



Walls (Murals & Pieces)

**XENO COUPLE**

Characters on Lord's wall. San Francisco

Artist: FASM

Ripon, CA USA

# Picture Spray Painted a Thousand Words

by Xandie J.

The Bay Bridge is like a portal to another world. On one side there is the clean, effervescent land and on the other, a busy graffiti-infested city. Coming from a town where we isolated ourselves from the violence, the drive-by shootings, the murders, and the overnight raids of spray cans, only seen by us on the daily news, I would only encounter graffiti as a mural in town. This mural was painted to display the history of what was once rolling hills, populated with Native Americans, now swarmed with thousands of houses. The only connection we would ever have and have been taught to us about graffiti was that it's bad and gang related.

Coming through this portal brought me to a dimension, a dimension full of all types of graffiti, opening my mind to many possibilities. I found in the long run that graffiti was not necessarily gang related, but there are other Graffiti Art that say something, shouting out to the adult world that you need to pay attention to us, that we have something to say. Though Graffiti Art can be disassociated from graffiti-tag and is appreciable, the greatness of the Artwork still doesn't justify the fact that any type of graffiti is vandalism without consent.

My misconception of graffiti as being only one type haunted me to think that all these years I have been judgmental along with the narrow minded people, refusing to look at underlying purposes of Graffiti Art. This portal that brought me to a world of graffiti showed me another type of graffiti, graffiti Art, voicing out the thoughts of all youths. *"A voice describes an identity"* (Bojorquez). Graffiti Art is the voice of many youths- giving them an identity among themselves, among their community, a sense

that they belong, combining all youths together to fight against the cruelty of this world-a voice drowned out by the noise of a traffic jam full of stereotypes, a noise that society is not willing to filter out.

There was this one particular Graffiti Art, from the movie, *"Graffiti Verite: Read the Writing on the Wall,"* in which the cops were portrayed as bad people; maybe some are, but this work showed real images that would never be seen by the public in the news, real live images only seen by those who lived in poor neighborhoods where cops are the real enemies. Graffiti Artists', striving hard to get the public's attention, can only gain it through Graffiti Art.

The realization of all my misconceptions had brought me to this world of Graffiti Art just in time to appreciate the Art on the wall, a world that will take society a lifetime to reach, a world full of voices and truth; truth is what the spray can painted. These Graffiti Arts showed the public the real agenda that was happening underneath their noses, images that the public refuses to open their eyes to see.

Although Graffiti Art is exemplary work, it doesn't exonerate the fact that Graffiti Artists or taggers can spray paint anywhere they wish. I have to excuse myself from here on out because sympathy is my weakest characteristic. My argument would not be invalid due to lack of personal experience and knowledge, but would be valid as a judgment call. I know most Graffiti Art is vandalism because no permission was ever exchanged between the taggers or Graffiti Artists and the wall owners. If no permission was ever reciprocated, from a judgment call, it