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The historical research method requires a time gap from the chosen object of study so that an adequate critical distance can be achieved. The same goes for PALeontology, the branch of natural sciences that studies PALs and their living environment on Earth, i.e. Paris.

The time period examined in this study extends from 2013 to 2017, the golden age of the crew, a time in which a large quantity of images and content began to circulate online alongside a multitude of publications printed on poor paper in limited editions, which led to a significant renewal of the European and international writing scene.

Attention turns to three individuals from the PAL group, Horfee, Saeio and Conie, also observed through the lens of a fourth, Esso, who has always been an internal reporter for the crew's news. The approach proposed here will focus on a peculiar characteristic: the ability of the three to adapt to two different environments, although at times similar and complementary: writing and art.

The styles of writing were consolidated in New York starting from the first piece with the outline of Super-Kool 223, in the 70s, until the beginning of the 80s, the era of the founding documentary *Style Wars*.

From that moment to today, the rules for making good graffiti are the same: construction of the letters, clean outline, shadows, 3D effect, lights and background. Yet someone, overseas, thirty years later, in Paris in the first decade of the 21st century - where the avant-garde had flourished a hundred years earlier - decided that to make graffiti more interesting something innovative had to be tried.

A revolution, however, does not happen by chance, it needs an idea, or at least its seed.

As a voice-over says in the second video dedicated to the Parisian writing of the *Crack&Shine* series, in non-grammatically pure English: "PAL is Peace And Love crew, a sort of happy crew with crazy, crazy kids all interested in the arts".

In fact, from the "rues and souterrains" of Paris, some of the PALs will very soon access the spaces of contemporary art by presenting themselves with their tag and generate great interest for the esteem they were earning in the writing scene, just as it was for the kings of New York in the 1980s.

The book that exported graffiti to the world is from that same historical moment and, we must not forget, it bears the word "art" in the title (*Subway Art*), as if to underline the intrinsic link between the two worlds.

A great clarification must be made, so as not to trivialize: although writing techniques produce images - just like painting - and its methodology can often be assimilated to a performance, in the exploration of urban space and in the act of illegal public painting, writing and art - for galleries, collections and museums - are not the same thing.

Writing often limits itself to reproducing a paradigm of action and stylistic features, revealing that it is a rigid discipline rather than an artistic practice. Furthermore, it is not absolutely certain that a good writer is a good artist.

Those of this study were also the years of a strong expansion of other unauthorized urban practices, "Street Art", especially in Paris. Writing and Street Art ended up being assimilated into a completely heterogeneous and undefined whole (even today) often arbitrarily connected to street practices.

The question, therefore, was burning: how to bring the practice of writing back into the art world without betraying its origins and without ending mixed up or exchanged with artists without credibility?

For the PALs the answer was simple: they retained in their studio production the same energy that pushed them to paint in the street, with an awareness of all the differences involved. Because that energy had produced so much writing excellence, the authenticity of the studio approach ensured a certain artistic quality.

Horfee, Conie and Saeio are just three examples of the large and heterogeneous group of PAL, the first who entered the world of official art, together with others such as Mosa, Sonik and Tomek.

Everyone now has their own independent path; PAL is the name that represents that old but complicit bond.

A name that in the years to which this exhibition is dedicated, was linked to one of the most innovative crews in the history of writing, a crew that allowed, thanks to its vision, that its members have become the artists they were and now are.

HORFEE's name is Antwan (Paris, 1983) and he is a painter. He attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris and is finely educated in arts but his roots are elsewhere: in some videos dating back to the years to which this exhibition is dedicated he can be seen effortlessly tracing the letters of his name in large backgrounds of flat color, which he would then crowd with cartoonish objects and beings. He wanted to be able to achieve whatever his imagination desired, regardless of other people's opinions of what was good. Being an artist, for Antwan, is being an individual, irreplaceable. Socrates said "know yourself" and Nietzsche "become what you are". Writing lends itself well to this purpose because it is the art of writing one's name - everywhere - to demonstrate one's existence: the same reason applies to those who assert themselves in art with their own unmistakable sign.

CONIE (Ken Sortais, Saint-Denis, 1983) drew simple letters and grotesque cartoonish characters made plastic by well-tensioned curves. The stroke that enclosed the large flat color backgrounds could be almost vectorial - a probable consequence of the degree in graphic design - or, on the contrary, completely cast, but never imprecise. He hasn't shown up with his tag for years.

Today Ken Sortais lives and works in Marseille. He prefers that his graffiti remain in the purity of the act, on the street, which is why he is no longer Conie. Yet, seeing the new works with casts taken from public sculptures, it is clear that the attitude of graffiti has not been lost.

*SAEIO was called Paul Bourguineau (Paris, 1987-2017), had noble origins and died before he could turn 30, in 2017, while his art was at its peak. He hadn't attended the academy, but was an incredible painter and, as he proclaimed himself, **king tagguer 2 Paris**. What interested him was the relationship of graffiti with the city, which is not a canvas in a gallery but a living place. He had noticed that graffiti painted in the city changes, mainly for three reasons: deterioration of time and atmospheric agents, other writers and the buff (erasure). It was the changing of things that fascinated him, life, where you can do things, but where you necessarily suffer them even against your will: he called it **Nolens Volens**. He thus began to erase his own graffiti and bring it back to the canvas with all the various interventions and layers, influencing a whole generation of writers and artists, contributing to the spread of the concept of **post-vandalism**.*

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