



School Bus
School Stickers - you'll know where to stick them
 with crazy Passes & permission slips

Skateboard Stickers & Durable Gifts

FREE SKATEBOARD
OLLIE POP

LOVE SKATEBOARDING
 HATE FASCISM

AVANTGARD
 ANGELS AND
 STUFF

HELLO my name is
HELLO my name is
HELLO my name is
HOLA Me Llamo
HELL My Name is
HELLO My Name is

Dig it or Stick it

hatch gallery > dirschauer str. 16 > berlin
 WWW.HATCHKINGDOM.COM

IT'S NO HISTORICAL FACT but allegedly it was the lithographic printing office Bognard that produced the first sticker series with pictures of the world's fair pavilion in Paris for the department store Au Bon Marché in 1867.

Around this time, adhesive labels bearing the names of famous hotels, railroad lines, airlines, and shipping lines had already been quite popular with travellers for some time and could regularly be found on suitcases. Originally, these stickers were intended to mark individual items of baggage, but as a positive side effect they bestowed a certain touch of the cosmopolitan and urbane on the luggage's owner.

In 1945 the Panini brothers opened a kiosk in Modena, Italy. As a marketing gag they gave their customers little hand-painted stickers with every newspaper. Soon their stickers were in even greater demand than the newspapers, but it took another 16 years before they released the first sticker album for the collectible stickers of the Italian football team. Countless companies from all sorts of businesses have since used complimentary stickers as promotional incentives for their product (as the flower stickers on "Pril" dishwashing liquid bottles unforgettable to many Germans).

Since the mid 70s the sticker has become much more than a give-away or an alternative to conventional advertising. There seemed to be no boundaries in terms of composition or design and so the sticker started to stand out for itself. This is especially true in regard to skateboard stickers: they had a huge impact on the progression of sticker designs. Especially in the 80s a sticker was more than just an advertisement. A huge range of stickers appeared that were meant to express a personal opinion or a political attitude. Stickers for the peace movement, for environmental protection, and for the feminist movement could be found everywhere.

"SKATEBOARDING IS NOT A CRIME" OR "GO SKATEBOARDING!"

In the early days of skateboarding, most stickers simply depicted company logos and were not particularly remarkable in terms of design. However, this was about to change with Wes Humpston und Jim Muir of the Dogtown Crew from Santa Monica, Venice, California. Their designs were fresh and had never been seen before. Their cutting edge skateboard graphics led to a whole new era that spawned a number of famous skateboarding designs. Who could forget the legendary "Screaming Hand" by Jim Phillips or the amazing Powell Peralta stickers still hunted for like crazy by sticker lovers today. In many cases, skateboarders became (and still become) graphic designers too and nearly every new skateboard design was published as a sticker alongside the more conventional logo stickers. Especially for new brands the low production costs of stickers in the late 80s and early 90s presented a quick and simple option of introducing themselves to the market and getting noticed. What was said about stickers in general before also holds true for

skateboard stickers; they have always been more than just a promotional item. Instead they often are about making a statement, expressing individuality by showing who you are and what you like - or don't like. Classics as Consolidate's "Don't do it" and "Skateboarding Is Not A Crime" by Santa Cruz hint at the animosities against skaters in those days. Not to forget the G sticker series, originally created by Yogi Proctor for Emerica in 1998 - a sticker sheet with Gs in different sizes to cover up the Ns in "No skateboarding" signs order to turn them into a "Go Skateboarding" message. Simple but brilliant.

Skateboard stickers have also received some attention from art historians and have been discussed as a possible new sector of contemporary art, due to the compositional challenge they offer. One of the main characteristics for the definition of art is the purposelessness of the artwork. In taking a look at the question whether the everyday item sticker does or does not count as art, it seems at a first glance that they don't fit this description due to their pragmatic

WORDS BY AYE KROMM VORRUNNER
FUCK SOKO
18 RCB



function (advertising). Yet, there are a number of arguments to support the idea that stickers are artworks in their own right. They are designed to work on their own, the designs do not necessarily always connect them to a skate brand or product and the strong emphasis on the collectability of stickers rather than on their function as a self-adhesive label with a promotional message all depose this medium off its singular pragmatic purpose of advertising something. Therefore, a sticker can definitely be called a piece of art.

SO, LOTS OF STUFF TO DIG, RIGHT?

Oliver Baudach has been seriously digging stickers for over 20 years. Oliver began his collecting career the traditional way: by going from shop to shop and tradeshow to tradeshow asking for stickers. Recently he and his colleague Nada Carls opened the sticker museum Hatch in Berlin-Friedrichshain, where all their treasures are on display. The two have found the perfect space for the huge and amazing collection comprising mainly skateboard and streetwear stickers from the

early days till now. The exhibits are presented with a great love for detail and show the amazing range of different designs and artworks. In addition to the gallery, Hatch offers the first online mail order service for brand stickers. The non-profit service ships packages with six, twelve, and 18 pieces for a reasonable price which mainly covers shipping. But it also wants to be seen as a platform for the sticker community. It is about sharing, exchanging, and dropping information for sticker aficionados worldwide as well as for people who make their own stickers.

Whereas collectors don't have the heart to stick their objects of desire anywhere, it is the main driving force for street artists: Stick it everywhere, anytime, and as often as possible!! It is obvious that the number of artists using stickers as their medium has increased amazingly. Some of them you just can't escape. You simply find them everywhere. TOWER from Berlin has been a sticker artist since 2001. After tagging and spraypainting stickers, silkscreen printing is his favourite method today. "I love fonts, I play around with

the five letters T.O.W.E.R. in different ways and I attach great importance to printing the stickers myself. TOWER has no special meaning – it's just "TOWER, the logo", he explains. TOWER's point of view on the graffiti versus street art discussion is clear: "For me, the main idea behind both is the same. The people are just using different media. But I know that graffiti writers often consider people who are doing stickers as 'toy' or 'not real' which is kind of sad. A problem I can understand is that some people often put up their posters without checking what they are covering up. I mean, graffiti laws are tough, you can't go over a tag or a piece. It's just that street art people often don't know the 'street laws'. When you are second on a spot, you come second, no matter if you do graffiti or so-called street art. Still, space is limited and sometimes there is no other way but going over someone's tag or piece." TOWER also collects stickers, but excludes brand stickers from his collection: "For me, this is mainly advertisement. It's more about the brand than about the sticker." A lot of big companies, whether they are in the streetwear and

skateboard business or not, use street art aesthetics for their advertising campaigns, like the fake tags and stencils that could recently be seen everywhere in the streets of Berlin. I am not going to discuss them here to not give them additional publicity. Just as a side note: some artists sprayed over them to protest against the sell-out of their culture. Whatever kind of view you may hold, the sticker is generally neutral. It is neither good nor bad, funny or aggressive per se. It is available as a platform for everything you want it to be: an advertisement, a trademark of your personality, an expression of your state of mind, for art, or simply for fun. ■