TED , Mia Nacamulli , Kelly Wall

TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series The Artist's Palette: A Brief History of Graffiti

Online (2016)

TAGS: Graffiti Plutarch Pompeii Rome Vandals





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series The Artist's Palette: A Brief History of Graffiti
Country of the First Edition	Online
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2016
First Edition Details	*A Brief History of Graffiti*. Kelly Wall, Educator, Mia Nacamulli, Script Editor, Tomás Pichardo-Espaillat, Director & Animator, Cem Misirlioglu, Composer. TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series The Artist's Palette. ed.ted.com, September 8, 2016, 4:31 (accessed: August 20, 2018).
Running time	4:31 min
Official Website	ed.ted.com (accessed: August 20, 2018)
Available Onllne	youtube.com (accessed: August 20, 2018)
Genre	Animated films, Instructional and educational works, Internet videos, Short films
Author of the Entry	Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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Creators

Logo retrieved from Wikipedia, public domain (accessed: December 8, 2021).

TED (Company)

TED: Technology, Entertainment, Design (accessed: July 6, 2018) is a media organization focused on "ideas worth spreading", which organizes conferences and creates online talks for free distribution. One of its initiatives is TED-Ed (ed.ted.com), an online platform hosting short interactive lessons. Each lesson consists of four sections:

– *Watch* – animated educational video (available also on YouTube);

– *Think* – a short quiz about the video's content;

– *Dig Deeper* – a concise text on where to search for more information on the topic (providing mainly hyperlinks to educational websites rather than "traditional" bibliographical references);

– *Discuss* – a forum with two types of discussions: Guided (i.e. created by the educators), and Free (i.e. created by the viewers).

Prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Mia Nacamulli

Mia Nacamulli is a writer and educator who graduated in film/video studies; since 2015 she has worked as a script writer and editor for TED Conferences.

Source:

LinkedIn profile (accessed: March 30, 2017).

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Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Kelly Wall

Kelly Wall is a history teacher with 8-year experience at The Bush School, University of Michigan, and an educator working in innovative learning environments. She describes herself as a "researcher, instructional coach, outreach coordinator, curriculum designer, or educator." She has given dozens of public speeches on the topic of education and history published at her Seelio website (accessed March 30, 2017). Currently she also works as a Research Assistant in *The Big History Project*, a free educational social studies learning platform for middle and high school students.

Profile at LinkedIn (accessed March 30, 2017).

Profile at seelio.com (accessed March 30, 2017).

Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl

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Additional information

Summary

Graffiti in the form of spray paintings, tags, and murals is present almost everywhere across contemporary cities: on bridges, walls, subway cars. It is useful for expressing identity, artistic and political preferences – on the other hand, it is still controversial as it questions ceratain rules of social life. In a brief outline of the history of graffiti a female narrator claims that in ancient Rome graffiti was widely accepted, and Romans used walls for daily communication; Mayas used drawings for the same purpose. Then the functions of graffiti in ancient Pompeii are discussed: graffiti was a medium for spells, emotional expression, political campaigning, expressing support for favourite gladiators. There were voices against graffiti – the narrator cites Plutarch's opinion (from *De curiositate*, without mentioning the title) calling graffiti "ridiculous and pointless."

Next, the tribe of Vandals who destroyed Rome is introduced as eponymous for "vandalism," the term dating from the time of French Revolution. In the 20th century graffiti developed into an extremely popular form of illegal art, sometimes with a propaganda twist, as during WW2 or at the Berlin Wall. Today the status of graffiti is ambiguous, on one hand the traditions from 1960s–80s are not totally gone and many artists still remain underground; on the other, graffiti became part of mainstream, as it is often produced legally and inspires other, more "traditional" genres of art.

The section "Think" contains 8 questions (ancient culture is present in two); "Dig Deeper" contains 3 paragraphs referring to the resources of both historical and current knowledge about graffiti in different countries – an article from "Smithsonian.com" about Pompeian walls is also linked; "Discuss" contains one guided discussion: "What does the future of graffiti look like?" with 35 answers so far, and 2 open discussions.

As at March 30, 2017 the video had been viewed 258427 times; it gained 4127 "thumbs up" and 439 comments on YouTube.

Analysis

The video serves as a didactic tool, which makes young people learn about ancient graffiti as a phenomenon which has its equivalents in other cultures, but remains relevant for its own time and space.

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	Antiquity is presented here as a fundamental stage in developing the cultural concept of spontaneous sharing one's thoughts or expressing aesthetic ideas on the public urban surfaces – this concept is constantly renewed by representatives of each generation living in today's cities all over the world.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Graffiti Plutarch Pompeii Rome Vandals
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Heritage History Invention
Further Reading	Ohlson, K., *Reading the Writing on Pompeii's Walls*, available at Smithsonian.com, July 26, 010 (accessed: August 20, 2018). *The Big History* project website (accessed: August 20, 2018).

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