For Immediate Release

**The Digital Press at UND Announces New Book on Street Artist WD**

Recent travelers through the Athens airport would have seen a monumental owl painted on a corner of a building peering down from large television monitors. The promotional video introducing tourists to the city of Athens juxtaposed its vibrant contemporary culture seen with its familiar antiquities. The owl is a millennia-old symbol for the city of Athens, but the painting on the monitor was the work of contemporary street artist WD.

The Digital Press at the University of North Dakota is proud to announce the publication of the first book-length publication of the street art of WD (Wild Drawing): *Context and Content: The Street Art of WD*. Alongside over 100 photographs of WDs work, this volume includes studies that situate WD's art in its social, environmental, political, and even conservation (and preservation) context. The collection concludes with an interview with WD that provides unprecedented insights into how the artist works.

WD's art isn't just known for its dramatic paintings that enliven Athens and other cities. It is first and foremost activist art. WD make this clear when he says: "Art won’t change anything if the people who see it can’t be inspired to do something. So, let’s create something that can inspire people."

Kostis Kourelis, the book's editor, sees WD's art in another context: "Whether it's the Owl or Homelessness, WD’s work will certainly be included in the future textbooks of modern Greek art. Faced with WD’s canonization, our modest volume offers a way to contextualize his work in the recent past. We are excited to produce a story that transcends ethnic parochialism, celebrates the national ‘other,’ and embraces the racially diverse leaders of contemporary Greek art practices."

For WD, though, the experience of creating art often provides the most immediate rewards: "When I was about to finish painting the mural *No Land for the Poor*, I wrote a dedication, 'to the poor and homeless here and around the globe.' At that moment, I felt someone poke me on my back so I turned back and I saw a guy. He said, 'Hi, thank you for this,' and when I asked him why, he said, 'because I’m homeless.'"

*Context and Content: The Street Art of WD* features contributions by Konstantinos Avramidis, Maria Chatzidakis, Sofia Fragkiskou, Panos Leventis, Dewa Nyoman Ketha, and Julia Tulke.

It is available as a free download or as a paperback:

<https://thedigitalpress.org/wd/>

Contact information:

Kostis Kourelis, Editor: [kkoureli@fandm.edu](mailto:kkoureli@fandm.edu)

Bill Caraher, Publisher: [william.caraher@und.edu](mailto:william.caraher@und.edu)

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“Knowledge speaks-Wisdom listens.jpg” Image courtesy of the artist (WD).

“NoLand4thePoor.jpg” Image courtesy of the artist (WD).

“WD Artist Photo\_Stairway to Hell.jpg” Image courtesy of the artist (WD)

“Kourelis\_Editor\_Photo.jpg” Kostis Kourelis headshot. Image courtesy of the author.