

“Beauty along the streets in Bangkok”

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The street is a unique and powerful platform which allows artists to explore art as expressive objects in public. Most people have the wrong attitude that fine art is only a matter of refined paintings kept in galleries to be viewed by elitists and foreign tourists. Such an attitude prevents people from enjoying the visual aesthetics which can be seen along the street. So called “street art”, which communicates with the public and everyday ways of living, is both an expression of culture and a counterculture in itself that we need to closely pay attention to.

There are various types of art works that anyone may see while walking along the streets in Bangkok. From observation, there are nine types of art works to be found: Architecture, Environmental Art, Sculpture, Decorative art, Advertising, Window Display, Interior Decoration, Graffiti and Painting. The work of collaboration artists and a combination of all artworks can be viewed in a certain way as representative of Thai culture. Each is created for a specific site for the public to experience, in a cityscape such as Bangkok.

Architecture, large-scale artwork in both traditional and modern style, makes quite a contrast and can be seen everywhere in Bangkok. The traditional buildings were constructed in Rattankosin Island, where the style was popular during the reign of King Rama V and the modern style has emerged in the past decade. One of Bangkok’s most important ancient landmarks, the temple of the Emerald Buddha adjacent to the Grand palace is a well known tourist spot.

Sculpture is another art form; its function is to add beauty to the environment. Some works are modern and others are traditional. They are created in both figurative and abstract forms with differences in contour.

Environment sculpture, one of the most beautiful ways of living, involves the pictorial of Thai tradition. In the simple life of the past Thais used the Kwuen or animal-drawn cart before it was replaced by tractors and people left the family buffalo behind. This “Kwuen” provided the principle means of transporting both people and produce, which can be seen in artists’ portrayals of the period.

Paintings of different types and different purposes can be seen along the streets in Bangkok. For instance, on the construction barriers to cover up the materials, dust and bad pollution. At some points, the barriers can reveal a perspective of the future or the ultimate creative output. This can make public spaces friendlier, more interesting places and bridge the gap between arts and construction site.

Some school's fences are painted with various anti-drugs subjects, or themes concerning religion and saving the environment. The purpose is to promote the anti-drugs campaign. Some paintings depict children playing all kinds of sports. Music is also another theme of the paintings. They depict children practicing different kinds of musical instruments. Other paintings suggest that art would be a suitable activity for school children in their leisure time rather than taking drugs. The last theme of the anti-drugs campaign is to give love. Lack of communication and understanding is a major factor behind students' drug abuse. Parents must realize that their love and care is the most effective tool they have to shield their children from drugs.

Graffiti is another artwork that is usually painted or sprayed on the walls of buildings and fences. Most of the graffiti is painted by teenagers who want to express themselves. Graffiti, strong in both form and idea is used to convey thought provoking messages about today's society. While there is general acceptance by participants about the significance of public art, there is disagreement on some of the issues raised. For instance, "Graffiti makes teenagers aggressive" or "It's so dirty". However, those teenagers need guidance and support in the right direction from the public.

All types of art works, along the street in Bangkok, no matter whether created for aesthetic or commercial purposes, offer optimistic visuals to make places more interesting, reflect the bright side of culture and bring the people together.



Area : The temple of the Emerald Buddha is an excellent example



Traditional Thai Sculpture decorates a plaza in Bangkok.

Area : Bangkok Park (Sanam Luang)



Modern sculpture, designed to enhance the experience of shape and form.

Area : Pathumwan



A mural depicting life in the forest and beauty in nature.

Area : Pathumwan



This Environment Sculpture captures the essence of Rural Thai Culture.

Area : Rama IX Road



A plant sculpture in which shrubbery is formed into elephants, enhancing the harsh city environment.

Area : In front of the National Stadium



Graffiti Art, created mostly by teenagers, showing typography as a subject of beauty.

Area : Pathumwan



A young creative artist joins the Anti Drugs Campaign, using the typographic graffiti art form to show his talent.

Area : Pathumwan



Many very creative designs using typographic motifs can be seen along the streets of Bangkok.

Area : Pathumwan



An Anti Drugs painting depicting how drugs would affect one's life.

Area : Ladpraow (The wall of Houwang School)



This painting shows how drug addicts can be harmful to others.

Area : Ladpraow (The wall of Houwang School)



This painting suggests that music, sports and arts are more enjoyable than drugs.

Area : Ladpraow (The wall of Houwang School)

Painted by : The students from Tremudomsuksanomkaow School



An Anti Drugs theme painting, portraying children that are involved in Art, Music and Sports as not using drugs.

Area : Ladpraow (The wall of Houwang School)



A painting encouraging social involvement in Music, Art and Sports. These activities would keep children away from drugs.

Area : Ladpraow (The wall of Houwang School)



Portraying how important family closeness and creative activities are in preventing children taking drugs.

Area : In front of Houwang School

Painted by : The students from Houwang School



Bangkok has many examples of Decorative Art. This one uses tile patterns to beautify the entrance and sidewalks of a shopping Mall.

Area : In front of MBK (Pathumwan)



This construction barrier is painted in abstract designs, changing the construction site into a creative visual experience

Area : Sukumvit Road



This decorative art form, painted on a bus to create Mobile Art, is often seen on the streets of Bangkok.



This coffee shop in Bangkok provides an ideal setting to combine window display with interior decoration.

Area : MBK



An innovative idea of using a shopping mall stairway to create a unique advertising media.

Area : Siam Center