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INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 1 AND 2

This paper is written in an attempt to penetrate beyond typical reactions by people who are under the assumption that Graffiti is anti-social and has the intention of sheer defacement and nothing else. On the contrary I think that Modern Graffiti is populated by a wide variety of properties which have come to my attention through research and simple deductions from looking at Graffiti first hand. This Low Art Form has not been subject to change, unlike what is happening in High and Fine Art which is in a constant state of change and turmoil, as if it were suffering from an identity crises. Graffiti has remained like a pillar throughout the ages. Personally, it is my belief that Graffiti contains in its make-up the last remnants of what could be called a Native Western Primitive Art, which is not to be confused with Modern-Day School of Primitive Painting.

Chapter 1 deals with culture in general and to some extent its relationship with Graffiti.

Chapter 2 "Graffiti an Art Form", sets out to determine and show that Graffiti is an art form, but of a particular kind.

Graffiti and Culture

Before we can look at Graffiti as a cultural product or an aspect of a culture, plus some of the various roles or functions Graffiti has in a culture, we first must look at what culture professes to be. Both in its products and what has been written in the definition sense of what culture can be. Culture is made up of general forms, through which man obtains his particular pieces of knowledge. Each major area of cultural life myth, religion, art, thinking, history, politics, science, etc. are forms for obtaining knowledge. The above forms of mans cultural pursuits are only a part of what goes to make up the complete fabric of mans culture.

Williams referred to culture as a particular way of life which expresses meaning and values in the Arts and Learning, Institutions and some forms of behaviour. Barthes is even more generous in his idea or notion of what culture is about, that is a culture which extends beyond the library, opera house, art galleries, and colleges etc. to encompass the whole of everyday life. Barthes definition of what culture can be is very broad, but it would be foolish to think that culture was strictly a form of institutions or events where so called learned people only get involved or get to partake in. This position on what range culture can have is fortified by K Baynes, (Art in Society, London, Lund Humphries, 1972, page 33). "The material gathered in the worlds great museums is only the top of a colossal iceberg, the base of which stretches away below the surface of the limited range of attitudes and activities that are thought of as cultural". end of quote. From considering Baynes and Barthes ideas on culture, it's obvious that Graffiti can qualify as a cultural

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mechanism, which has been used by people in many different ages and countries, which has a visual end product - a cultural product.

This interaction between mans ability to make visual signs, symbols, images, and knowledge of some sort no matter how low it might appear to be, usually having an anti-established cultural setting, culminates in Graffiti.

The role and function Graffiti has in a culture at large is one of a conveyor of ideologies or just gestural thoughts about everyday existences expressed in words and images, and it will go on conveying this long after the maker has absconded. It's through the interposition of this kind of visual experience, that we can see and know what other people think or are about, and what they get up to. Sociologists, Artists, Psychologists, Political scientists, in short anyone who has an interest in a close up of the human condition, have looked at Graffiti. Unlike some of the other cultural activities, Graffiti tends to be humble, obscure and very ephemeral. In spite of this, it can have a lot of power and energy, for Graffiti can be signs or vehicles of doubt, challenge, defiance and symbols of crises. The people who make graffiti do not command the resources of societies or states, on the whole it tends to represent in its work the outlook of small groups or individuals, rather than established organisations and institutions. This form of visual expression makes appearances in most parts of any given city in the civilised world, but working class areas in cities are particularly rich in it. However the fact that it can be found in any location gives it much greater scope than other art forms, which usually have a fixed set of locations to be seen or heard in. So it's bound to achieve and have a bigger effect and impact on people who live or come into contact with the environment where it can be found,

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whether they like it or not compared with other low art forms. Historically some of the finest examples of Graffiti in ancient times have come from the ruins of Pompeii and the Catacombs in Rome, the contents of which is not unlike what can be found in today's Graffiti. What has kept it so alive and virulent from ancient right up to present times is the fact that there will always be minorities and individuals who, because of their views or ideals would be unable to use normal channels to express themselves.

Whether it is a school boy drawing a rude picture of someone he dislikes or a political activist painting anti government slogans on a wall, its position in culture remains very much the same, it's Graffiti in the service of the under dog offering uncensored versions by the uncelebrated.

GRAFFITI AN ART FORM

Graffiti is conceived and made outside the arenas of Fine Art, in the sense of Art Schools, Galleries and Museums. There is no recipient involved e.g. art collectors or buyers. It is an Art Form which is nearly always executed anonymously by individuals and up until recent times was disqualified as a cultured form of expression, the kindest words being said about Graffiti were that it was a visual pollutant.

Graffiti has similar visual relatives, certain characteristics that go to make up Graffiti can be found in other forms of visual expression. The most obvious are probably early forms of prehistoric art, primitive and folk art, child art and some brute art. Forms of alphabetic writing, I think, should also be included, even though writing evolved from pictographs. It is interesting to note that in the case of Chinese writing, the two forms of communication writing and drawing have not entirely separated. All of the arts mentioned, including Graffiti are done by people who are untutored in the context of knowing about art historically or modern movements in art. There is little or no desire to improve in a **technical** sense. The maker also can have similar attitudes as regarding the idea of looking at other peoples' efforts at making art, usually having a total indifference towards all art including arts the same as their own, and putting very little value on their own efforts after it has been made. One of the aspects that gives Graffiti a distinct individuality from other similar visual phenomena is its stance or point of view. Usually it is one of a subversive nature, either in words or pictures of topics which would not be handled by artists because of state or personal censorship, this also helps to explain as to why Graffiti is often an anonymous activity.

Graffiti is a mode of communication and expression which is usually adopted by people, who have ideologies outlawed in some way, whether it be sexual, political

or religious views. Besides, regardless of what is drawn or written by people who do Graffiti, the actual making of it is prohibited and in some cases, even in Ireland, people have been known to be shot dead doing it.

(Ken Baynes, *Art in Society*, London, Lund Humphreys, 1972, page 30: "We are used to the idea that art enriches people's lives, and widens their Horizons, we are familiar with a concept of culture which shows it as aiding growth and maturity. Today we see art as playing a central role in an education directed towards allowing people to develop their own personalities. But in fact every aspect of culture is more ambiguous and double-edged by celebrating certain modes it inevitably dismisses others". end of quote). Graffiti is a mode which has been put down mainly because the topics, which are usually too sensitive and outrageous for the official version in other forms, are natural provinces for Graffiti. Even if we could imagine a form of Graffiti that was abstract and having no ideologies, consisting of meaningless marks it would be outlawed on the grounds of defacement of private or public properties.

Does Graffiti qualify as an Art Form? To say that it does because it is an activity which uses images and words, and that these kinds of activities have always traditionally been called art is not good enough. By looking at some of the functions performed by Art and Low Arts, we can build up an idea of why Graffiti is an Art Form. (Alan Gowans, *Unchanging Arts*, New York, J.P. Lippincott Company 1971, page 13: "Art historically had four functions (1) Substituted imagery when things needed to be preserved for one reason or another, Art made pictures that could be substituted for the actual thing. (2) Art made images or shapes (including pictographs) that could be used in whole or part to tell stories or record events vividly which is called illustration. (3) Art made images which by association of shapes with ideas set forth the fundamental convictions or realized ideals of societies or conversely Art made images intended to persuade people to new or

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different beliefs. (4) Art beautified the world by pleasing the eye or gratifying the mind with particular combinations of forms, arrangements of colours, or namentations, etc." end of quote). Conviction and Persuasion is the one that concerns us, "images which by association of shapes with ideas set forth fundamental convictions or realized ideals of societies" and "Art made images intended to persuade people to new or different beliefs". Gowan goes on to say that conviction and persuasion can be so interrelated, that the Art serving both of them cannot properly be considered apart. Graffiti is not shaped or has not originated from ideas of an Art which illustrates or performs the function of substitute imagery or lastly beautification. Graffiti performs many of the functions that come under the umbrella of the art conviction and persuasion. Graffiti is an Art Form with political and religious ideologies, and subculture or personal beliefs. It is sometimes used to persuade people to new beliefs or at least made known new ideas, or on the other hand Graffiti can be of a nature where conviction can apply, such as sexual Graffiti. Conviction is mainly concerned with personal notions, as in sexual desires, or any of the private thoughts that run through any person's head. When this kind of thought is manifested in Graffiti, the making of the Graffiti is caught up with the persons thoughts or daydreams and they become very interrelated while the work progresses. It has the hallmark of an experience that is entered into and then abandoned. Graffiti, with its images of conviction, is meant, not so much as to be seen by any spectator, but as to give reality to an idea or notion in the maker's mind, in a very fulfilling and satisfying way. It is a self-rewarding activity. In its small, but not unimportant way, Graffiti helps to articulate a particular network of human emotions and relationships, regardless of which area it operates in.

The techniques and systems of lettering and figuration, found in Graffiti, have little or no connection with those handed down by traditions. They seem to stem rather from personal inventions. Graffiti can have two distinct modes of

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communication. Words and pictographs can appear individually, or together making up to one piece of Graffiti. Whatever the case may be, it is all done very spontaneously. When viewed, the figurative and the alphabetic come together and are integrated to extent in the mind, but, somehow, still remain very distinct. One reason as to why writing and drawing appear together in works of this nature is given by Michel Thevoz, Brute Art, Paris, 1978, page 105 ("Writing and drawing are done with the same instrument and spring from the same impulse"). Paul Klee had similar views on this matter. This may very well be the case, but it could also be that the concepts, besides dealing with simple little facts, like grass is green or sky is blue, are also an attempt to deal with more abstract ideas, e.g. power, the idea of rule, wet or o.k. and so on. In other words, there are certain ideas which can only be best got across either through words or pictures. From this it could be deduced that words and pictures appear together when there is a need for them, whether words are put down first and a diagram included or words are included with a diagram does not really matter. What does matter is the fact that makers of Graffiti adopt different modes, lettering or figuration, because of the inadequacy of one or the other to deal with the ideas or concepts at hand. When lettering and figuration appear together, they have a polar effect, because they are two distinct modes, which engage separate acres or the mind, making for a richer visual experience, in a somewhat frank and unsophisticated way.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 3

The classification of Graffiti in Dublin into descriptive categories in a means whereby the different kinds of Graffiti can be exposed and examined more closely. Classification is achieved by selecting and grouping them into constituencies that have a particular topic as a common denominator. In this chapter, four topics, that preoccupy Graffiti makers in Dublin, are looked at. Doing this should give a better understanding of this Low Art form in general since it is a visual phenomenon that has universal qualities as regards topics, motivations and ways in which it is done. It will also allow for a greater access to what lies behind the signs and symbols and strange words that can be found on walls etc. in Dublin.

COPROGRAPHY GRAFFITI

Drawing and writing offensive material of a sexual nature in public places is called coprography. Representational drawings of intercourse and the sex organs, sometimes combined with bawdy words or phrases being the most familiar found in Dublin. It's a Graffiti which is made for personal reasons rather than being made for, and to be seen by other people, it's a way of giving visual external concreteness to secret thoughts and intentions concerning sexuality. Eric J. Trimmer, in his book "Words and Graffiti, London", (Pam Books, 1979, Page 126) states "Graffiti that is of a sexual nature is often another form of releasing inhibitions, it verges also on sexual provocation since secretly most Graffiti artists are hoping to draw attention to themselves and their sexual needs without the risk of losing their anonymity". The fact that makers of this kind of Graffiti don't lose their anonymity, helps to explain the frankness and explicitness in approach, since there will be little or no personal censorship regarding their secret ideas about sex. This particular Graffiti could be seen as an honest response to human sexual needs and notions through the interposition of this Low Art Form.

Indian and Japanese paintings of love postures, showing in a matter of fact way the pleasure's of sex between people, compares to some extent with sexual pictographs for their explicitness, but no comparison could be made in relation to the styles, the Indian and the Japanese being more about beauty, eroticism, and poetry, where as the Graffiti is more in tune with expressionism in a germanic way.

Up until recent times Western High and Fine art had to contend with allegory when dealing with this kind of topic, mainly because of church and peoples petty mindedness morality. Graffiti past and present, appears as a hole in a morality minded culture, breaking its taboos about sex and its pleasures with

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with its crude figuration and words.

For the most part sexual Graffiti is made up of linear drawings showing various parts of the human sexual apparatus. Both male and female. The systems of figuration used stem from personal invention, supplemented by others borrowed from hard core porn magazines. Female vagina's and breasts with large nipples are frequently to be seen, along with love posture's which occasionally have fellatio as a theme. Most of the sexual Graffiti that's found show's the reproductive organs exaggerated in size, and the remaining parts of the figure having a secondary role. This also applies to the treatment of the figures. The sex organs have more details while other areas are just minimal linear lines.

Words are used also, that have erotic double meanings, e.g. suck, smooth, wet, big, fuck, cunt and spunk, etc., which are fairly self explanatory but give this Graffiti a lot of impetus from their use. On the milder side of sexual Graffiti there is the romantic attitude, that is Graffiti which springs from love affairs e.g. Joe loves Anne, Clarie and Michael True Love, or hearts containing initials. Romantic Graffiti is more a female activity than say a male one, explicit sexual Graffiti is predominantly male.

TAGGING GRAFFITI

The writing of one's signature is called tagging, it is probably one of the most elementary forms of Graffiti that is to be found. It is also the commonest form of Graffiti found in Dublin. Unlike other kinds of Graffiti which are anonymous, this is the opposite because the main element involved is the maker's name or nickname in some cases. The function of tagging is the promotion of the writer himself, a form of self advertisement, a way of saying I am.

Information is also to be found in tagging Graffiti, usually it's of a type that's usefull in the context of underground street life in a survival way. But because of the use of sobriquet and slang what kind of information is being communicated could only be fully understood if we probed deeply into the secrets of the groups that choose to express themselves in this particular way. This way of communicating information in tagging is compared with the "Griot Traditions of Afrian Story-telling", by R. Goldstein in his paper "Praise of Graffiti" (page 55, 1980, Voice December). Another aspect of tagging Graffiti is one of territory, which is an area of space whether it be land, sea, or air, which an animal defends as an exclusive preserve. Man being one of the most territory minded animals there is, often brings to a conclusion by the manifestation of wars on a large scale, this attitude towards infringement of his territory by outsiders. On a small scale when the issues are localised, more subtle ways are used which don't entail loss of life when infringement occurs, whether it be an infringement on a persons social or physical territory. ("It is not necessary for a territory to be actually fought over, provided the different members of the species can communicate. The way in which communication is affected varies widely from species to species, being visual in some, auditory in others,(Sttar Human Aggression, page 52). Since writing is one of mans ways of communicating and the fact that the majority of tagging is done in the area where that person lives, and because of the sobriquet and slang used the contents would be vauleless outside

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his or her home area. It's plausible to suggest that to some extent the writing of ones signature or tagging has some connection with the territory idea. In America it is definitely the case with some street writers. To take it as a threat when his tag is crossed out and a new tag is substituted in its place. In Gusmoro Cesareths book on Chicano Graffiti he mentions cases of when tags are cancelled out by another person or group it will be always interpreted as an act of infringement and defines by the people who have had their tags crossed out, and in most cases it leads to territorial gang warfare.

In Dublin on the whole, this kind of Graffiti remains simple but sometimes colourful compared to its American counterpart which has been developed into an Art in it-self, almost because the better one's tag is done visually and which commands a good location where it will be seen, the higher your status will be among street writers and artists. Anyone who just uses graffiti to vandilise or bomb it out is called a toy which is the lowest kind of street writer, where as the best Graffiti makers are called master.

SUBCULTURE GRAFFITI

In recent years urban areas in most western countries have witnessed a rash of subculture Graffiti and Dublin is no exception. Subculture basically is resistance by youth to the establishment in a broad sense. It is a resistance which is figuratively expressed in the form of subculture style, clothes, music, dance and behaviour are the main forms that are used to challenge the accepted norms of a society. All the different subcultures, also, react against one another in order to undermine their style. Subcultures must be distinguished from small gangs and delinquents, (Dick Hebdige, Subcultures, Methuem + Co. Ltd., London 1979, page 1980. "Delinquents and gangs have a specific local recruitment, a local set of loyalties and a strong commitment to machismo subterranean values and illegal activities, whereas subcultures are much broader in interest, less preoccupied by class or illegal activities").

The main subcultures in the British Isles are Hippies, Mods, Skin Heads, SKA, Rude Boys, and Punk Rockers. All these different subculture groups are involved in using Graffiti mainly for the purpose of showing allegiance to their particular group.

Mods.

This subculture group originated in the early sixties. It came about due to a reaction with the Motor Bike Rockers, who dressed in leather, were unkempt and had large motor bikes. The mods adopted a style that was West Indian working class in nature. (Dick Hebdige, Subcultures, Methuem + Co. Ltd., London 1979, page 52. "Obsessed with small details of dress, being very neat and tidy. Their style of dress enables them to negotiate smoothly between school, work and leisure, a style which concealed as much as it stated"). Their mode of transport was Italian Scooters which the motor bike rockers called hair dryers in order to undermine them. Their Graffiti for the most part contains symbols such as the letter A with an arrow passing through it which means anarchy. The target is yet another

symbol used by Mods which was adopted by Pop artists as a motif in their paintings in the sixties. A more recent symbol which Mods have used is the key-hole shape. It is important to note that when a symbol belonging to any sub-culture group is used in Graffiti it never appears for it's own sake, it will always be used in conjunction with Graffiti that is tagging in nature. From this it can be seen that the symbols have the function of a logo when Graffiti is written which would not contain sufficient data within itself to show which sub-culture group wrote it. This factor applies to all subculture groups' Graffiti.

Heads or Hippies

The origination of this subculture was the beatniks and hipsters of the late fifties, organised around a shaped identity. They were of a literate verbal culture with an interest in avant garde music, painting and poetry and "Ban the bomb" marches. It was nicknamed the bomb culture because of this. This subculture re-emerged in the sixties with the hippies who were more extreme than the beatniks in their quest for a peaceful world. More bohemian in attitude towards every-day living, which was helped along by an early beatnik drug hashish, and supplemented with a much newer drug L.S.D. When America stepped up it's commitment to the war in Vietman they became more conscious of politics and a side shot of the hippies was a form called Yippies, Youth International Party, who were then forced to go underground because of drugs, mystic beliefs and reactions from people to their intending intentions to become a hostile political subversive group. They were also often integrated into a rural idyllic setting. However, this subculture has still got some influence upon youth today, as if it is still ticking over, waiting to re-emerge. Hippy Graffiti consists mainly of various elements. The names of musical groups connected with the movement such as Pink Floyd, The Beatles, Bob Dylan etc., peace signs, drawings of marijuana leaves and more recently the restafarian colours; red, green, and yellow can be seen in Dublin.

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Skin Heads, SKA, Rude Boys.

Skin heads were established due to a reaction against the mods who gradually became more interested in fashion and acid rock music rather than black orientated music. At first the group was called hard-mods but by the late sixties they constituted a movement in itself, wearing heavy working boots, jeans, short cropped hair. However, within the space of a few short years they turned against the black community and were integrated into the right-wing street politics of the National Front, and the Neo-Nazi party. Their Graffiti is straightforward. Skin heads or the abbreviation S.H., being found with tagging. Deviations of this subculture are SKA and rude boys who owe as much to the West Indians as did the skin heads for their subcultural styles. However, the SKA are a racially integrated subcultural, having both black and white in among its groups. Rude boys are a rehash of the gangs of mainly delinquent type West Indians in the late fifties, who were collectively called rude boys because of their passion for causing trouble. Their Graffiti is much the same as skin head Graffiti, SKA or rude boys being found in conjunction with tagging graffiti or Graffiti of a more offensive nature.

Punks

Combining elements from other post-war subculture groups and ideas as far back as the Dada art movement, it is a subculture in an age of crises, real or imagined. Their aesthetics are nihilist but they seem to have the most going for them as regards subcultures of the present time. The use of subversive practices through style by the punks ranges from refusal to be positioned by opinions or pretensions intellectualizations, use of throw-aways for clothes, plastic bags, safety pins, rope-string, chains, the breaking of taboos concerning sexual paraphernalia such as bondage clothes, rubber and leather, high heels, fish-net stockings, transvestite cross - dressing male and female, is often used in this style. Of all the subculture groups, punk and the off-shoots new-wave use

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Graffiti the most. Their Graffiti consists of many symbols such as anarchy signs, world war II German military insignia e.g: S.S., and the swastika cross. They show a fondness for coprography Graffiti which is placed in certain contexts such as churches, grave yards, etc. Graffiti is also used to advertise forth-coming attractions which would be of interest to them, e.g. musical groups etc., giving the time and venue where these activities will be taking place. Tagging Graffiti is also done by Punks.

POLITICAL GRAFFITI

Graffiti of the type that is political can be readily seen in Dublin. Political slogans can be seen in most parts of the city, but are more prevailing in working class areas, because working class areas have always given more support to organisations of this kind who are offering verbal alternatives, at least, as opposed to the established government. The political Graffiti found in Dublin, on the whole, is done by the Provisional I.R.A. or supporters such as the Provisional Sinn Fein which is the political voice of this Para-Military organisation. It is typical of all Governments whether left or right-wing to ban any group or organisation which runs counter to its status quo, and to ban them from using the means of communication with the public, such as the media. Naturally when circumstances like this arise, some form of viable outlet for the communication of an opposing group's propaganda must be found. Writing and drawing slogans on the wall is one of the first used, and it has been the case throughout the ages in other countries, to adopt this kind of campaign by political groups who are challenging an established power. It is a Low Art form which sets out to persuade and convince people of new insights held by a particular group of political activists. Writing instead of drawing is used since words are best for expressing thoughts and ideas more directly than say pictographs, but some pictographs can be found in conjunction with words, e.g.: 1. flags; 2. guns; 3. shamrocks, signs and symbols of 1. a country, 2. power, and 3. traditions, respectively.

The writing, regardless of the context is the biggest Graffiti in scale that can be found in Dublin, and is done predominantly in white block type face which is one of the most legible types there is. It has the hallmarks of a Graffiti that is well organised in it's making compared to other non-political Graffiti, probably two or three people taking part in making a piece, usually adults rather than teenagers, which is also another feature making it distinct from other

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Graffiti. The above statement came about from looking at newspaper reports of court cases on people who were caught by the police making Political Graffiti in the Dublin area.

The contents of Political Graffiti in Dublin ranges from smear campaigns about the British and the Irish Governments, British soldiers and the Irish Special Branch, i.e: secret police, highlighting various atrocities committed by both government agencies such as the Bloody Sunday in Derry, or the beatings and fitting up, i.e: framing of I.R.A. suspects in the south by the Special Branch, and also dealing with certain issues that arise out of a paramilitary campaign, whether the people put in jail for these military activities should be given political status. The campaign for political status by I.R.A. prisoners in the North has spawned a rash of Graffiti in Dublin in support of the people in the prison called H-Blocks at Long Kesh. The actual idea of using a H in the Graffiti connected with this campaign, comes about because of the shape of the prison buildings seen from the air. They form what appears to be a row of H's. It also has the added factor of being a symbol which, when marked out on a wall, will trigger off in a person a whole range of insights that a person might have about the H?Block prison whether the insights would have been taken from media sources, e.g: news-paper, T.V. reports or personal notions of it. The political Graffiti in Dublin serves as a reminder, to jarr and keep alive in people's minds the issues that are taking place today and even a generation ago, seen by people whether they like it or not. It can also be said to some extent that where there is a rash of Political Graffiti in a community it indicates a strong affiliation to the group in question and areas where it abound being the territory and strongholds of Para Military or political groups, for it is a Graffiti that highlights unrest or communicates alternative politics. In the last year Graffiti which is pro-National Front has made appearances in Dublin, but there is little or no evidence to support the theory that an organised group of this nature exists in Dublin. At the moment this kind of Graffiti could only be put down as the work of a few isolated individuals.

Introduction to Chapter 4

Contemporary Art and Graffiti

This chapter looks at Graffiti and its seepage into contemporary art. Two main approaches have come to the surface regarding Graffiti and some contemporary art trends at the present time. One is where Graffiti appears as an element in an artist's work, two where Graffiti proper is put forward as a definite new art form in its own right.

These two approaches are examined, along with the artists involved in this chapter.

Contemporary Art and Graffiti

Dubuffet was one of the first artists who, because of his self-confessed aim to replace Western art with more subversive art form, considered and incorporated Graffiti into his own painting. However, his interest was not confined exclusively to Graffiti or, as he called it - lavatory art. Other influences which Dubuffet fostered were Child Art, art of the mental institutions and primitive art which he collectively called Art Brut. From looking at Dubuffet's it can be seen that he has adopted many of the characteristics that Graffiti displays. The systems of figuration mimic very similar systems to be found in Graffiti. There is also the use of words, which was not new to painting in general, but still prove to be innovative because of the deliberately crude manner in which he paints them. The composition in Dubuffet's work is yet another area where Graffiti has probably influenced him, it is a composition which, for the most part is informal, made up of rubber-like areas, containing visual idiosyncrasies which can also be seen in Graffiti. Examples of Dubuffet's work which contain influences of Graffiti are his series of water colours entitled Corps De Dame - Body of a Woman 1950. This series shows clearly the use of ideas borrowed from Graffiti, these are the utilization of forms or shapes found in Coprography Graffiti, which he uses to determine the overall composition. The actual way he treats the figures giving them a grotesque appearance by concentrating on particular aspects such as the face, breasts, and pubic region, while having vacant generalized areas. In a later painting - Business Prospers 1961 the qualities are very similar to the ones found in his Corps De Dame series, except that it has become more complicated in its internal structure,

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and it also shows his use of words in painting done in a Graffiti fashion.

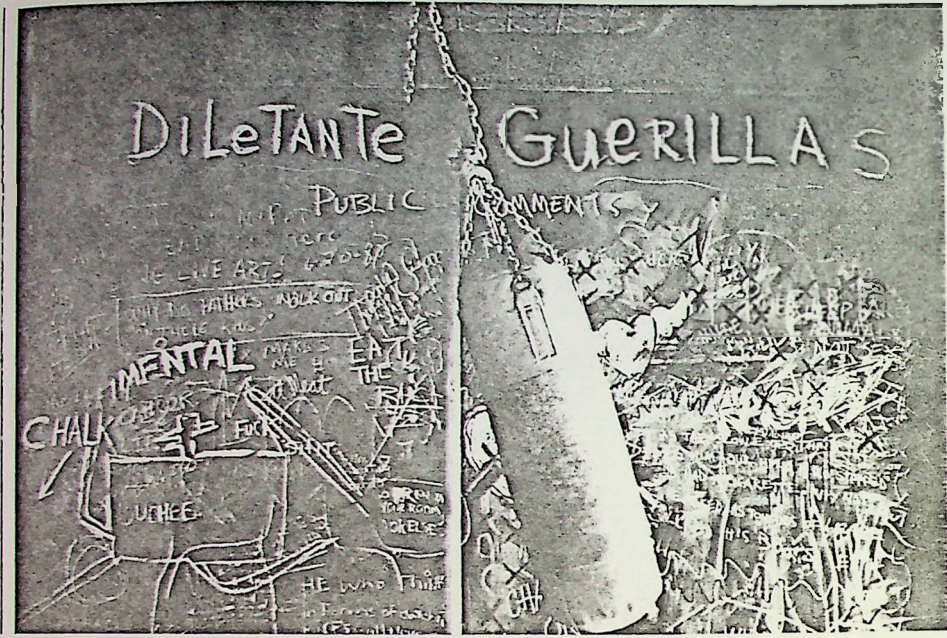
See illustrations.

American New Wave Art

American New Wave Art was established as a definitive new form of visual expression in 1980 with an exhibition called The Time Square Show, which was held in June of that year. Reviews of the exhibition appeared in Art in America and Art America in September 1980. (Jeffery Deitch, page 63, Art in America: "The show was engendered to be a challenge to dealers and curators of advanced Art, who continue to feel that the discreet display of a few pieces of art in an elegant gallery is enough", end of quote). The aesthetics of the exhibition was governed by New Wave attitudes and ideas regarding the making of art. New wave aesthetics are basically an art form which draws from every form of pictorial information that has entered the cities in the past twenty years, billboards, underground comics, customs car designs, trashy dust covers on cheap paperback books, cinema, popart, graffiti. This area of New wave art is called Image theft. Other factors in this New art form are human aggression and cross cultural referencing, the idea of defacement is also embodied in the majority of works. (Richard Goldstein Voice, December 1980, In Praise of Graffiti, page 58 "The use of graffiti is one of the most authentic elements in the New Wave aesthetics" end of quote). A number of the New wave artists are utilising Graffiti by incorporating it in their works. Of the various artists to use Graffiti as an element in their work

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Tom Otterness, *Punching Bag*, 1980. Photograph Lisa Kahane



is a group called Samo which was established in 1978 by Keith Haring, Michel Bosquait and John Fekner. With strategy borrowed from Conceptual Art they began making phantom installations consisting almost entirely of pure Graffiti which they embellished onto walls. Their installation in the Time Square Show was sprayed with Graffiti by unknown street writers. Tom Otherness, one of the organisers of the Time Square exhibition hung a punch bag in a vacant room, he then encouraged the viewing public to make Graffiti on the walls of the room in a very free fashion about whatever topic suited them. There are other American artists involved with Graffiti but not connected with the Time Square Show. (Art Action and Participation, page 267: "Gordon Clark who has photographed Graffiti in the subways, he then works on them by cutting and joining the photographic records and produces what he calls alternatives, the are in effect dynamic strips which seek not only to depict Graffiti but to reproduce their kinetic presence in the urban landscape" end of quote). Yet another group in New York, who are true street writers, have changed from walls as a support to large canvas, called the Fabulous Five. This group of street writers have shown work in the Paulo Seno Gallery, New York.

Gilbert and George are British artists who share the distinction of being two artists who work closely together to produce their art, each being dependant on the other for a complete unit which goes to make up a piece by them. This idea and way of making Art gained currency when happenings and performances came into vogue in the early sixties. Their work has always been varied, from using themselves as living sculpture in performances, producing large land-

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scapes in the early seventies, right up to their most recent work which uses images of Graffiti. Gilbert and Georges use of Graffiti is very different in approach compared with others. Their work comprises of large photographs arranged in a very formal fashion, using squares to build up the complete work. The images also are formally laid out in respect to each other as regards the contents of each photograph, which helps to determine the overall pictorial composition visually. The contents of the photographs used in the completed work seems to be determined by three main interests:

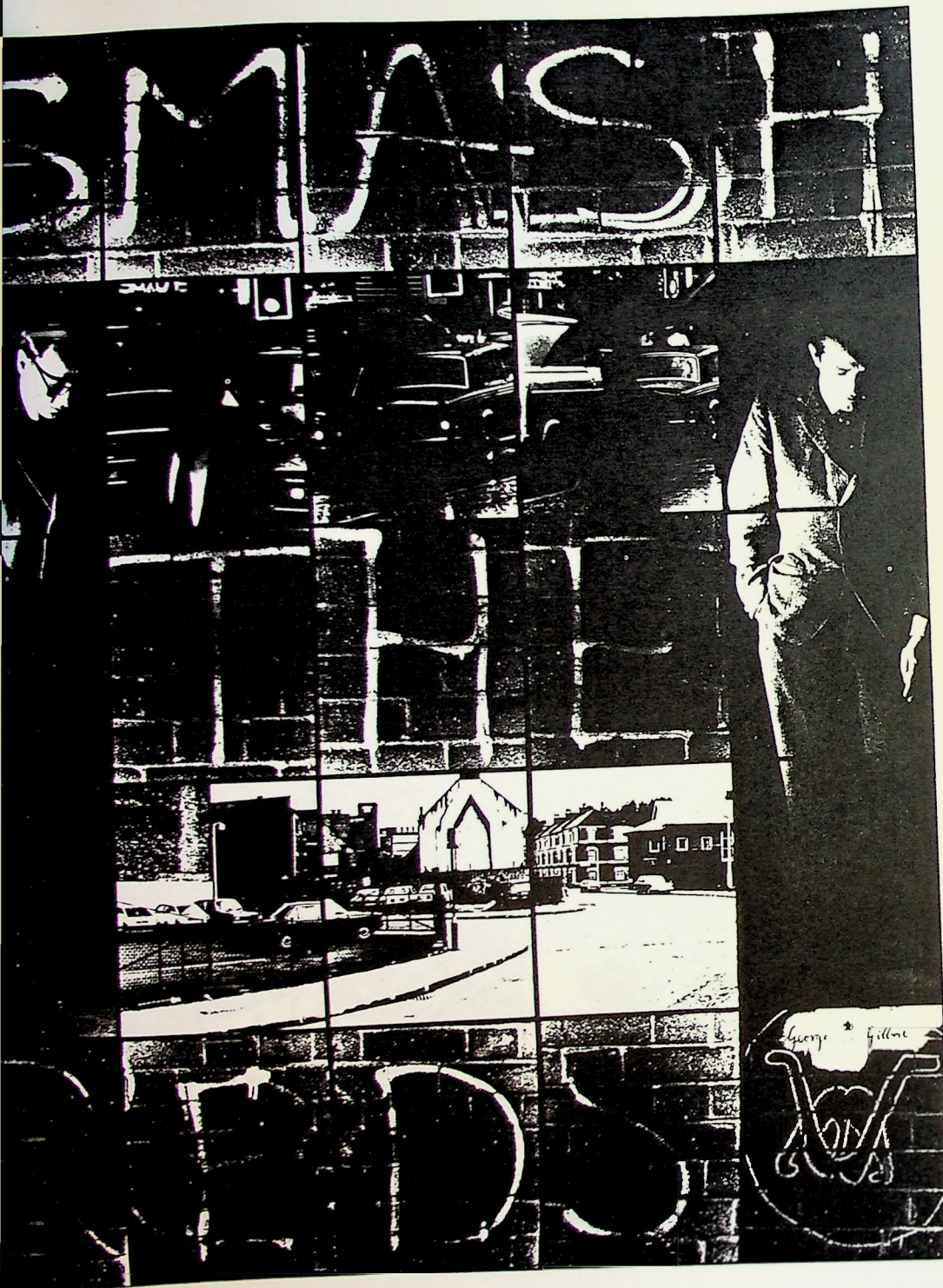
1. Graffiti
2. Gilbert and George
3. Controlling forces in a society e.g. houses of parliament, police, soldiers, urban bric a brac.

The Graffiti that is used in the photographs is coprography in nature, both words e.g. suck, cunt, fuck and pictographs of the male sexual organs. To lesser extent Political Graffiti is used as well like - smash the reds and words favoured by Black political ethnic groups e.g. angry, which is familiar in black areas of London. They are works which have caught the flavour of life in a large Urban City. These photographs of Graffiti and the Urban scenes, combined with passive photographs of Gilbert and George communicate unrest and to a degree the devolution of society.

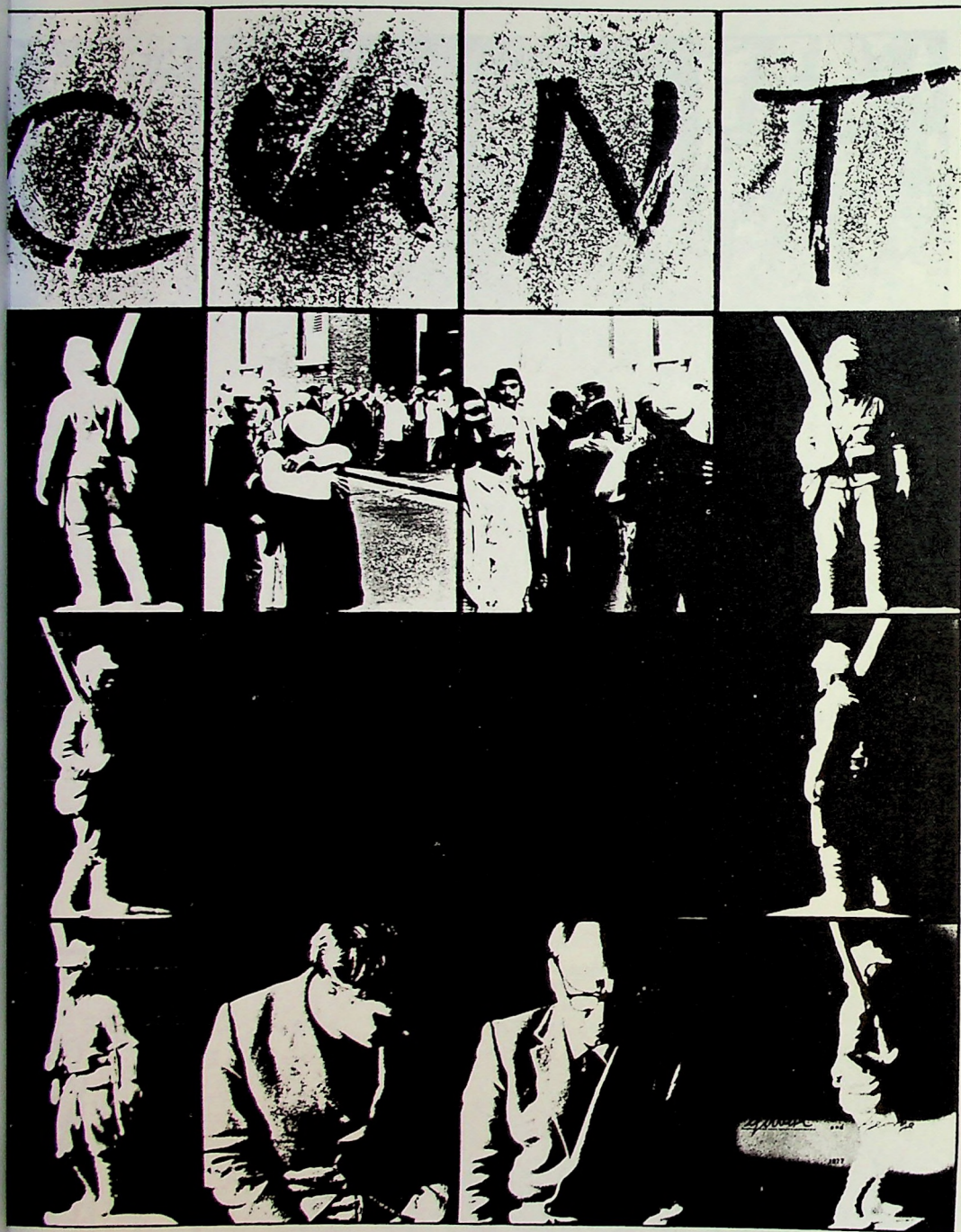
See illustrations.



, 1977. 240 cm x 200 cm.



CRASH, 1977. 300 cm x 250 cm.



.977. 240 cm x 200 cm.



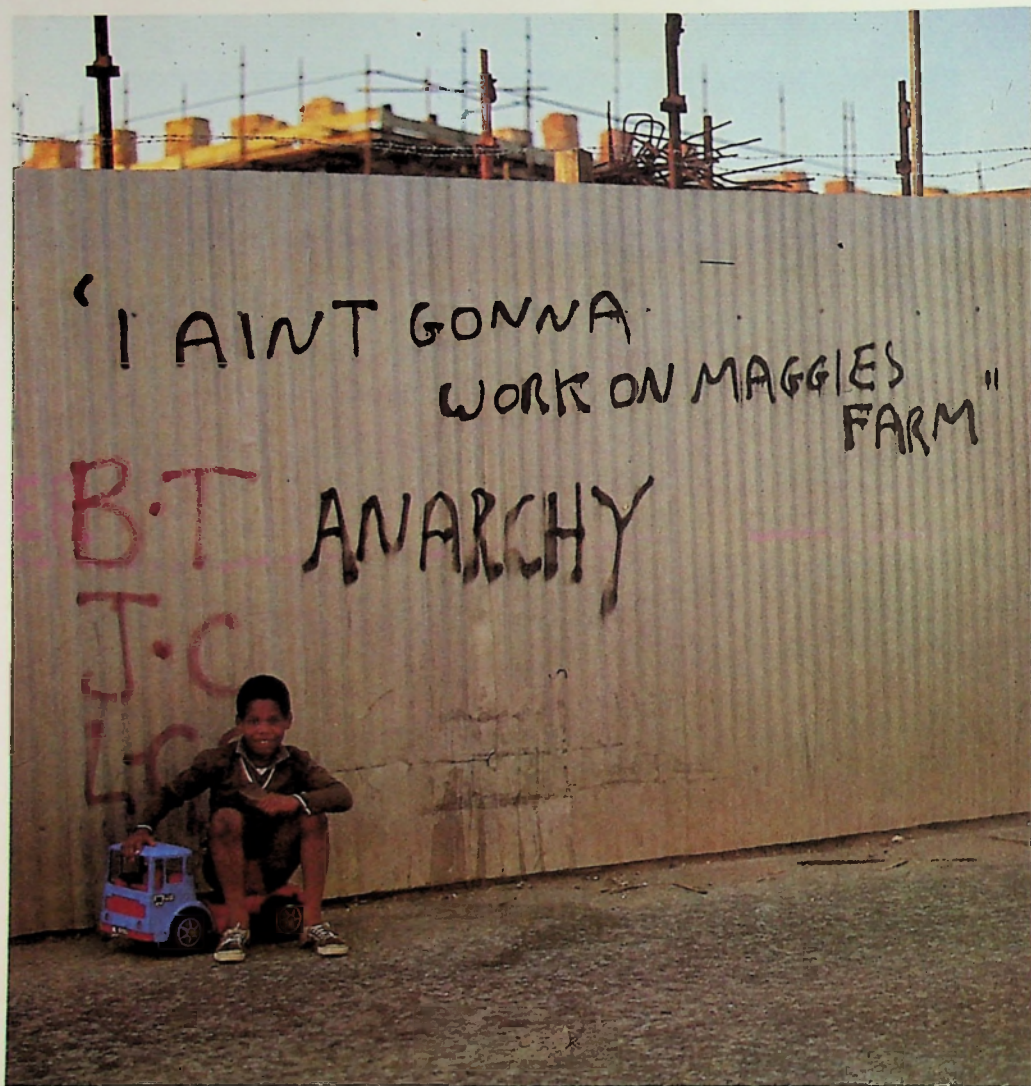
THE PENIS, 1978. 240 cm x 200 cm.



ANGRY, 1977. 300 cm x 250 cm.

Visual Examples of Graffiti from Different Countries.

The following illustrations from different countries show the range and sometimes spectacular styles that are adopted by the graffiti makers in different parts of the world. The English, Northern Ireland and German Graffiti are examples of European works. American works make up the rest of the illustrations, they are of two distinct styles. The colour reproductions of New York Graffiti show how various elements are borrowed from advertisements, comics, and Gallery Art, these illustrations show clearly the sophistication Graffiti has reached in the 80's. The remaining reproductions show Chicano Graffiti, who are credited with being the most persistent and consistent street writers in America. The Chicano style of writing is very different from other forms of Graffiti, because of their emphasis on Grace and Poetry in the line which is always combined with economical attitudes to the amount of line used.

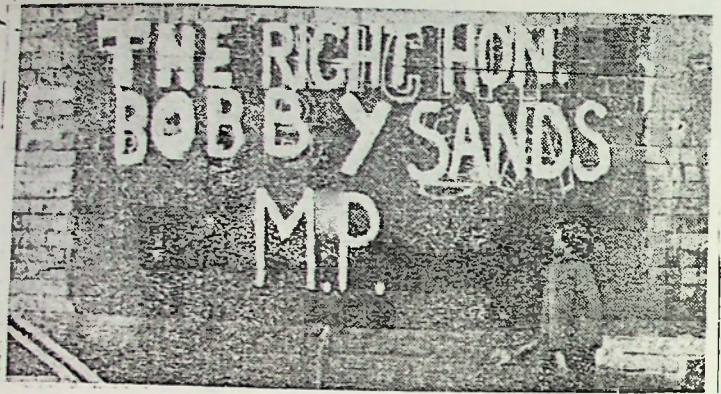


' I AINT GONNA
WORK ON MAGGIES
FARM' "

B.T. ANARCHY

J.C.
L.C.

Bohemians
are people
who
wash
their dishes
before
meals



Notausgang

Handwritten scribbles and symbols in the top right corner.

FIGHTING FOR PEACE IS LIKE
FUCKING FOR CHASITTY

GE N W & HERE
NIK+NOVIKA
GABRI A RAMONA
KOMMI
CHARLEVS
GIRLS
SIND Tot
DA +
Hoch Loco.
GARY GALT
ZEMSOR
EARLSS

LADIES
GAVIN Sid
Jacollete Anant
vir... and...
Heiraten
Got a new
Edling
GARY
GALGEN
but only Fridays

Handwritten notes on the right side of the door, including "I.C.", "1W03 876 to", "Tod", and "Nicht".



SLINGA (999)
FICK dich
PUN'S KNIE
JUCH
WAMA
FUCK YOU
LESLEY
LOVE
GENN

ROLL MAN
KOMMT
bestimmt
Mudlarks
ROOX
Reg only
FUCK
Married
Women!
OK!

ANK
Stiff
DEVO
Kack job
Hippie
Never mind the Prolox
I LOVE
LESLEY JAM
He can't
spell
prolox

ROT
MARCUS
IS A TART!
PHONE 66322
I SHAVE
WITH
FUCK ALL
US. DEERS
I LOVE
JAM + SANDIE

Hebl
smicktydikgob
DON
signed → JAMA
BERNADETTE
LEX

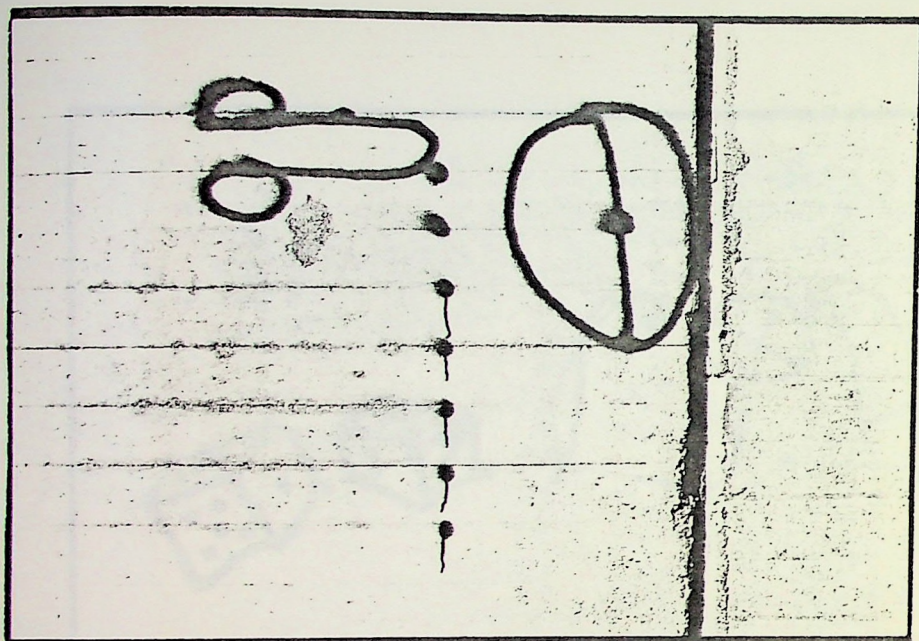
I DON'T LIKE
FUCK THE
INTERNATIONAL
live the
larks

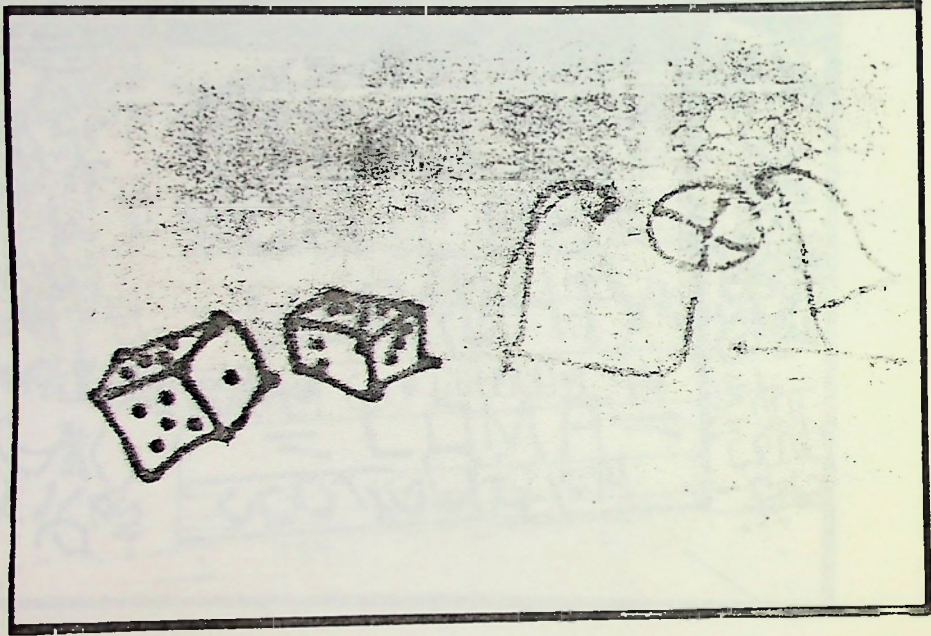
LESLIE
BIG TOM
(DIRKKE)

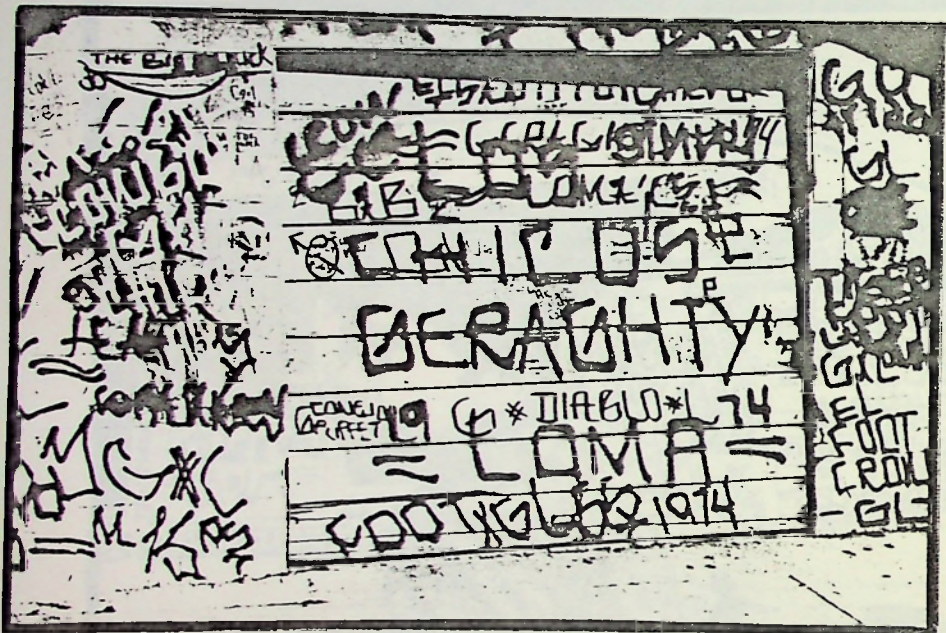


BLADE: Tag, 1980









National College of Art
P. D. Library



Handwritten text in a stylized script, possibly a name or signature, enclosed in a rectangular border.

Conclusion

The basic premises for this paper, is to show what appears to be a very simple ephemeral event called Graffiti, is intelligible, structured and has the capabilities in its works for the embodiment of ideas and aspirations of Human Beings at particular moments and at certain levels in man's development.

Chapter 1 looked at Graffiti and its relation to a culture in general, one of the factors that came to light was what fuels this kind of Art form. It can be challenge and defiance at one pole to responses of a more mundane nature in a society, which ever it is, it's displayed with ease.

Graffiti as an art form, chapter 2, deals with the notion of Graffiti actually being an Art form, firstly by comparing Fine Art and some of its facets with Graffiti, in order to highlight similarities and differences. Finally it gets slotted into the Low Art of conviction and persuasion which is the oldest function Graffiti has.

I have examined Dublin Graffiti in chapter 3, of the body of material observed at first hand, four prevalent kinds of topics emerged, which are outlined in that chapter. Dublin Graffiti was studied because it gave me the opportunity to do original research and to document my findings with photographs.

Contemporary artists have begun to use Graffiti as a source or part of their work in recent years. Chapter 4 looks at the artists individually and the way in which Graffiti plays a part in their work, the extent and ways it is used varies from one artist to the other.

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14. Hebdige, Dick. Subculture. London: Methuen and Co. 1979.

LEGLISE 17



KAYA

PUNKS
MONTAGNES

OUTCASTS



RANKC

LUCAN RUDE BOY

DC NIEN

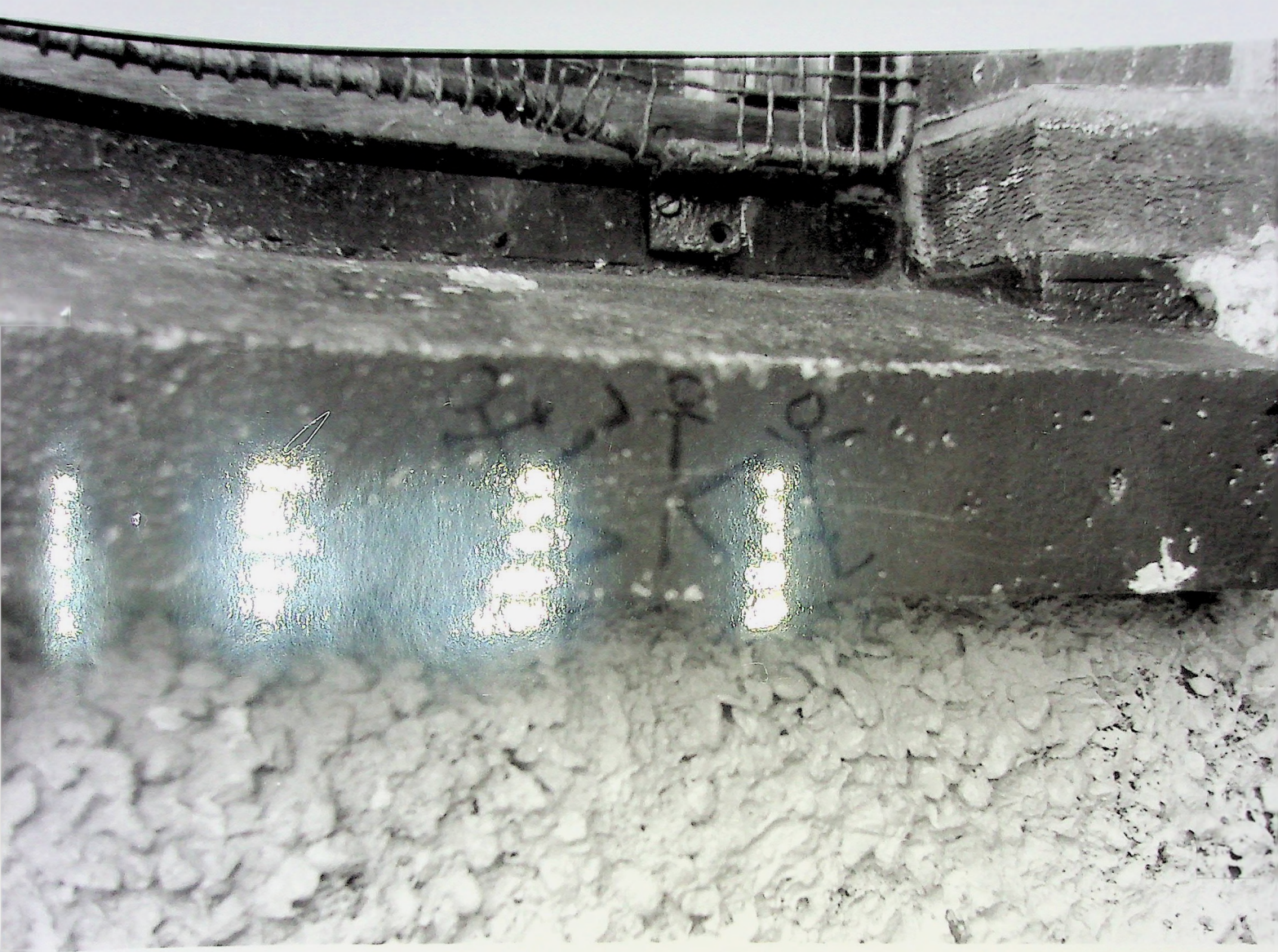
BAGGOT INN

SUNDAY 22ND

LEODU JUNE

TUES





A 30YS

SKINNER

THE GANGES
R S

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PAUL
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SCULLY
OF

M O S
THE JAD

SECRET
AFFAIR

THE
W

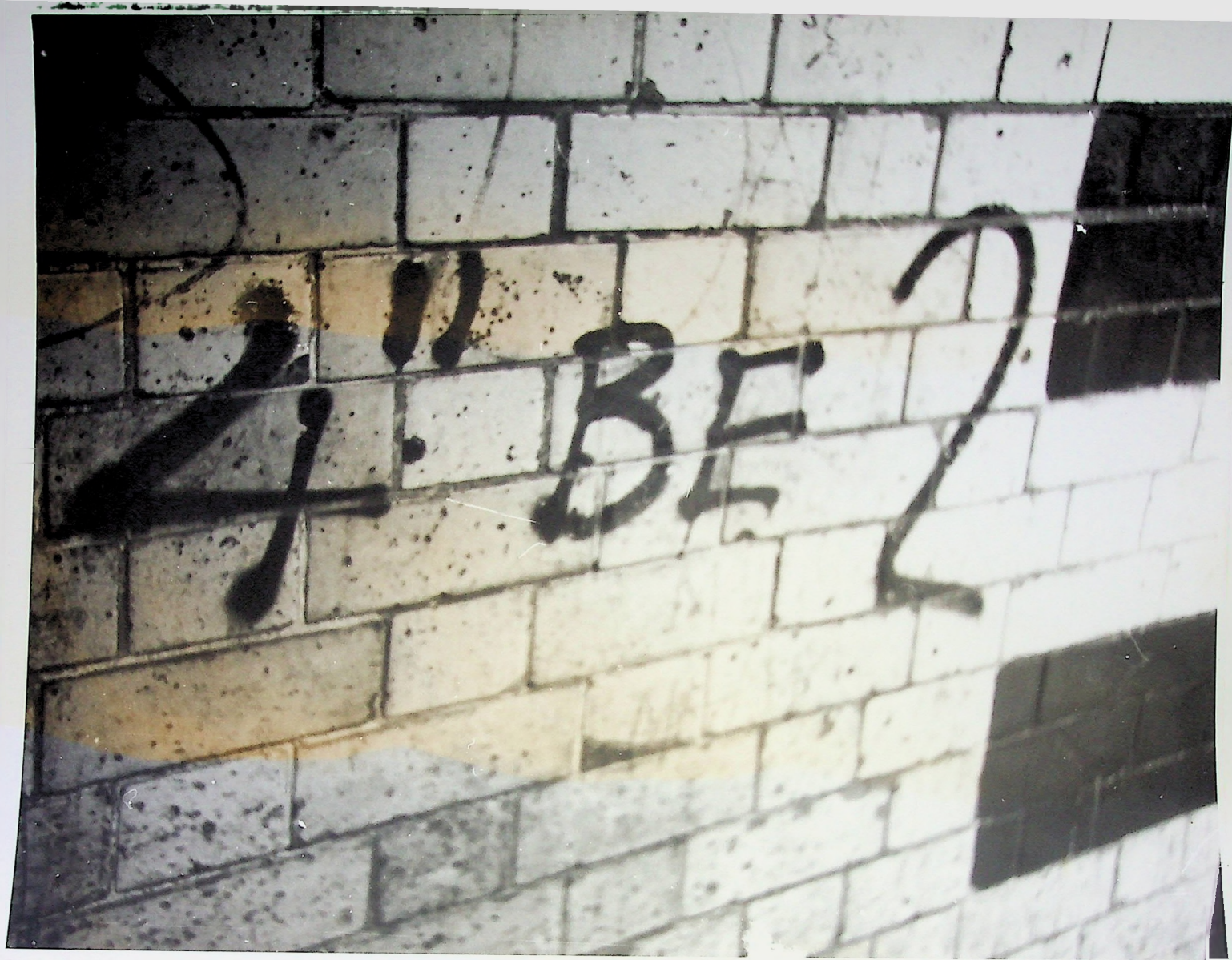
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RETTOC

B S H



FROM
EENNA





13



M O O D S



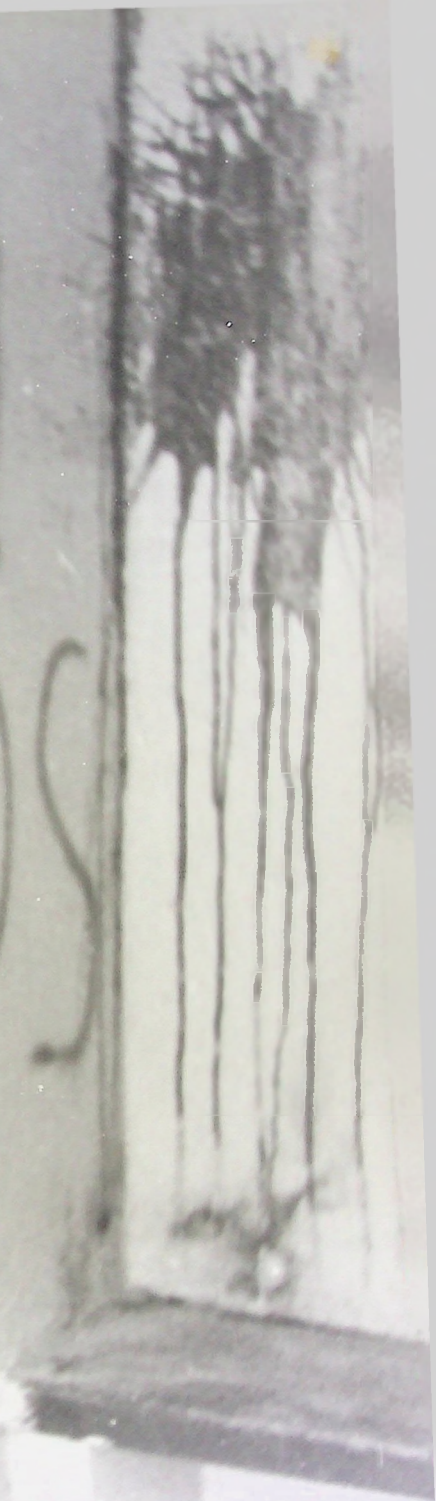
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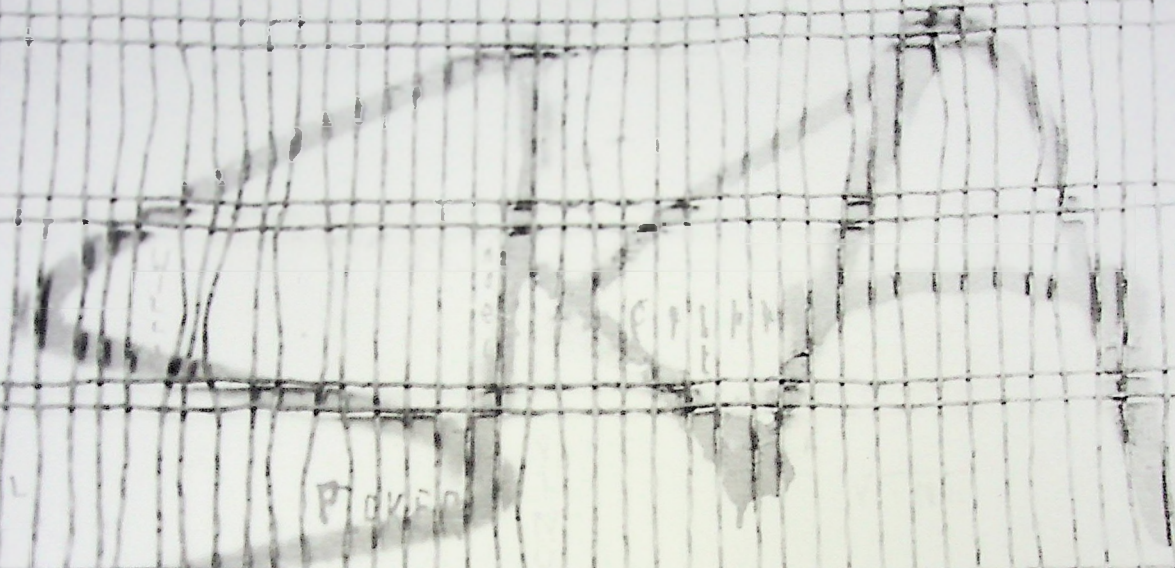
CARV

RUSH

HEADS

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11/11/11



CLACKER

ANDY

CALO

LAFO

ANTO

DEREK

TOMO

TOMO

ROCKER

KEN

SHOWBODDY

LAR

BLACKKEY

BOM

RAY

JAMES

JACKIE

DODGER

MARLEY

GERRY

UPPER

ZIPPY
LIT



Tommy's

PAULO CHARLIE

Sex Tommys
JR

David Mondello
Reid

Pato (Pato) Mondello

Tommy
Paulo
JR

Bar

Joe
Brendan

+
Con.

loss.
PAPA
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S
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NOT
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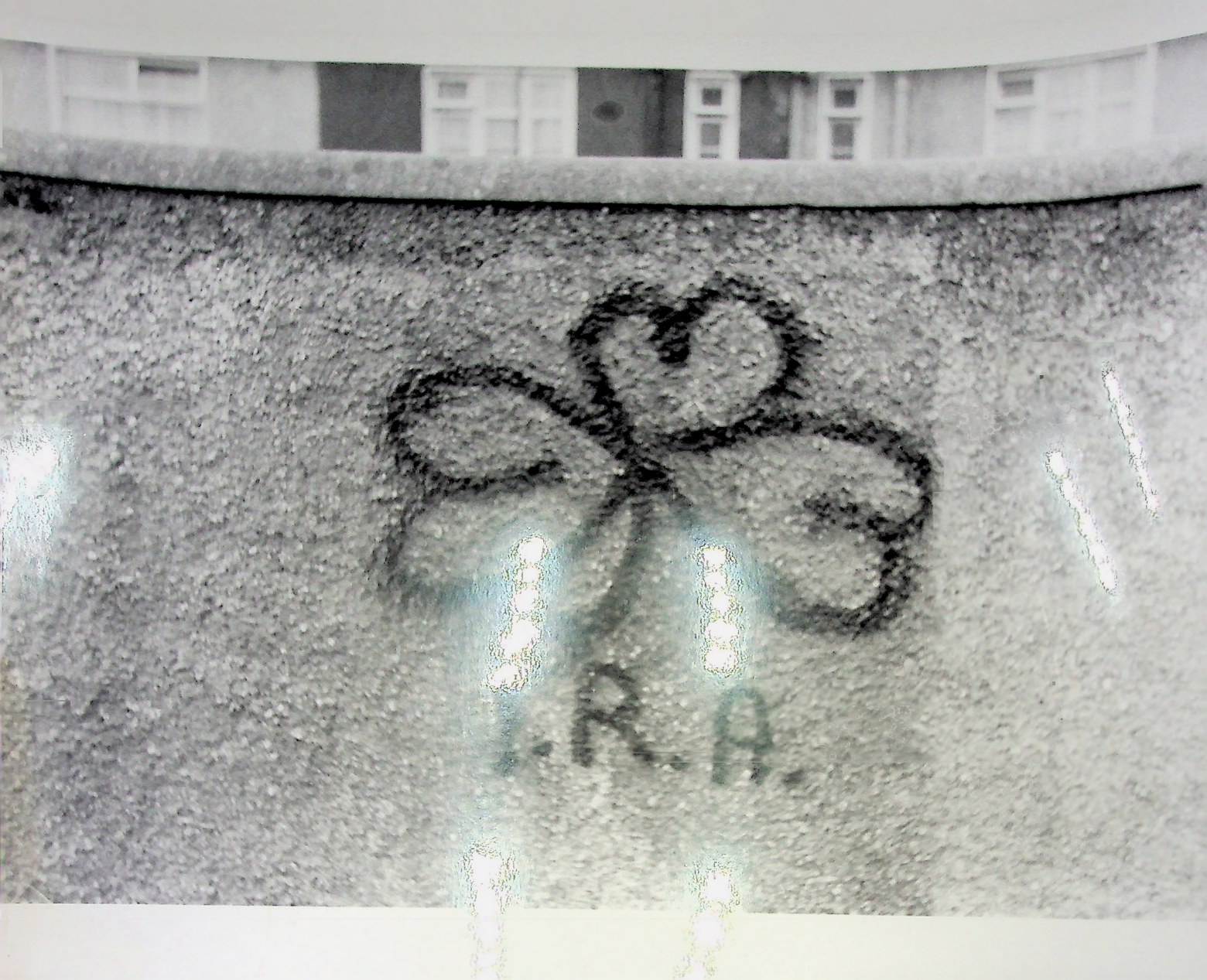


DERRY IS DEAD. AND NOT FOR
COTTON



STOP

IN THE TORTCHER
H. BLOCK
NOW



WE SALUTE THE WOMEN IN ARMAGH GAOL



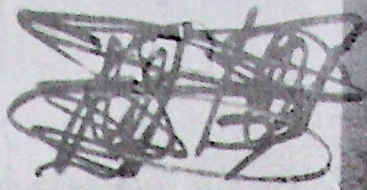


SMASH H-BLOCK AND ARMAGH

SHB. NOW



NATIONAL
FRONT





SEX



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GRAINES

Dates

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and

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ZEXÉVO
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200
1800



DICK
BURKE

O. K.
BALBRISGAN
SEITE TET
MOVEMENT

DAN IDAN
DAN

