

Municipality captured by graffitists!

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The leading theme of this year's Open Day at the Krakow City Hall was graffiti. The event gathered numerous graffiti artists and experts from Krakow's partner cities. The City Fete presentations organized on 2 - 3 June attracted dozens of Krakovians and tourists willing to join festivities and spend a Sunday together.

The Open Day at Krakow City Hall, a part of the City Fete, traditionally takes place at the beginning of June. For the majority of Krakovians and tourists this day is a unique opportunity to visit the Krakow City Hall's offices, for example those which are usually occupied by the President of the City of Krakow. They can also learn more about different departments' activities.

Graffiti in urban spaces is one of the most debatable issues for authorities of larger cities nowadays. Organizers of the Open Day decided therefore to focus on graffiti and allow graffiti artists and experts meet in Krakow to give a boost to a public debate on how to manage illegal graffiti and use street-art as a creative way of changing urban spaces. During the conference on 3 June effective legal and technical solutions in the battle against illegal graffiti were discussed, providing examples of good graffiti and methods of making urban spaces available to street-art performers. Representatives of the Municipality of Krakow, Krakow's districts and city services had the opportunity to exchange their experiences with experts from Florence (Italy), Vienna (Austria), Vilnius (Lithuania), Rochester (USA), Tbilisi (Georgia), Trondheim (Norway), Moscow and Sankt Petersburg (Russia).

Professor Wiesław Starowicz, Advisor to the Mayor of the City of Krakow and coordinator of the Panel for the implementation of the illegal graffiti prevention program in the Krakow municipal area emphasized that we should consider making use of the solutions that were worked out by the authorities of Vienna. The Austrian capital city not only combats illegal graffiti but also provides positive examples of artistic activity in urban spaces which is promoted by special areas freely accessible to graffitists, said Mr. Franz Kratzer, the representative of Vienna. Mr. Giorgio Moretti, from Florence, made a speech on an interesting way of preserving urban spaces which is implemented in Florence where the administration of the City, together with private businesses and local citizens unite to preserve Florence's artistic image. The speaker from Moscow, Mr. Yury Marychev, demonstrated artistic projects which enriched the Russian capital city lately and were financed with public funds. Valuable insight into effective legal and administrative procedures applied in Trondheim and Vilnius to minimize the problem of illegal graffiti were presented by Ms. Ulrika Wallin (Trondheim) and Vaida Misiūnienė (Vilnius). Representatives from Tbilisi and Rochester concentrated on the artistic value of this kind of activity. Mr. David Aleksidze's presentation of Tbilisi street-art exemplified the impact that social and political changes have on graffiti in Georgia. Mr. Shawn Dunwoody (Rochester) elaborated on the important street art is for involving people in social activities and how useful graffiti can be for building a community through the development of artistic education.

Undoubtedly, the most spectacular point in the event's programme was graffiti painting in front of the City Hall. Graffitists from Bordeaux, Lviv, Leipzig, Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Orleans and Rochester did their best and had a lot of fun together with the audience that afternoon. As a result, 8 remarkable works were created, which can be seen in our photo gallery.



**Magiczny
Kraków**

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