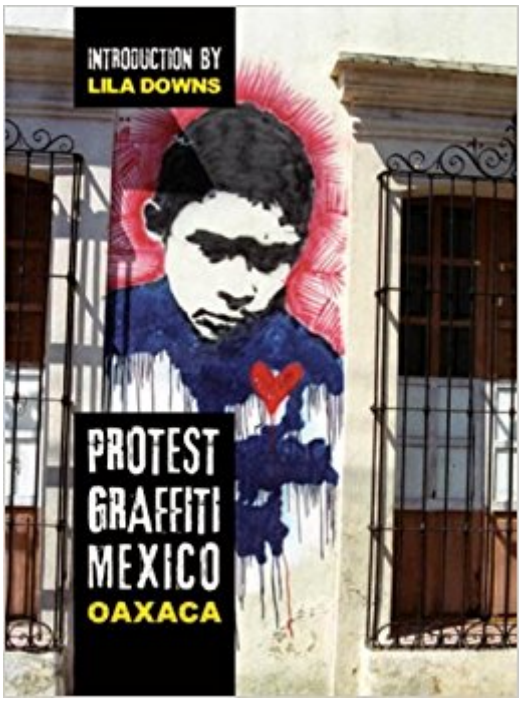
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Protest Graffiti Mexico: Oaxaca



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Synopsis

On October 27, 2006, when Mexican police opened fire on a crowd of protesters in the city of Oaxaca, killing three people, including American journalist Brad Roland Will, the world became aware of a social conflict that at its core was about the right to an education. Within hours of these shootings, graffiti calling the region's governor a murderer was sprayed throughout the city. Unlike in other cities where graffiti is recognized as a form of public art, in Oaxaca, graffiti became a way of achieving social justice through community organization. And because teachers in Mexico are primarily women, the graffiti is very much inspired by and made by women. Shot by Elaine Sendyk in 2007, the photographs in this book depict oppression, empowerment and the messages of struggle and revolt.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Saw this book at a bookstore in Oaxaca but the price was a bit overpriced. I decided to wait till I got back to the States and look around for a cheaper alternative. did it. Great book, I'm a huge fan of Lila Downs and love art, including graffiti. Very interesting book. Highly recommend it.

Elaine Sendyk died in 2007 but with this superb book PROTEST GRAFFITI MEXICO OAXACA she left behind an important political and artistic document that will surely become a standard against which all other books about the human response to the suppression that begets revolution must be judged. This book is a pinnacle of graphic art design, a treasure of information about a subject known by too few in the world, and a fascinating reading and visual excursion through an important

period of time in Mexico.Sendyk was present with her camera when the October 2006 incident of police firing on a crowd of protesters who were railing against the lack of right to an education. The particular place: Oaxaca, Mexico. Those responsible for the reaction of the people to the deprivation of education were women, primarily teachers struggling against insurmountable odds to speak out against the government's closing of schools. With paint and stick they wrote on the walls of the city, not to vandalize as some graffiti is often interpreted, but to use their only means of spreading objection and truth to their people and the world. This book captures the images they created, images often incorporating religious symbols as well as caricatures of the leading political leaders responsible for the outrage. It also shares interviews with some of the teachers and powerful commentary by the book's author Louis E. V. Nevaer.Opening this important volume is an introduction by Lila Downs who shares the atmosphere and crushed dreams as well as the lasting spirit of hope that accompanied the debacle this book uses as focus. Superimposed on some of the images of the walls of comment are quotations such as 'Democracy is exhilarating, but it is also fraught with the natural anxiety that accompanies the unknown.' and 'Knowledge, in human beings, is not passed on from generation to generation through our genes, but must be learned by each person, one by one.'At the end of the book are tributes to the now deceased Elaine Sendyk, among which is the following statement by Sendyk's nephew: 'This is what stands behind the camera that shot the photos you will find in this book. An eye with the ability to capture the results of individuals taking action - fulfilling responsibility. Cookie found that beauty amidst the chaos and ugliness of revolution. Do yourself a great service, and use these images to motivate you to engage in that same beauty, on whatever level that you can afford. That's why Cookie took them.' This is a book that should be part of every school library as well as in the homes and minds of everyone who cares about social injustice. Highly recommended. Grady Harp, March 09

Organizers often forget the importance of the imagination. Though cadre may be able to articulate points in Capital, it's the masses whose dreams for brighter futures for their children that provide the numbers movements need to succeed. And when things look difficult, the imagination helps keep participants focused. One example of this observation was the protest effort in Oaxaca, Mexico.Teachers in Oaxaca have been involved in demonstrations against Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz for several years. Most times, these conflicts centered on pay disputes. Sadly, Mexico has fights over federal and state budget priorities as anywhere else. However, the Oaxaca kerfuffle was just one of many struggles in a nation with many powerful social movements, until more than 20 protesters, including a white American, Brad Will, were killed in a protracted conflict in 2006.Louis E.

V. Nevaer and the late photographer Elaine Sendyk's Protest Graffiti Mexico: Oaxaca is a beautifully illustrated book that tells the story of the movement, its root causes and the creative forms of resistance the quest for justice took, and takes today.During the uprising, in which demonstrators took over public offices, media and other institutions in Oaxaca, the city was peppered with graffiti against Ruiz and his surrogates, but more importantly with exhilarating silhouettes and encouragements to continue the rebellion. One passage in the book compares this sort of artistry to teaching literally in the Aristotelian vein, where the teacher is a scribe and the artist serves the same mission. Lofty though such claims may be, there is no discounting the emotional heft of the artwork, or what it meant to the Oaxaca unrest. Thousands rallied in what was ultimately an unsuccessful bid to oust Ruiz from office, but the ways in which art was used are stunning. Nevaer calls this presentation a dialog of rage.How such achingly gorgeous art is the faÃƒÆ'Ã Â§ade for a long history of governmental misdeeds and the disenfranchisement it birthed is a theme touched on frequently throughout the weighty chapters encircling the images herein. In addition, this book is particularly helpful in describing a phenomenon that occurs almost universally during any mass movement: ploys by the state and business to get back to 'normal' by blunting civil disobedience in the name of commerce. Sick as that may seem, it happens often, and Nevaer explores how Mexican activists fought to keep their issues in the public consciousness, art being just one of those tools.Sendyk's simply ravishing photography presents the furious faces and joyous smiles dripping to the pavement which once pocked Oaxacan streets. Directly and indirectly, these visuals afford glances at the discontent. Similarly, the copy here gives breathless firsthand accounts of the heady early days of the protests. From moments of station takeovers to discussions on the role of women in the struggle, Protest Graffiti Mexico is a respectable documentary of a movement far deeper than the paint on walls. Those curious in more extensive analysis in tactics the movement used and ways it succeeded and failed might be interested in books like Teaching Rebellion: Stories from the Grassroots Mobilization in Oaxaca. However, Protest Graffiti Mexico is bound to give anyone a good start on learning about the history and endeavors.

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