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Land of the Rising Graffiti Artist: New Book Documents Japan's Exploding Street Art Scene through Images and Interviews

Mark Batty Publisher Launches "Graffiti Japan," a comprehensive documentation of the island nation's fanatical embrace of the popular art form

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New York, NY, August 12, 2008 — Mark Batty Publisher, a leader in distinctive books covering the graphic and communication arts, has released the first book to take readers on such a comprehensive and intimate tour of Japan's burgeoning graffiti movement. Written and photographed by Remo Camerota, "Graffiti Japan" provides a revealing Japanese perspective on a conventionally Western tradition.

Japan has long been a breeding ground for innovative angles and perceptions on Western traditions, such as movies and baseball. The fanatical acceptance of streetscape graffiti in Japan has torn the art form away from its Western roots and has given it a national identity of its own. "Graffiti Japan" documents that evolution with a multitude of photographs, artist interviews and author commentary.

The photographs in "Graffiti Japan" feature a wide range of graffiti styles, settings and subject matter, including sprawling commissioned murals and illegal art in hidden spots that feature anime and manga characters, kanji and much more.

According to Camerota, the seeds for the book were sewn during his first trip to Japan to meet the graffiti artist SUIKO, who had him "crawling around in places no one would ever think to go looking for graffiti."

Subsequent interviews with SUIKO and others who have given themselves such names as TENGA, QP, KRESS, BELX2, FATE and EMAR reveal how these artists define their work as distinctively Japanese, musing on everything from foreign influences, national pride and public perceptions, to replicating the calligraphic intricacies of the Japanese language with spray paint.

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“Even legalized projects do not get much attention unless we do something attractive or big,” comments TENGA in one of the book’s many interviews. “It seems that passersby think that drawing with spray cans equals vandalism.”

When asked about his inspirations, the artist called QP said, “It can be an object, a person, a building, a tiny space between walls, a scent, an aroma, temperature, a feeling, a tree... Inspiration comes out of the blue. The trigger can be anything and everything around. You can’t choose. You just get it.”

About Mark Batty Publisher

Mark Batty Publisher is an independent publisher dedicated to making distinctive books on the visual art of communicating, showcasing the visual power and innovation of contemporary culture in all of its varied poses. Today, the visual comes at us from more places than ever, and its dissemination is faster and more advanced every year. Books from Mark Batty Publisher capture this acceleration on the pages of every book. Affordable, well designed, thoughtfully created, and produced to last, MBP books are artful products that readers want to hold onto forever. For more information, visit www.markbattypublisher.com.

“Graffiti Japan”

Remo Camerota

Street Graphics and Urban Art

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