



## A Pink City Protégé

Mademoiselle Kat brings her women to the streets. **By Nina Lary**



Mademoiselle Kat ([www.mademoisellek.net](http://www.mademoisellek.net)) doesn't reject the masculine—she just paints over it. A female graffiti artist originally from Toulouse, France, Kat works hard to give women a place in the big city.

"The city is so male," she says. "A lot of architecture is male and the city needs a feminine sense for me. I want the city [to be] more sweetie, sugar, babe!"

As a teenager in the '90s, Kat found inspiration in a thriving scene of female graffers (a common term for graffiti artists). In Pink City, as she calls it, Kat met Miss Van, a graffer whose female characters are both erotic and menacing.

"Here is the start of a real story of girls who paint with pencils in the street in France," she says. She and Miss Van started painting together, bonding over a shared love of color, cartoon, characters and graffiti.

Kat also draws inspiration from the energy of the city, the solidarity of fellow graffers and a little ol' story about a woman named Eve and a snake named Na'hash.

"I want to go deeper and deeper into the expression of desire. The man is not the first on earth for me," she says. "The forbidden fruit is not only an apple."

She enjoys recasting the flagship fable of female sin with

her own characters, which, she says, could all be the same person. "I think the same woman can be a lot of women in the same day. Our life asks of us this sort of multiplicity of identities."

By bringing a colorful expression of the female and its many faces—playful, sensual, colorful, joyful—into public spaces, she hopes to create a social exchange. But the law in France is growing increasingly harsh about graffiti, so she can't always create murals on the spot. To avoid being caught and fined, she sometimes paints on wallpaper first and then pastes her graffiti onto the city's walls later.

Kat and her women have been welcomed in cities around the world. Aside from shows in Paris and Barcelona, she has painted at the Can't Festival in Antwerp, Belgium and at the International Meeting of Styles, one of the largest graffiti events in the world. Kat was also invited by les pékins de Toulouse, a French-Chinese artist exchange, to paint a mural in Chongqing, a Chinese municipality with over 30 million residents.

She looks forward to increasing her exposure with more gallery shows but says the street will always live inside her. "Urban art is one of the best expressions," Kat says. "This is the true place for my women." ■