffed at all, and there were plenty of pieces from the 80s. They had to hunt for clean spaces, or worse pieces to cross. Then, in

2002, the first big buffing came. Practically all the graffiti along the whole line was removed in one fell swoop.

Hell: All the old **Cazter** walls disappeared, insanely good pieces nobody does today.

Ellr: Now there's too much room for too few writers.

They describe the time around the turn of the century as one of the high points of the line in later times, and mention the crew **TSE** as a source of inspiration.

Hell: **Him** and **High** did a loot of cool stuff. **Lois**, **Mean** and **Mene** were also inspirational

"It's a trend to bomb in the city, I do it too, and many writers are clearly influenced by New York styles."

when we started out. **DNE** was hard and is still really heavy. But now it feels as if the line's glory days are over. The other commuter lines don't feel much better either.

Ellr: But at least there are more writers there.

A trip down the Södertälje line is a uniformly grey experience. It might be seen as an easy



Ellr – New York subway



Ellr – Norrköping

task to be the most up a line where there is mostly no competition. But one of the reasons for CIA's writing is to trigger competition.

Hell: We write to get others started along the line.

Ellr: But nobody ever hangs on. Only like **TSV**, who do a bit on their part of the line.

Hell: Here, it's almost just us and **DNE**.

A large commuter train yard spreads out not far from the inner city gates, at Älvsjö commuter station. Several train sets are parked in the yard, which stretches into a small mountain. In the car park are rows of security cars. The yard functions as a connection point for the security company **CSG** (Commuter Security Group), the Transit Authority's main weapon in the battle against Stockholm's graffiti writers.

CSG also watch the Södertälje line, but so far, Ellr and Hell haven't had any trouble with them.

Ellr: There was a lot of talk last summer, but I've never run into them. I was painting every weekend; it was cool all the time. But apart from **CSG**, there are a lot of cops here. There's a police station at Flemingsberg, and there are

always cops and guards at Huddinge.

Hell: It's one of the toughest things you can do along the line – do Huddinge station towards the road. If anyone sees you and raises the alarm, there are at least ten cars in the area that can arrive. You're fucked if anything happens. When we painted it, we did it in two goes.

Both Ellr and Hell think that the chance of getting caught in Stockholm is greater for train writers. They say **CSG** puts more time

fewer train pieces in traffic, but that may be because they remove them faster.

The trains are something that absorbs Ellr and Hell, and has done so ever since a night in 2001. Hell was at a party when Ellr called and asked him if he had a camera. Ellr told him he had painted a commuter train in Tumba, a little further on along the line. The following week, Hell was there painting. After that, they spent each and every evening at the Tumba

“I don't know if graffiti has been positive, except for the fact that I had so much fun. It hasn't taken me anywhere.”

into trains and are a bit sharper than their predecessors at Falck Security.

Hell: The difference is that if the plainclothes guys from Falck were there, you mostly discovered them. They always messed up. **CSG** are harder. Also, there are so many of them all the time, and they have hired so many new guards it's hard to recognize their faces. They do their job, but then again they're only human. They can't be everywhere all the time.

Ellr: I also get the impression that there are

commuter train lay-up.

Ellr: We mostly painted the side towards the tracks, not between the two train sets. From the first time I did Tumba, it was my favorite place.

Hell: We must have done at least a hundred commuter trains there and only got into trouble once.

Train writing kept its grip for a few years, but nowadays Ellr and Hell both take it easier.



Hell - Norrköping



A Hell piece painted on a commuter train in London, England

Hell: I cut down on train writing during 2005. I've had a little trouble, so I didn't want to paint trains as much lately. I've mostly done trains outside Stockholm since then.

Ellr: I've had trouble with the trains for a long time, and I just can't take getting caught. A lot of people are getting stuff done, so you can probably paint trains, but it's as though the cops and security companies are getting their revenge for all these years. As I see it, they are a lot harder nowadays. The sentences nowadays are harder than for assault. It's crazy. Often, it's just about one train piece. I doubt I'll be doing panels as much as before.

Hell: But I guess it depends on the climate.

Ellr: Yeah, that's true. It's got to get easier at some point.

Hell: They can't keep this pressure up all the time. If a lot of people stop writing, they'll cut



Hell - Commuter train



Hell painted on the Stockholm subway



Hopp, Order and Hell painted on a Intercity train in 2006



Cia, Om – Stockholm

down on security and it'll get easier again.

Many Stockholm graffiti writers think the graffiti scene has shrunk in the last years. The harsher climate may be a reason. Hell and Ellr say that the climate has also contributed to tags and throw-ups becoming more popular.

Hell: It's a trend to bomb in the city, I do it too, and many people are clearly influenced by New York styles. A lot more time goes on bombing, and fewer trains are done. The train pieces that are done are not as good in quality. People can't stand around too long.

Hell is not pleased about American stylistic influence. He thinks a lot of people follow the trend and that styles become impersonal.

Hell: I think you should be able to write anything, and one should still be able to

see that you did it. Now you have a hundred writers who could have done the same piece. Of course there are people who distinguish themselves, but they've been in the game for a long time and don't follow trends in the same way. Like **Matador**, **Aman** and **Nug**. The only younger writers I think are harsh are **Cash 87** and **Yers**. They do a lot.

Hell himself isn't very influenced by American styles. His round, ingenious letters give an impression of playfulness, and are a personal mix and development of Scandinavian styles.

Hell: I carry on building on my basic style. I'm often influenced by stuff outside graffiti. Really, I'd just like to do rings and curlicues. Not even use letters.

Ellr's pieces are different from Hell's, and are based on large blocks and clean, compact letters.

Hell: For a while, we had pretty similar style. It's different now. Ellr mostly likes blocks and I just want to do weird stuff. There was a time when we didn't paint together at all, that's probably when our styles started to develop in different directions.

Ellr: Now we often paint together again. But it's still hard since I work and haven't got much spare time. I've got like three week's holiday a year and a hard job.

Despite hard jobs, they find time to paint quite a bit. Graffiti shapes their environment, and they both feel their lives would be very different without it.



Ellr – One man whole car on the subway in Stockholm



7dc, Cia made by Hell in Poland 2005

Ellr: I don't know if graffiti has been positive, except for the fact that I had so much fun. It hasn't taken me anywhere. I've laid all my energy into graffiti, energy I should perhaps have put into something else. But on the other hand, it's the most fun thing I know, ever since I started.

Hell: I don't know what I'd have done if it hadn't been graff. Probably sitting in front of a computer like everybody else; at the same time I think graffiti might have saved me from getting involved in more serious crime.

Ellr: We were pretty sporty guys before, pretty good and always training.

Hell: I was in great shape and there wasn't so much smoking and beer. Then graff came into the picture and I gave up sports. Now my shape is a lot worse.



Cia – Stockholm





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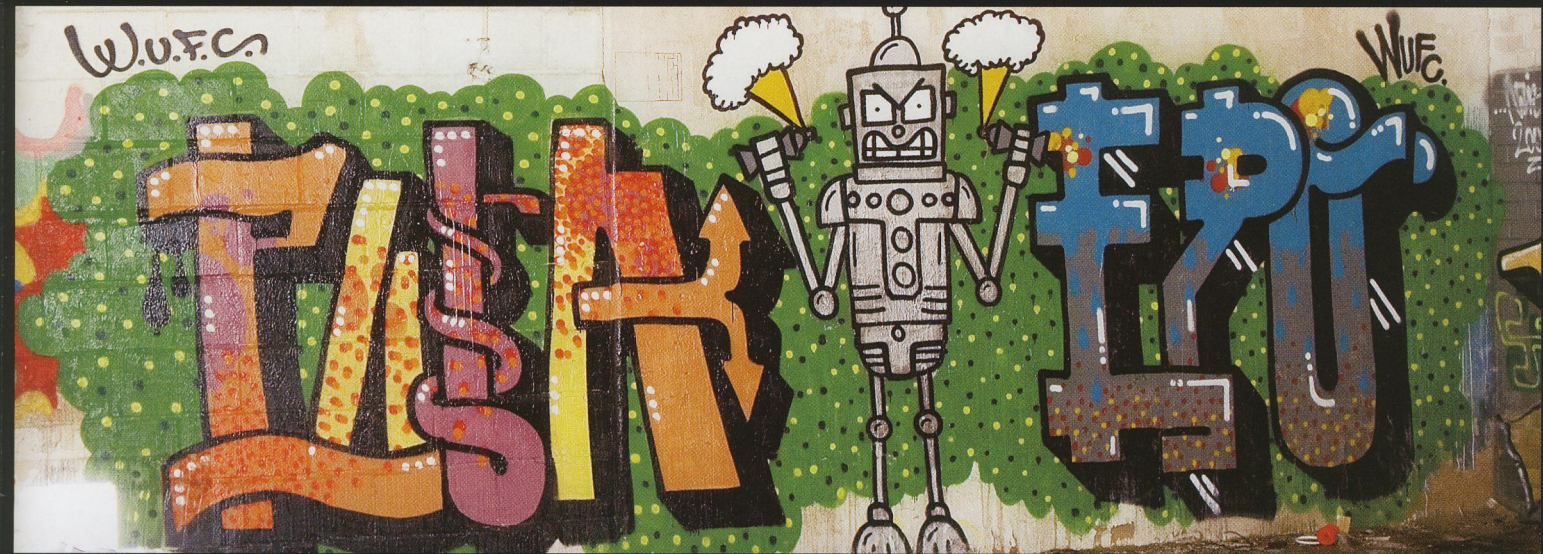


Spit





7dc, Iq painted on Liljeholmen subway station



Pura, Epo



Csg painted on T-Centralen subway station



Erir on Slussen subway station



Blake, Stick



Fame on a commuter train

STOCKHOLM TRAINS



Ner - Subway train



Tier - Subway train



Fame - Subway train



Cha - Subway train



Mistr - Subway train



Erir - Commuter train



Wher, Ashes and lfs – Commuter train



Luck – Commuter train



Oiks – Subway train



Oiks, Erir, and Luk on a subway train



Uze – Subway train



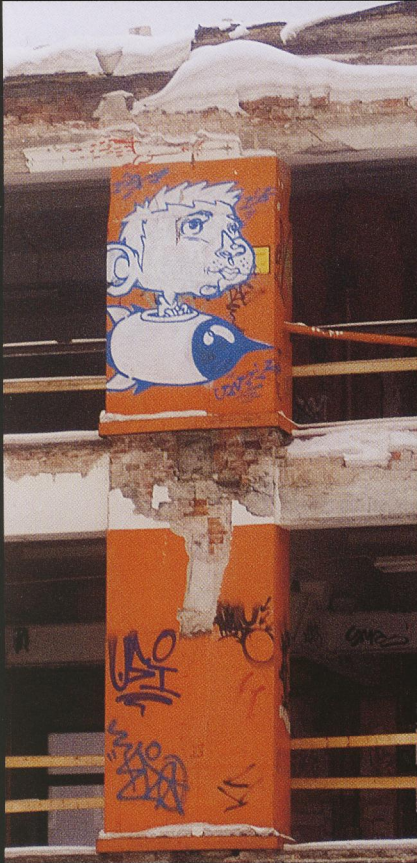
Que – Subway train

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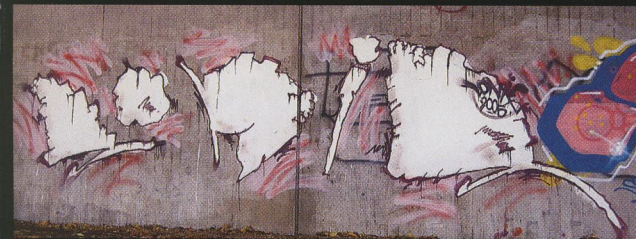
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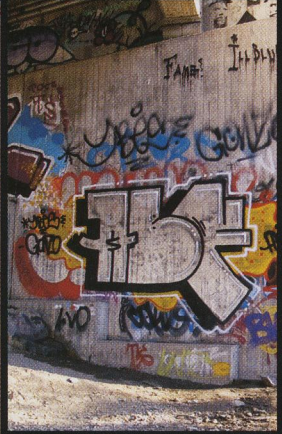




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INTERNATIONAL TRAINS



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..Afs..



..Banos – Amsterdam subway, Holland



Curly – Tokyo, Japan



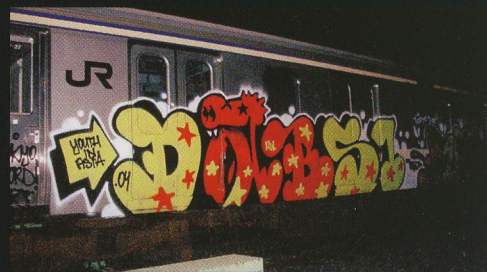
Dick, Kasp and Mdts – Commuter train in Moscow, Russia



Snek – Subway train in Moscow, Russia



Fra32 – Regional train in northern Italy



Dabs – Tokyo, Japan



Sie – Finland

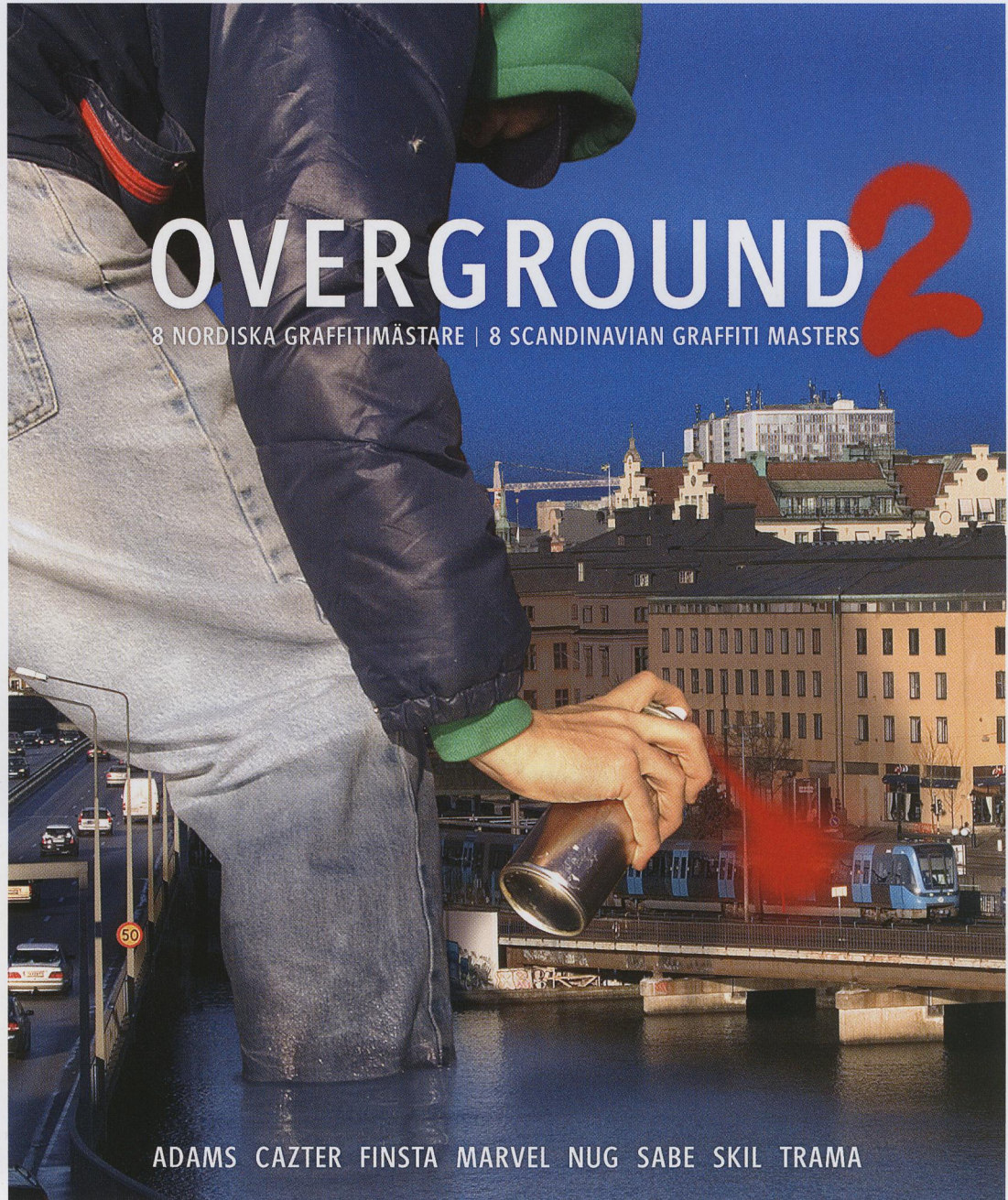
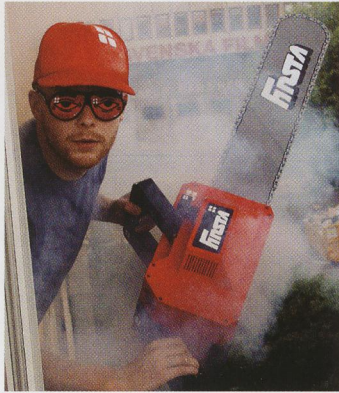


Task – Finland



Tonot – Subway train in Buenos Aires, Argentina

IN STORES JUNE 2006



OVERGROUND 2

8 NORDISKA GRAFFITIMÄSTARE | 8 SCANDINAVIAN GRAFFITI MASTERS

ADAMS CAZTER FINSTA MARVEL NUG SABE SKIL TRAMA



The world's best graffiti is created in Scandinavia. It is elegant and dynamic, humorous and serious. In Overground 2, we follow eight of the most important Scandinavian artists. Their pictures seethe with life. Their lives are full of adventure.



Clas, Pure – Copenhagen, Denmark

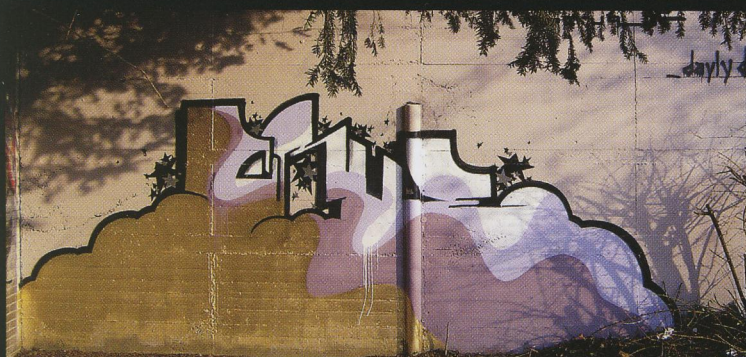
INTERNATIONAL WALLS



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Beat – Chile



Crue – Germany



Swet – Copenhagen, Denmark



Clas – Copenhagen, Denmark



Mist, Para, Ore – Finland



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Tamr – X40, Västerås

SWEDISH TRAINS



Vifl



For – Regional train, Gävle



Rise – Itino train



Tamr – X40



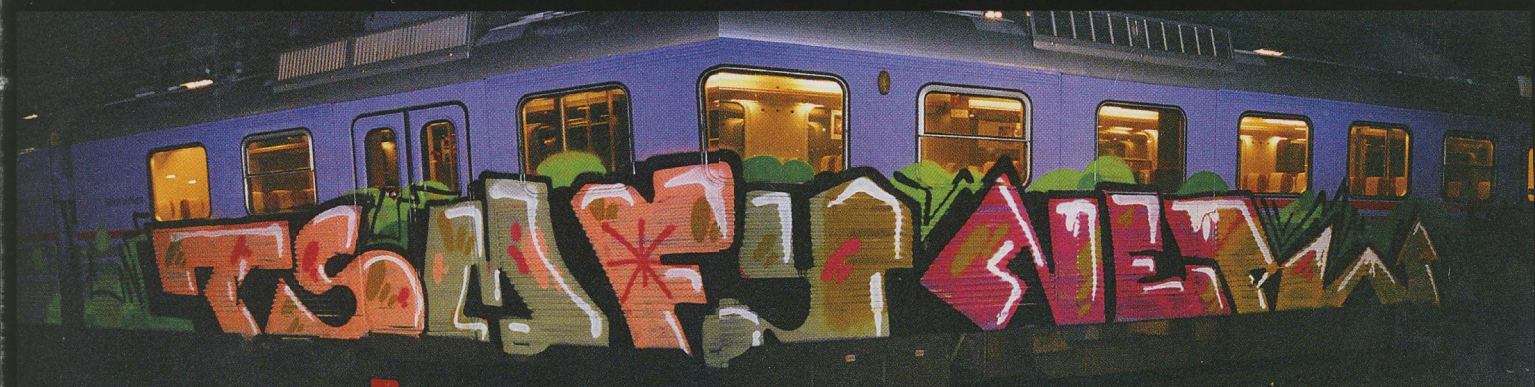
Hraf – Scania



Ober – Freight train



Ashe, Tro, Cha – Östgöta commuter train



Tsm, Fy, Ner – Påga train, Scania



Cha – Östgöta commuter train



Dir – Regional train, Dalarna



Rec – Intercity train, Luleå



Wlc – Intercity train, Luleå



Moor, Cler – Påga train, Scania



Rudj – Lidköping

SWEDISH WALLS



Bingoe, Relik, Mir – Gothenburg



Rabex, Nail, Sker – Västerås





Lovetoburn – Falun



Cp – Dalarna



Rudj – Lidköping



Lovetoburn – Falun



Rimba – Sävest



Egs, Lady, Bingos – Gothenburg



Cens – Gothenburg





A page from Code's blackbook dating early 1989. Triumph was one of Code's most used undercover names.

"We were healthy kids"

In the 80s, everybody was bombing, but few dared to do pieces. Those who were good at that had status. One of them was Code from Tyresö in southeast Stockholm.

Text: Tobias Barenthin Lindblad

Photos: Code & Ance

"I don't like the style kids use today! It doesn't say anything. We were better in the 80s." Code sits leaning back in a chair in the sunlight. On the table a cup of coffee. He speaks a typical Stockholm dialect and is leafing through a copy of UP:

"What's this? Just a waste of time and paint. That, on the other hand, that's good, and that, wow!" Code locks on to **Dome's** Dentalizm piece and **Erse's** pieces.

"The style has to be pure, and technique is important. You should be able to look at the pieces up close. I think the tags are also often sloppy."

I observe that Code sounds like a pensioner moaning about the youth of today. He laughs:

"I'm stuck in the 80s. I'm an old man – all I need is a cane!"

But he looks younger than his 35 years. The clothes are the same: sneakers, hoodie and jeans. Only the goatee is new.

Code was one of the best writers in Stockholm in the late 80s. It was a short but

eventful period. The subway was full of tags, subway stations were painted, and colour burners popped up like mushrooms along the lines. Code concentrated on his well-made

"I think of graffiti the way an ex-junkie might look at his drugs."

pieces. It was during the station period of the fall of 88 that he became known. Three crews in particular painted the subway stations: **Da**

System Tyrantz (DST), **Vandals In Motion** (VIM) and Code's **Controlers Of Crime** (COC). For a short while, everything hinged on the stations. Appointments were even made inside closed stations at night. Some fifteen writers might pop up from different directions when they had done painting.

"We were biggest on the green line then, **Akay** and me. I did all the stations from Skanstull to Fridhemsplan, except for Central Station. A funny memory is from New Year's

Eve of 1988. I was talking to Akay on the phone and he asked if I was going out to paint that evening. Ah, no, I won't bother, I said. 'Thank



Code at Hall of Fame in 1988.



Sir by Jel (Code). This burner was close to subway station Sandsborg and was one of the much talked about pieces in 1989.



Hard Core by Jel (Code) and Akay. Probably in 1989.

God, then I don't have to,' said Akay."

There was a friendly rivalry between Code and Akay, and they also painted together. Amongst other things, they did classic commuter train pieces like *Do the Society a Favour and Give Graffiti a Chance* and *A Transit Revenge, Skips the Trips*. The latter was a clear anti-drugs message, quite in line with the ideal of clean living common to many writers born in the early 70s.

"When I was active, we didn't drink, we didn't use any drugs. We were healthy kids who did tags and racked cans. Graffiti was a good alternative. People didn't care much about what we did. Not like now, it seems. It was cool to paint, but you got caught sometimes."

A measure of how graffiti was perceived were the train parties that the entourage

around COC and DST started. From the *Writers Bench* in the middle of town, it is a stone's throw to all of Stockholm's subway lines. You just had to take your pick.

"Often **Mezar** and DST started it. Stuff just happened. We were bored. Nobody does anything when thirty guys walk in to a car

was really ugly, but we had great cans. Quick! See, there was a paint store in Tyresö that must have been the most assaulted one in Sweden. Shit, what a lot we racked there."

Code looks ashamed.

Tyresö is just southeast of Stockholm, and Code started writing strategically around

"Nobody does anything when thirty guys walk in to a car and start bombing."

and start bombing. I remember Mezar moving somebody, saying 'Excuse me', and spraying a big tag on the wall behind them."

But Code was careful and used different names: Triumph, Jel, Rush, Al Cap 1 and Racki. Code's first name was Crusher.

"I did my first piece in December of 1985. It

the subway connections at Slussen and Gullmarsplan. With **Roze**, he did a piece at Gamla Stan subway station.

"We did a *2 Bombers* (picture p. 35), but had to split. We ran past Slussen to Medborgarplatsen. We found an exit there. I kept it in the back of my head until we did our



2 Bombers Shine Roze by Code and Roze at Gamla Stan in 1986.



Jel by Code in 1989. All members of COC have been tagging below the dedication. Stockholm, Södra Station 1989.

Controlerz of Crime at Medborgarplatsen.”

Code often painted back home at Tyresö, sometimes together with **News**. He got better and better, and his final recognition came from **Ziggy**, who was already legendary then.

“Better than I thought’, Ziggy wrote next to my piece. Boy was I proud!”

He formed the crew COC together with News and others, but News soon went over to VIM, and Code brought new talents to the crew. **Dezoner**, **Black** and **Buzter** the bubbler.

“What tags Buzter did! His style was among the best, and he became a really cool writer.” Crew identity wasn’t much observed. When COC finally broke up, Code joined VIM for a while, and after that was in DST, TAG and AO concurrently.

Code starts enumerating members of his crews. They were the kings of the 80s, writers

you couldn’t talk to just like that. People like **Slice**, **Baze**, **Speed** and **Snow** were arrogant and completely unattainable to the younger generation of writers. But Code was an exception. He was always friendly and liked to talk. It was enough he recognized someone.

Moreover, he was curious. And he still is.

Many people were completely focused on the Stockholm scene, and didn’t care what happened elsewhere.

“I knew **Pike** in Malmö, and the guy from Gothenburg who was so good at characters – **Dwane**? And also **Shoe**, **Romance**, **Bates** and **Mode 2** of course.”



Jel by Code, 1989.



A page in Code's black book, early 1989. This kind of layout was very popular around 1990.

Code himself travelled around Sweden to paint. Often it was for work, sometimes complemented with illegal pieces.

“Puppet and I did legal pieces in Östersund, Eskilstuna, Skara Sommarland and Västervik. I was in Copenhagen once in the 80s. It was fun if someone had photos from other cities, there was no Internet. If a new piece came up, you went there straight away. You didn't know much, but you found your own style. I'm no good at drawing, I can't even draw a matchstick man, but if I want to learn something, I'm stubborn. I sat and sketched an incredible lot for years to get good.”

Stockholm in the 80s was focused on a very technical style. Both the construction of

the letters and the execution were important. The top writers had both style and technique. Code lists his favourites:

“Circle, Puppet, Disey and Ziggy, Tariq and Erse. And Akay, of course. The Seen of Stockholm. He always did different styles, that was his thing. These guys were thorough! They'd paint for half an hour extra to get it perfect. I regret not being more focused. I was too sloppy. I went out to do pieces; of course I tagged as well, but a piece says more than a thousand tags.”

Code is about to become a father. The last time he did a piece was in the summer of 2002, but some of his old stuff remains in the subway tunnels. Like many ex-writers,

code is very curious and asks a lot about how things are nowadays. He lives far away from contemporary graffiti, he says, but in the same breath, he admits that his fingers are awfully itchy.

“Especially in the spring. Or feeling the scent of a summer evening, then I can think that I ought to be out writing. But getting caught wouldn't fit into my life. I've got a partner, two dogs, a country home.

I think of graffiti the way an ex-junkie might look at his drugs. It's in the past. But I see tags and pieces every day and can't forget it. Damn, I miss those days, the best of my life! I miss being creative. And I wish I'd continued with graffiti into something else.”



Agent by Code, part of the famous Agent Orange piece in Hall of Fame, Stockholm 1989.



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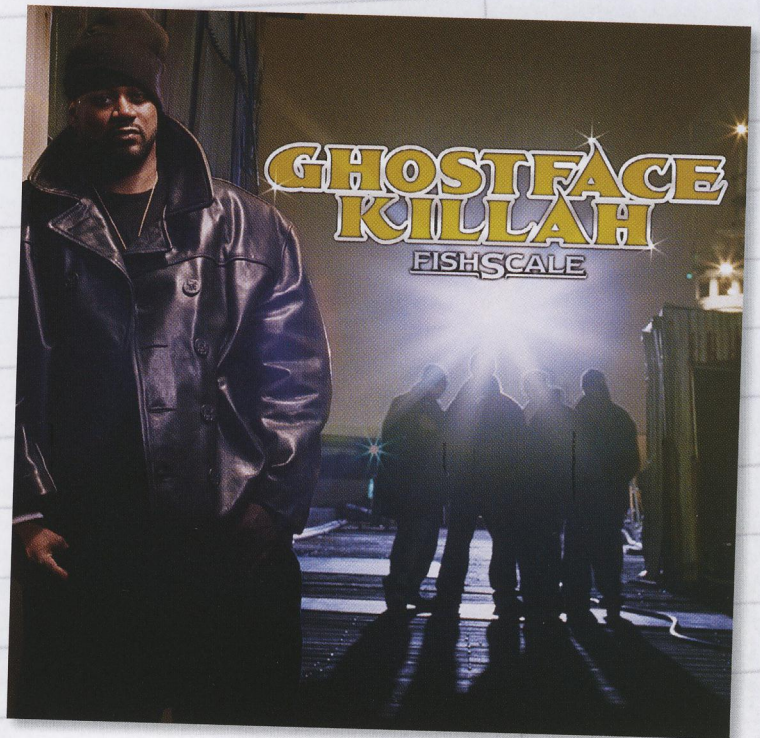
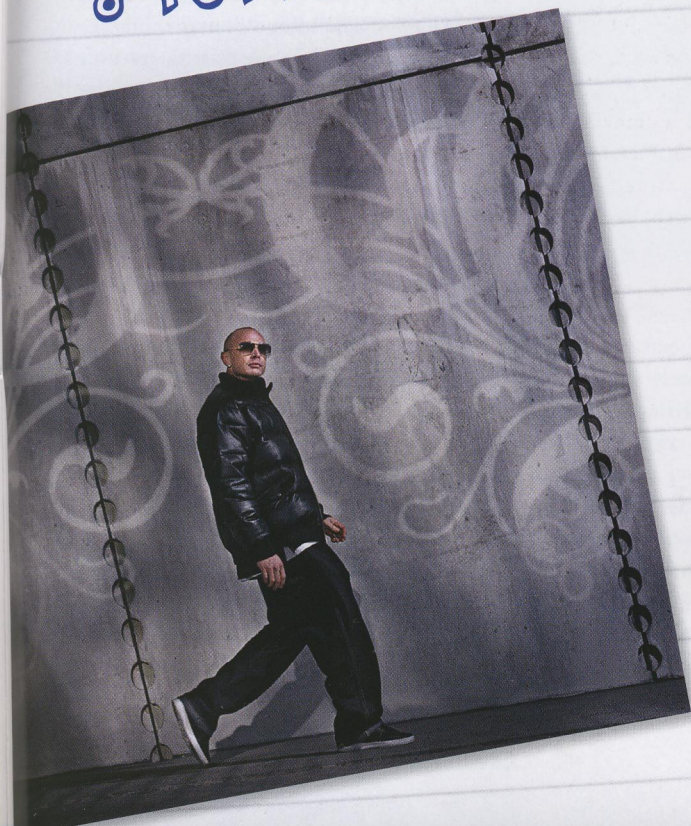
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Three times Dabs on a street in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan

Graffiti in its beginning stages

A new graffiti scene is on the march in Asia. Since moving from Montreal in Canada to Taipei, the Taiwanese capital, Dabs has seen more than the growth of the world's highest skyscraper.

Text: Dabs One
Photo: Dabs One

When I first came to Taiwan in 2001 there wasn't very much graffiti. In fact, almost nothing in the central downtown core of Taipei or outside its surrounding areas. I was told that there were some writers down in the Southern part of the island, where locals also say graffiti first emerged on the island, but for the most part the scene had been non-existent. This was a bit exciting as well as a bit depressing since I was hoping to find some locals to show me around, and make my new life easier. Later on I had met some writers, both foreign and local, although most of the time I ended up scouting spots and discovering the city on my own. Getting around by motorscooter, I was able to travel around the city and find good untouched spots to hit up. This was amazing and reminded me of when I first started writing graffiti back in Montreal in 1992, when the scene was just starting to grow and not too many writers were around.

Since the graffiti situation hasn't been a major problem for this country and in some

respects has even been embraced by some locals as a new contemporary art form, this attitude has made it much more accessible to do more quality street works in good locations around the city. It has also made it a great opportunity to get your work up and out to the public, which in turn helps to develop the

“Graffiti hasn't been a major problem this far, although most people think it looks good, it's still illegal.”

scene more. Most of the new scene emerging now had been concentrating mostly on doing wall productions, although lately there have also been some more artists getting up in the streets and bombing has been taking off a bit more.

There is also a lot of street-art or lo-fi type works being done, which kids out here seems to relate with more, although there isn't as much on consistent level. The train scene hasn't really fully taken off either, probably due in part to its lack of huge accessible yards and the severe



Omen

finances and penalties handed down, if caught. As for styles, characters seem to be really popular among the local writers at the moment and these artists seem much stronger in this area than they are in their lettering style and concepts. However, the writers involved in the lettering styles are developing in this area

too and will probably come out with some great ideas very soon, considering the rich background in Chinese calligraphy and art. It feels like the scene in Taiwan has really grown since I first moved to Taipei. Some key figures getting up in the scene, and making some noise in Taipei at the moment are: **Curly, Chek, Omen, Fhail I, City Stalker, Magic, Yamps, Same, Bobo, Host, Spooz, Budda, Winston, Ano, Reach, Howa, Oyang, VnL.** These artists have been developing the scene and making their mark



Ano



Bobo



Vnl



Curly

on the city for the next generation of artists. I had an opportunity to sit down and talk with some of the newer local writers emerging out of the scene in Taiwan.

How do you think the scene in Taiwan is different compared to what's happening out in the West?

Bobo: "Graffiti is still in its beginning stages out here so it's different in many ways because we haven't really developed our own key signature style that we can call a Taiwanese style. We're still following the conventional Western style of graffiti writing. Hopefully we'll be able to develop something different in the future."

Same: "Also, because we're just in the beginning stages, it's been a bit better since a lot of people feel more interested in it, and more positive about it. Which seems the opposite compared to the graffiti scene in the West, where it seems it's had a more negative response. We hope that it doesn't develop that way out here too".



Saven

Bobo: "At the moment, however, a big question is whether graffiti is art or vandalism. People aren't familiar enough with it and it hasn't been a major problem this far, although most people think it looks good, it's still illegal, and this also creates some room for debate."

What could improve or develop the scene better?

Bobo: "I wish we had more locations to get better graffiti-related materials

and that good quality paints like Montana didn't cost so much to buy. It would be nice to be able to work with cans where you can get the different effects from the caps, which we can't get on the local brand paint. Although it isn't a really big deal, it would still be an advantage to have."

Same: "I think it would be cool if we had more graffiti-related events in the future and have more writers from other countries come



Same



Dabs

to visit, I think people out here could learn more about it from this. Although another problem may be that kids will only follow these types of events and not be involved with the real street style of the art form.”
Bobo: “It’s also become more of a marketing business thing out here, more than an art form at the moment. It’s been made popular through the media, clothing and other advertising things, so more people are getting involved so they can make money off of it.”

With the Mainland Chinese government opening its borders to more Westerners, it will be interesting to see the effect graffiti will have in China, which is Taiwan’s neighbour. There are possibilities for a major scene developing out here in the near future considering its massive population and large cities. It’s exciting to be at the fore front of a new emerging scene whether here in Taiwan, mainland China or other locations throughout Asia.

Dabs has recently opened an underground art space in Taipei, called “AMPM gallery”, which is designed to help independent local and foreign artists to have a chance to exhibit their works and promote their art on another level. He hopes this can also be used as way to bring other artists together around the city and create something like a “writer’s bench” for people to meet up. You can contact Dabs by e-mail:

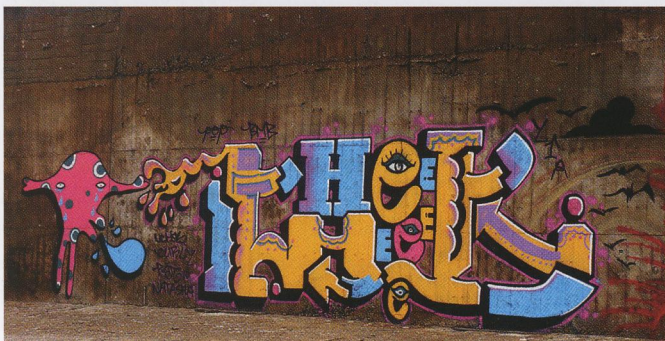
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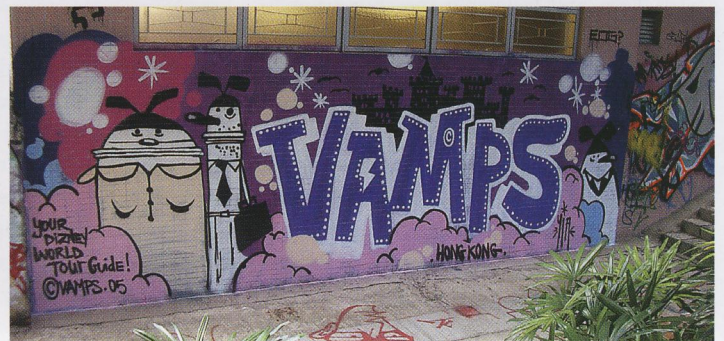
Tags and throw-ups on a street in Taipei



Same



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Hfu – Intercity train

Getting fame with your name on a train

In the very last minute of making this issue of UP we recieved a bunch of photos. Some really nice ones. We ended up giving them some space. Check it out for yourself. Most of these pieces are done around a city called Gävle, a few hours north of Stockholm. Enjoy.



Mofos, Mofos, Hfus, Hej and Mofos painted on a Intercity train



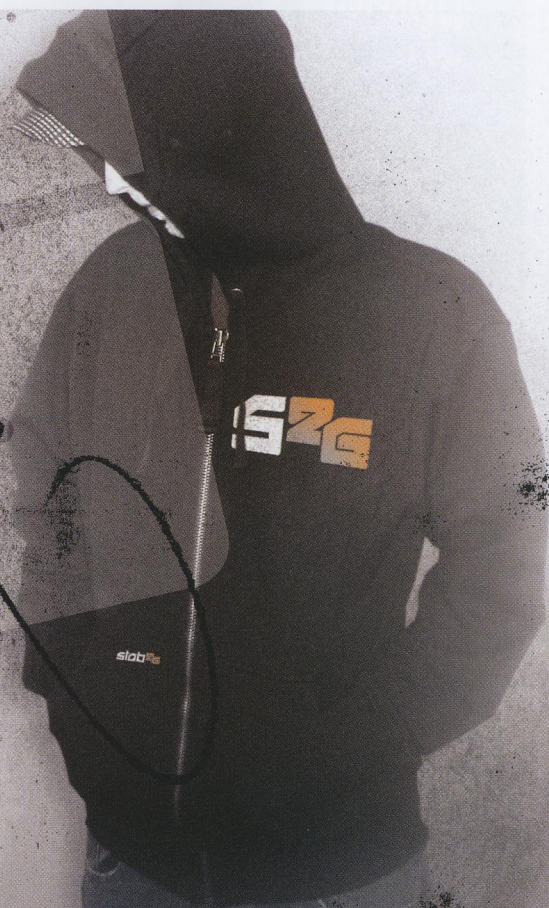
Gee, Bel, Hopp and Mofo – Long distance train



Mofo, Hfus – Intercity train

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Handwritten graffiti in black marker on a light-colored wall, featuring a large, stylized signature.





Wholecar by Bye, Thek and Pesto. Photo by Bye

In memory of the flat S-trains

Copenhagen's graffiti scene is about to lose an important part of its history. The classic red S-train is going to the grave.

DSB, the city's transit authority, is working on taking all the commuter trains in the classic square model out of commission. On these carriages, the Copenhagen style development has been written in blood, sweat and spray paint since the early 80s. The cars have now

been replaced with rounder models. It is easy to suspect that DSB have chosen this shape to make it harder on graffiti writers.

For Europeans in general and Scandinavians in particular, the Copenhagen S-trains have an almost magical meaning. Swedes, Norwegians

and Finns made pilgrimages to Copenhagen to goggle at the trains that were constantly painted. Legends like **Mode 2**, **Ghost**, **VIM Crew**, **Sento** and **Mellie** have painted them, as have thousands of Copenhagen writers since 1984.

UP bids farewell to this Danish graffiti symbol with some pictures of phat pieces from the last few years. Held og Lykke!



Christ and Kazz, 2004. Photo by Cave



Cave made in 2005. Photo by Don Juan



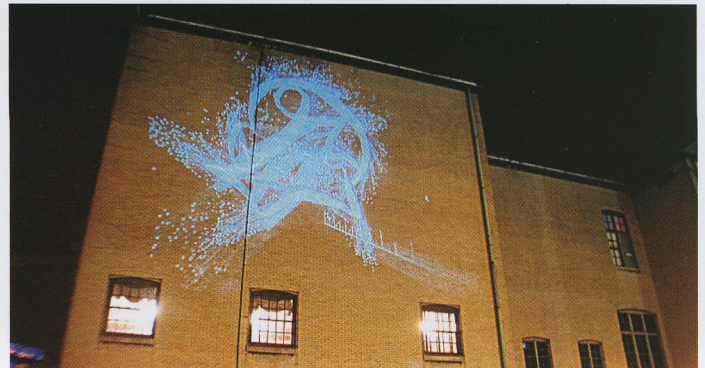
Cave One in a yard in Copenhagen. Photo by Bob



Evan Roth and James Powderly from Graffiti Research Lab



Photos from the project "Graffiti Analysis"



Equipment for new surfaces

Bright tags. The city backdrop as a movie screen. With backgrounds in computer programming and robotics, the men behind **Graffiti Research Lab** are developing new forms of expression on the streets of New York.

Text: Gustaf Kjellin

"Most of what we do, we develop with writers. By discussing the possibilities of different techniques, we develop equipment that can help them reach new surfaces. Then we go out in town and test it," says **Evan Roth** about his work with Graffiti Research Lab (GRL).

Using their technical know-how, Evan Roth and **James Powderly** have been integrating the analog with the digital since starting GRL some six months ago.

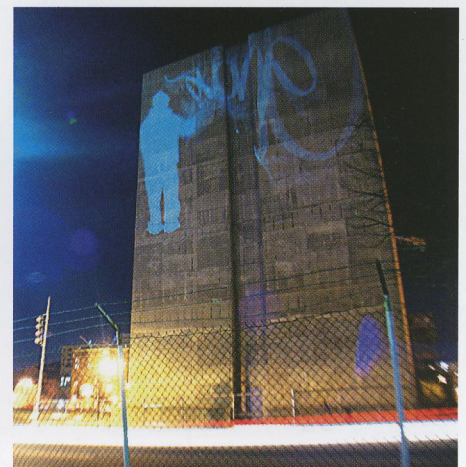
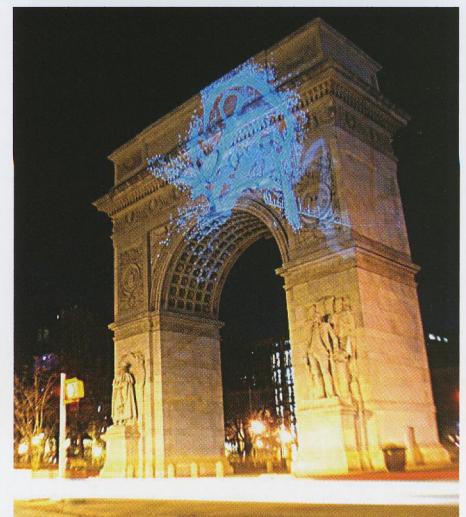
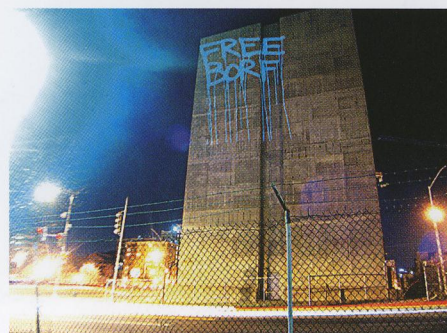
One of their projects has been named Graffiti Analysis. Graffiti writers **Hell**, **Jesus Saves**, **Avone** and **Katsu** are recorded by a computer as they write their tags. Their movements are then projected onto city walls and monuments.

All projects are documented and put on their homepage.

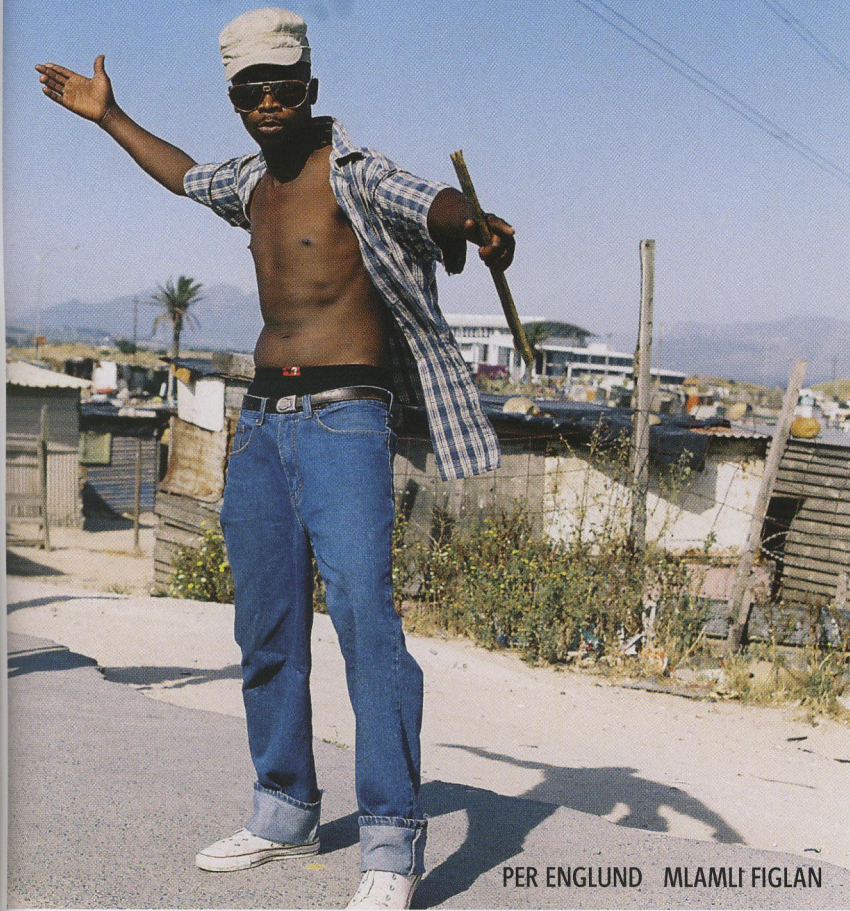
"It's the only thing that feels right. We don't want any copyright and to make lots of money out of this. Our reward is that as many people as possible can use our ideas to beautify the urban landscape," says James Powderly.

On their website, you will find information on making a "drippy marker", which concoction can then be used to obtain a "conductive spray paint" that allows stencils to stay up for as long as possible, how to make your own "LED Throwies" and use them to write shining tags using a "Night Writer".

If you're tired of spray paint, find new inspiration at www.graffitiresearchlab.com



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