



STREET ART: RHETORIC, POETICS, MEMORY AND CREATIVITY IN THE TRANSMEDIA AGE

Rhetorical Figures in Street Art Interventions

KEYWORDS

Rhetoric
Poetics
Street art
Effectiveness
Transmedia
Memorisation
Urban space

ABSTRACT

The interrelationship between rhetoric, poetics, attention capture, creativity and memory (in the transmedia age) is examined through an analysis of the 107 street art interventions awarded either gold or special prizes between 1999 and 2024 at leading international advertising festivals. The findings are compared with the knowledge derived from the scientific documentary sources consulted. The study demonstrates the rhetorical and poetic significance not only for the conceptualisation of street art actions but also for their transmedia projection. The final contribution presents six key ideas to be considered prior to designing such interventions.

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1. Introduction

Rhetoric, as a social construct, enhances both the appeal and long-term memorability of a message—whether written, spoken or visual—and of its sender. This study examines its communicative application, along with that of poetics, through the technique of street art.

1.1. Purpose of the Research

The aim is to establish key principles for applying the technique of street art in advertising, from both rhetorical and poetic perspectives. To achieve this, the research is structured in three phases. The first analyses 2.0 transmedia interrelations between rhetoric, memory and creativity in street art interventions. The second studies—both qualitatively and quantitatively—which rhetorical and poetic devices are awarded (gold or special prizes) in street art by leading international advertising festivals between 1999 and 2024. The third phase correlates the data from the previous stages in order to identify the most effective attributes.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Rhetoric

Rhetoric is the discipline that studies real-life discourses in order to formulate rhetorical figures that shape effective written, spoken or visual messages. It should not be confused with semantics (which examines the meaning of signs), dialectics (concerned with truth and falsehood), or semiotics (which explores systems of signification, perception, interpretation, and decoding across disciplines) (Lagos Caamaño, 2010).

Quintilian identifies five key components (VVAA, 2011):

- The materials and tools used to structure the exordium, narration, argumentation, peroration and conclusion:
- The organised discourse.
- The stylistic methods and techniques, including tropes, rhetorical figures, and composition.
- The memory required for accurate recall.
- The *actio* of pronunciation, recitation, presence, gestures and gestures.

From the mid-twentieth century, rhetoric began to play an increasingly prominent role in advertising, which came to be viewed as a form of fictional discourse—rich in figurative language and capable of generating new meaning.

As a codified cultural construct rooted in natural language (Albaladejo, 1994; Albaladejo, 2013; Genette, 1974), rhetoric performs eight functions: referential, emotive, connotative, poetic/aesthetic, phatic, persuasive, attention-grabbing, and gratifying (Albaladejo, 2013). These functions are enacted through comparisons, metaphors, personifications, metonymies and similes (Barthes, 1964).

Both literary and rhetorical language are cultural constructions that alter meaning internally (through thought) or externally (through words) using tropes (Albaladejo, 2013). Rhetoric models natural language by modifying codes and communal symbols (Albaladejo, 2013, p. 312), thereby shifting meanings, persuading, aiding memory, and stimulating multiple readings of a text (Barthes, 1964) or image (Lagos, 2010, p. 49).

The following areas of rhetoric are particularly relevant to this research:

1.2.1.1. Internet

Its special effects generate a freer, more persuasive and influential advertising environment that alters perceptions of beauty and creates personalised realities. Social platforms now function as a new universal public sphere—hypertextual and interactive—offering both synchronous and asynchronous communication (Montenegro Hidalgo, 2021).

1.2.1.2. Audiovisual Communication

Visual communication persuades by applying rhetoric to text, images and signs. The visual metaphor compares two unrelated objects, transferring characteristics from one to the other through substitution (Ortiz, 1970).

1.2.1.3. Graphic design

Its most important aspect is content, and it serves three purposes: communicative, advertising, educational, and aesthetic. The “graphic triangle” consists of persuasion, identity/differentiation, and the provision of factual information (Frascara, 2002).

Artists and advertisers agree that colour and design capture attention: warm colours evoke passion, revolution, death and violence, while cool colours suggest calm, peace, purity and tranquillity (Vanderwood & Chaffee, 1994). The graffiti artist’s experience and the flexibility of graffiti allow for cost and time-efficient execution. While well-made graffiti is long-lasting, it remains inherently innovative. Finally, compositions using natural urban elements can provoke surprise, suspense, emotion, and moral discomfort in passers-by.

1.2.1.4. Writing and Typography

Whether written in words or drawn with letters, a message generates interest by associating it with external sensory impressions (e.g. youth fashion or a smooth flavour). Letters function as both images and text. Typography studies and classifies them to convey textual and emotional information that modifies meaning. Together, typography and rhetoric serve communicative functions such as legibility and clarity, structural functions such as letter families, aesthetic functions such as beauty and persuasion, educational functions such as understanding, and persuasive functions (Gago et al., 1994).

Fundamental lines (vertical, horizontal, diagonal and curved) are used to draw letters and convey value and meaning. Rhetoric creates letters by attaching, deleting, substituting and permuting lines (Gago et al., 1994). Meanwhile, typographic resources such as size, colour, boldness, italics and upper- and lower-case attract attention.

The word employs rhetoric (it begins with a surprise, continues with facts and concludes) to aid memory. Verbs can define situations, project the future or personalise the message (Gago et al., 1994, pp. 518–519).

1.2.1.5. Photograph

It is objective because the image conveys a clear message without any elaboration or code. It spontaneously produces a scene that is interpreted in a limited way based on socialisation that relates the signifier to the signified. Its language employs different expressions and technological instruments, as well as aesthetics (design), culture (social practices), and narrative argumentation. However, drawing is a coded message that requires learning and only partially reproduces a modifiable object (Barthes, 1986).

1.2.1.6. Image

Rhetoric combines signs and specific attitudes to transform commercial texts into literary ones (Genette, 1982). This creates an unstable space of meaning around the sign (the signifier or sign table, the image), which resembles the signified (the definition) (Barthes, 1964).

Those who advocate for the image, recognising that the word does not convey all meaning, agree with the proponents of the word that practical, national, cultural and aesthetic knowledge facilitates meaning (Barthes, 1992).

Photographic techniques and personal perceptions modify both reality and its interpretation (Barthes, 1992; Vargas et al., 2014, p. 122).

Advertising images convey linguistic messages using well-known names, corporate slogans or icons that summarise qualities (Vargas et al., 2014, p. 119). Advertising meaning can be written (potentially forming part of the image) or symbolic and iconic (Gago et al., 1994).

Therefore, as the stereotypical interpretation generates the unique corporate image of consumerist “modern mythology” (Gago et al., 1994), the message can only be understood by combining the denotative and connotative meanings.

1.2.1.7. Advertising

By studying visual (iconic) and verbal (symbolic) advertising signs, rhetoric detects the most persuasive option that modifies the conventional context (Barthes, 1964; Magariños de Morentín, 1983, p. 245;). It thus promotes an intellectual effort that generates new information (Vargas et al., 2013) and positive consumption emotions (Magariños de Morentín, 1983). Perelman (1958) favours argumentative logic, while Keyelaar and Van Gisbergen (2006), Greenwald and Leavitt (1984), and Meyers-Levy and Malaviya (1999) criticise advertising rhetoric that complicates advertisements. Conversely, Phillips (2000) advocates advertisements that combine image and text for increased recall.

The advertising text comprises three types of signs: icons, symbols and indices (which are irrelevant to Magariños de Morentín (1983)). Rhetorically emphasising these signs modifies the significance of the sign-product, the text's signifiers to communicate with the receiver, and the meaning of the advertising message (Magariños de Morentín, 1983, p. 246).

This article, based on Moliné's work (2000), investigates the rhetoric applied to street art that has won the most awards at festivals in the sector.

Table 1. 18 Significant rhetorical operations

Single CONTEXT	Transformed by means of conventions (repetition; expansion; alteration of order; suppression or substitution of elements, qualities or context).
More than one context	Interrelates at least 2 aspects by adjunction or substitution of the quality of one by the element of the other; the quality of one by the quality of the other; the quality of one by one or more elements of the other or by one or more qualities of the other or by a set of element and quality of the other.
Of an operative nature	-Adjunction: adds one or more elements to the proposition. -Suppression: takes it/them away: ellipsis, percusio, allusion, paralipsis; ambiguity; equivocation. -Substitution: the trope replaces one idea with another to make the first understandable: irony, metonymy, catachresis, metonymy, synecdoche, periphrasis, euphemism, lithotheism and hyperbole. -Interchange: exchange of two elements of the proposition.
Relation to other elements	-Identity: elements of the same paradigm made up of a single term. -Similarity: elements of a paradigm of a single term or of a paradigm that includes other terms. Link two ideas or objects with the comparative conjunction 'like'. Metaphor,

	concept, simile, synaesthesia, prosopopoeia, paradigm or fable, allegory or parable. -Opposition between two ideas with antonymous words or by repeating the original sentence backwards: Paradox, Antithesis, oxymoron. -Difference: elements belonging to a paradigm comprising other terms.
Repetition: sound, verbal (words or phrases) or visual.	Anaphora, Germination, Epitome, Epiphora, Epiphora, Epanalepsis, Concatenation, Dissemination, Retractive, Palindrome, Refrain, Alliteration, Rhyme, Pun, Polypotheme, Chiasmus, Synonymy, Pleonasm, Climax or Gradatio, Symmetry and Rectification.
Destabilisation	A word means more than it says, so context can change meanings.
Myth	Helps to understand and inform by starting from the sign (meaning). Composed of form (image), concept and meaning.
Antonomasia	Appellative adjective that identifies an individual quality by means of a generic one (the species): Simón Bolívar is the Liberator.
Lítotes or attenuation	Close to irony and says less to say more. Can use negation: "no fue poco lo que hablaron" or "¿Te parece poco?"
Inclusive relationship	Synecdoche: the whole for the part, the part for the whole; the species for the genus and vice versa; the singular for the plural.
Personification	Representing inanimate objects or abstract ideas as living things.
Apostrophe	The speaker appeals to an absent or dead person, to an inanimate object, to an abstract idea, to those listening or reading, or to himself.
For emphasis	Exclamation: expresses an intense emotion (fear, pain or surprise) / Interrogative: emphasises the answer contained in the question or exposes its absence or impossibility.
Imitation: Onomatopoeia	Imitates natural sounds in words. Imitative harmony: reproduces auditory effects by repeating phonemes.
Construction figures	Anacolute, Asyndeton, Polysyndeton, Hyperbaton, Pleonasm, Chiasmus and Zeugma.
Descriptive figures	They adorn the product and remain as an echo in the memory recovered from emotion: Prosopography, Ethopoeia, Portrait, Pragmatography, Topography, Chronography, Syllogism, Definition, Adjectivation, Omission, Reticence, Chasis, Neologism, Archaism, Childish language, Correct or incorrect punctuation (intentional), Anticipation, Deprecation, Imprecation, Execration, Dubitation, Praeteritio, Testimonials and Catchphrases.

Figures of disorder	Disorder the information so that the receiver, in exchange for rewards, engages in ordering it and remembers the announcement: anastrophe; hyperbaton; parenthesis; confusion; and metagraph.
Figures of contradiction	Breaks mental schemes by saying something different from what is expected: paradox; oxymoron; hysteresis; antithesis; simulatio; dissimulatio; irony; and sarcasm.

Source: own elaboration based on Moliné (2000).

Pérez (2008, p. 177) states that 84% of the 154 advertisements analysed by McQuarrie and Mick (1993) in People magazine and 74% of the headlines analysed by Leigh (1994) contain rhetorical devices to improve consumption, understanding, and recall of the message.

1.2.1.7.1 Advertising Rhetoric and Art

Advertising, literature and art generate and transmit collective knowledge and social heritage using icons, codes and symbols (VVAA, 2011).

Both art and advertising use rhetorical devices to create surprise and attraction, and to help people to remember and process information. Colour, shape, composition, perspective and angle can all enhance the way a product is perceived (Zhang et al., 2009). Graphic advertising rhetoric increases interest, recall, credibility and persuasion (Bathers, 1977; Phillips, 2000). Visual metaphors, on the other hand, increase consumer perception and persuasion due to the implicit rhetoric of the images (McQuarrie and Mick, 1993).

Visual surprise and inconclusive messages associate the brand or work with the idea conveyed, in order to encourage recall, reinforce the brand experience, determine purchase, identify the brand and generate added value. Hyperbole, analogy and comparison enhance the memorability of advertising (Vargas et al., 2014, p. 130).

Art encourages reflective thinking and contemplation (Vargas et al., 2014). Advertising enhances brand awareness and recall.

Surreal advertising increases consumer attention and interest (Homer and Kahle, 1986; Mostafa, 2005).

1.2.1.7.2 Advertising Rhetoric and Poetry

Romantic poetic rhetoric encourages reflection and criticism by creating an inclusive, collective vision using original, authentic language. This approach is evident in advertising through commercial announcements, nineteenth-century press, and twentieth-century posters (Ceballos, 2016, p. 32).

Today, this segmented, homogeneous advertising imaginary constitutes collective knowledge, akin to old poems (Baños Saldaña, 2020, pp. 168–171). This efficacy is promoted by rhetoric, publicists, and pragmatic linguistics (Baños Saldaña, 2020, p. 289). This interdisciplinary relationship (Dumont, 2021) is exemplified by the following three advertisements (Baños Saldaña, 2020). The advertisement for Turismo de la Comunidad Valenciana (2021) adapts the sonnet “Quien lo probó lo sabe” (Those who have tried it know) by Lope de Vega to “Quien lo ha vivido lo sabe” (Those who have experienced it know). The text, image, voice and sound of the advertisement generate a new ideological and emotionally persuasive discourse around the images. The Seat León advertising text, narrated by its author Julio Cortázar, relates the car to the protagonist of his work (a watch) because it dominates its owner too. Coca-Cola’s adaptation of a poem depicts couples in love enjoying a light drink on a terrace. The voice of the young man is that of the poet Rodolfo Enrique Fogwill.

Such adverts create rhythm through refrains, typography, acronyms, neologisms, spelling and punctuation errors, and extraneous elements. They increase attention with noun or infinitive

phrases. They tease the consumer in order to generate positive emotions and draw them into the 'metaphorical universe' that makes up the corporate imaginary (Baños Saldaña, 2020, p. 115).

1.2.2. Street Art

It encompasses various forms of urban art. Born in the social revolutions of 1960s New York, it was consolidated in the 1980s, grew in the 1990s, and triumphed in the 2000s with Banksy. Without street art, advertising would be saturated and unable to generate new sensations that differentiate products and brands. Its aesthetic value and the social improvement associated with its messages have a positive effect on the environment, building community identity and personality. It is therefore considered a political and revolutionary communication tool with a good reputation. It uses graffiti, stencils, prints, murals, aerosols, stickers, posters, collages, collaborative projects, performance art, video and sculptures on railway lines, subways or any other urban element (McClinchey, 2023).

1.2.2.1. Advertising Planning

Fernández Pascual (2016) plans street art by first analysing the market, competition, environment and audience. Secondly, he defines the communication and commercial objectives of the campaign. Third, he designs an emotional strategy. Fourth, he prevents negative repercussions. Fifth, a contextualised, impactful message is defined. Sixthly, he selects the public space according to the target audience. Seventh, the staging is defined. Eighthly, it defines the recording of the action. Ninth, schedule the campaign on social networks before, during and after its execution. Tenth, analyse it qualitatively and quantitatively.

1.2.2.2. Rhetoric

Colours, shapes, the location of the observer and the use of walls and urban objects to manipulate the space involve the spectator in an unpredictable discourse that is internalised for its cultural and expository value (Mondino, 2014).

The urban space (environment, walls and objects) constitutes the rhetoric and poetics that comprise his discourse (Mondini, 2014, p. 6). JR (a French artist) attracts and surprises by using apostrophe (enunciative dynamics to address someone), hyperbole (broadening the message by reducing or enlarging the image), and irony. Camouflage and mimicry encourage reflection. Slinkachu develops narratives through miniatures. Julian Beever simulates movement and perspective through 3D graffiti. Thus, urban art is constantly negotiated through the acceptance or rejection of observers. Interpretations multiply the message because there are as many works as there are observers. Therefore, urban art must be approached in the context of art and the city, and in terms of individual and collective enjoyment of the work (Mondino, 2014, p. 11).

Finally, the key rhetorical function is constructive, constructing a message with a specific purpose and audience.

1.2.2.3. Semiotics

Carrington (2022) examines the semiotics of graffiti by studying its history, purpose and application.

Styles, colours, patterns, designs, overlays and textures can distinctly convey messages, moods or feelings (Carrington, 2022).

A graffiti artist's signature and their style convey identity, hierarchy, traceability and power. The more graffiti, the higher the status, regardless of quality. Throw-ups and pieces are simple, beginner-friendly styles. Pieces are large, complex pieces of graffiti using three or more colours and are placed on wagons, large structures or in spaces. Blockbusters are giant letters that highlight the message. Bubble graffiti consists of bubbles with rounded edges.

In Bilbao, Lisbon, Madrid and New York, graffiti conveys the artistic qualities of the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, boosting the tourist potential of the area and hiding the

degradation. Former graffiti is now managed as art by city councils (Gonçalves and Milani, 2022), but these councils often abandon the neighbourhoods (Garrido Castellano and Raposo, 2023; Raposo, 2023; Simoes, 2023).

1.2.2.4. Relationship with Poetics

Some artists argue that art should not exist for commercial purposes (Zorita Arroyo, 2022). However, Toulouse-Lautrec, Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol and Théophile Steinlen defend it.

1.2.2.5. Consumers and brands

Cárdenas et al. (2022) argue that street art can be used as a corporate and institutional communication tool because its originality attracts attention and gives the brand a fresh image. It facilitates the memorisation and recall of messages and brands, and connects consumers, society and brands. By involving consumers in the brand, the message can be personalised and shared with others.

While creators and consumers emphasise the emotional and symbolic benefits, brands emphasise the functional benefits, such as visual memory and diffusion. Underpinned by originality, both help with long-term memorisation and 'getting noticed'.

1.2.2.6. Transmedia

Martínez Sáez et al. (2017) and Rodríguez Fidalgo et al. (2017) argue that transmedia advertising is based on technological development, the democratisation of the internet and an increase in the number of screens. These three aspects ensure that prosumers (Toffler, 1980) and retransmitter-advertisers can access, share, and build content on equal terms.

This implies migrating from the "Broadcast Model" (Castells, 2006) — unidirectional — to the "Reticular Model" (Martinez and Palao, 2009) — virtual and interactive — which delivers content simultaneously in different media, building "the same narrative universe" (Martinez Sáez et al., 2017, p. 56).

Martinez-Sáez et al. (2017) studied transmedia campaigns that won grand prizes and gold awards at Cannes and Sol between 2011 and 2016. Of the 162 award winners, 50 are transmedia campaigns (31%), and except in 2011, they are always in the minority. The 50 transmedia campaigns are multiplatform in order to extend the narrative universe, and they are shared on their own social networks. 53% of these campaigns are transmedia because the sender and receiver converse with each other, while 15% are transmedia because they co-create content together. This period saw few transmedia advertising narratives (Martinez-Sáez et al., 2017, p. 56). Therefore, Kearney (2004) concludes that the repeated adaptation of transmedia texts reflects their high status and entertainment value (p. 281). A transmedia strategy draws on the strengths of each medium to strengthen the narrative and enhance consumer engagement with the brand (Jenkins et al., 2013).

1.2.2.7. Social Networks and Communication Agents

They are used by people from the age of 11 (García-Jiménez et al., 2020) via smartphone or tablet (Pastor Ruíz et al., 2019) for integration, entertainment, information gathering and connecting with close circles. They appeal to users' freedom of expression (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

Advertisers appreciate them because they provide information to generate targeted content and ads (Olarie et al., 2018, p. 471). Geographic targeting in campaigns generates engagement, converting followers into consumers (Alhabash et al., 2015; Bijmolt et al., 2010; Kahle et al., 1996; Vale y Fernandes, 2018).

Ndubuisi (2019) and Odiboh (2022) highlight the success of social networks in enabling the creation, sharing and exchange of engaging content on an equal footing. Therefore, merging advertising and entertainment creates added value, increasing sales and presenting the advertisement as community-owned content (Ramos-Serrano, 2006). Finally, the media transmits

content as news, which is more influential because it is received through an earned medium (Capriotti, 2006).

2. Methodology

This correlational research is based on the main hypothesis that there is a relationship between two or more variables: “In transmedia storytelling, rhetorical and poetic principles —interrelated with memory and creativity— applied to street art advertising, maintain their capacities of argumentation, seduction and conviction”.

This study uses a mixed methodology to examine all street art projects that have won gold or higher prizes at these festivals between 1999 and 2024: EPICA, Grand Prix Exterieur 2012, London International Awards, Cannes Lions, El Sol, C de C, El Ojo de Iberoamérica, El Dorado and Premios Eficacia. First, a qualitative study is conducted using three techniques to determine why rhetoric and poetics are employed in street art.

Table 2. Research techniques used

Research techniques	Purpose	Content addressed
1. Review of scientific articles	To elaborate a multidisciplinary theoretical framework valid for the case study and to elaborate the final contribution.	Rhetoric, poetry, art, advertising, street art, transmedia narrative, social networks.
2. Case study	To learn about the qualities of award-winning actions between 1999 and 2024.	Photos or videos of award-winning actions.
3. Grounded theory	Build the contribution directly from the data	Information extracted from the festivals.

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

The second technique is executed because the third technique has identified the qualities of the awarded actions and constructed variables. After several analyses, the final variables and their coding are determined, providing the necessary information to achieve the objectives.

Table 3. Variables and final codifications

Advertising Festival: EPICA, Grand Prix Exterieur 2012, London International Awards, Cannes Lions, El Sol, C de C, El Ojo de Iberoamérica, El Dorado and Premios Eficacia.	Advertiser's product category: food, fashion, drinks, automobile, tourism, public administration, third sector, sport, media, small business, department stores, shopping centres and culture.	Year: 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2003, 2004, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, (...) 2024
Figure of speech combined with Street art (indicate which of the ones studied in the theoretical framework)	Campaign objective: to publicise: a new product or service, the USP, the advertiser's shop, the product range; to promote a territory; to take away customers; to encourage consumption; to raise awareness or social denunciation.	Country: Spain, France, Argentina, etc.
Advertiser: Danone, Nike, Bogota City Council, etc.	Qualitative description of the action (open response)	Technological components: WIFI, QR, sound, lighting, image projection.

Type of space: square, street, park, avenue, shopping centre, department store, museum.	The action generates interaction with the public: Yes (1)/ No (0)	Generates surprise: Yes (1)/ No (0)
Name of campaign: name of each campaign	Poetic figure combined with Street art (indicate which of the ones studied in the theoretical framework)	Reaction of the addressee (open answer)

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

The response options are coded in three phases. Open coding begins with the recording of the above information and continues with its conversion into valid grouped data in order to generate provisional categories. Where possible, the original terms are used because they enhance understanding of the study. In axial coding, each item is related to its corresponding category, provided the category has subcategories. In other words, it creates subcategories that allow the information to be coded meticulously. Up to this point, information has been collected on the various poetic and rhetorical applications. This information is then analysed quantitatively to identify the relevant information and establish the necessary notions of rhetoric and/or poetics to devise effective transmedia street art. Finally, selective coding sequentially orders the categories that make up the theory needed to analyse the actions, eliminating irrelevant ones. This provides a comprehensive view of good practice. In terms of theoretical saturation, it should be noted that all actions have been studied; no representative sample has been created (Ramos-Galarza, 2020; Rodríguez, 2021).

Subsequently, universally valid patterns are identified by applying quantitative methodology to these qualitative data. The SPSS statistical programme is used to calculate frequencies, percentages and arithmetic means.

3. Objectives

3.1. Main Objective

"To identify the most effective rhetorical and poetic techniques used in street art from an advertising perspective".

3.2. Secondary Objectives

1. Studying the rhetorical and poetic interrelations with transmedia street art by analysing award-winning festival entries.
2. Understanding the poetic efficacy of street art in advertising terms.
3. Identify the interrelations between rhetoric, memory, and creative advertising in street art.
4. To identify the rhetorical, poetic and creative implications of street art for consumers.
5. Identify the rhetorical, poetic and creative implications of street art for advertising companies.

4. Results

Table 4. Award-winning street art advertisements between 1999 and 2024

Total award-winning urban advertisements	Award-winning street art actions	Percentage represented by street art
840	107	13%

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of the awards of the festivals studied, 2025.

Table 5. Street Art advertisements awarded with gold and/or higher prizes between 1999 and 2024

Urban advertisements awarded gold and/or higher prizes	Total aStreet art actions awarded with gold and higher awards	Percentage of street art actions with Gold and higher awards
250	40	37%

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the awards of the festivals studied, 2025.

Table 6. Street Art advertisements awarded with gold between 1999 and 2024

Street art actions awarded gold and/or higher	Street art actions awarded gold	Percentage of street art actions with Gold
40	35	87'5%

Source: own elaboration based on the awards of the festivals studied, 2025.

Table 7. Street Art actions awarded with top prizes between 1999 and 2024

Street art actions awarded with gold and/or higher prizes	Street art actions awarded with top prize	Percentage of street art actions with Gold
40	5	12'5%

Source: own elaboration based on the awards of the festivals studied, 2025.

4.1. Rhetorical Analysis

Table 8. Award-winning rhetorical figures and their applications between 1999 and 2024

Rhetorical figure	Application	Award	Percentage of total awards
Analogy	- Movies in shop windows with which they share qualities	Gold	10%
		Top award	2%
	- Create customised signage to direct people to a shop	Gold	10%
	- It shows the business philosophy, the name and the distance written manually.	Gold	4,5%
Metaphor	- Dictionaries are advertised by placing definitions on urban elements.	Gold	10%
		Top award	1%
	- The colour catalogue of a paint brand is advertised by painting facades with them.	Gold	10%
	- Depicts faces of celebrities with urban elements.		
	- Transforms businesses and streets into museums to inform or raise awareness.	Gold	5%
		Gold	8%

	- It presents products, in a figurative sense, using urban objects to make people think.	Top award	3%
Hyperbole for excess to impact	- It represents a vehicle with infinite capacity.	Top prize	1%
	- Thumbnail drawings are pasted on objects or places in the urban space to capture attention and fix the message.	Gold	1%
	- Large objects (sculpture-like) are placed in public or private spaces for public use to raise social awareness.	Gold	0,5%
	- Giant figures make up hyper-realistic figures and sculptures of a woman or a girl to captivate.	Top prize	1%
	- Giant footprints in the street, in fields or in gardens visualise human environmental destruction.	Gold	
	- Giant murals represent pleasure during moments of consumption associated with the product.		2,4%
	- They represent the height to which the sea level is rising and its danger to the city, they create benches with legs more than 2 metres high.	Gold Top award	2,8% 1%
Synecdoche	- Advertise films or books by showing only one or a few of their characteristic elements in shop windows or on the street.	Gold	2%
	- Advertise films or books showing one or a few characteristic elements , accompanied by the title.	Gold	10%
Simile	- Photocopy shop placing images, on paper, pasted		

	on elements present in the urban space.	Gold	2%
	- It presents the colour catalogue of a paint brand by painting the façades of buildings.	Gold	4%
	- Draw faces on the road so that their potholes act as facial scars of the mayor who does not want to fix those potholes.	Gold	2%
	- They simulate museums with urban elements to communicate different messages.		
	- Vehicles such as billboards or newspapers are used.	Gold	3,7%
	- A fruit crate is simulated using a canopy.		
	- A British-style market is imitated to communicate that the brand comes from Britain.	Gold	1%
		Gold	1,7%
	- The Lion King is advertised to the adult population, near roads, imitating the Osborne bull.		3%
		Gold	
			1,6%
		Gold	
Repetition	- Repeating the logo, along the street, creates brand awareness, drives memorisation and creates associations.	Gold	1,6%
Before and after comparison or cause-effect comparison	- Huge sculptures of benches are placed to exaggerate the consequence of climate change.	Gold	3%
Personification	- Denounce mayors who do not fix streets.	Gold	1,8%
	- Show business closures through a notice.	Gold	0,4%
Ellipsis	- Text and logos are suppressed to communicate	Gold	10%

breast cancer only with the
colour pink.

Source: own elaboration based on the awards of the festivals studied, 2025.

On the other hand, these interventions are carried out. An urban space or piece of infrastructure that must be preserved because art is legally protected is transformed into a work of art. Examples include stickers, graffiti, illustrations, sculptures, lighting, holograms, traditional elements, cultural elements, symbolic elements, music, photomontages and personalised messages. There is also a silhouette of a jaguar that can only be seen when the lights are focused on it. Attributes are also communicated by organising concerts and monologues that are then broadcast on the internet. Women are modified from paintings in the world's most famous museums. Finally, wooden murals are reused to create information polling stations in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The illustrations represent interpreted objects and embody the advertiser's personality. They are pasted next to real urban objects to communicate a message or highlight an element. When drawn on shop windows or shutters, they communicate the added value of each shop.

4.2. Poetic Analysis

Urban written texts are short, designed to be read in a few seconds and have an immediate impact. Poetic techniques include rhyme, altered word order and the use of evocative language. They are also developed by applying different senses and meanings to evoke new sensations. Finally, the typography used in each case attracts and visually pleases the audience, based on the qualities of the addressee and the communicative objectives. These last two applications account for 2.5% of the top prizes.

4.3. Analysis of Transmedia Transcendence

Advertisers use this narrative to transform urban advertising into content for their social networks. The ephemerality and novelty of the content achieve great visibility online. It is mainly the advertisers' social profiles that bring it into the digital world. Their followers comment on and share these posts with their contacts. Occasionally, some personalise the ads by digitally editing them. Sometimes, a passer-by will share a photo of themselves with the artwork, accompanied by a comment.

When such a response occurs, the action reaches the media, which spreads the word. It could be argued that it is the community present on social networks that drives the transmedia narrative of these art advertisements. Additionally, articles like this one analyse them in detail and provide knowledge that contributes to their transmedia evolution. These actions are not designed to be shared on social networks. In other words, people share them of their own accord.

4.4. Results in Relation to the Objectives

The main objective was to "identify the best rhetorical and poetic devices in street art from an advertising point of view". The most common devices were metaphor (10%), synecdoche (10%) and ellipsis (10%), followed by simile (4%) and comparative (3%).

Secondary:

1. Analyse the rhetorical and poetic interrelations with transmedia street art by studying the actions awarded at festivals. These actions do not encourage people to share them on social networks. People share them because they want to.

2. Understanding the poetic effectiveness of street art in advertising terms. 37% of the actions win gold or higher prizes, demonstrating their effectiveness.

3. Identify the interrelations between rhetoric, memory, and advertising creativity in street art. The theoretical framework indicates that these factors aid memorisation, and some of the award-winning actions provide data on improving notoriety.

4. Identify the rhetorical, poetic and creative implications of street art for consumers. The theoretical framework suggests that street art increases attention, improves memory and enhances recall.

5. Identify the rhetorical, poetic and creative implications of street art for advertising companies. The theoretical framework suggests that it makes their advertising more novel, attractive and impactful.

5. Conclusions and Input

5.1. Conclusion

Quantitative research on representative cases shows that professional performance in communication and creativity is not underpinned by inspiration. Both art and creativity in advertising are based on previous studies that chart the way forward.

This article examines the use of art for commercial purposes. While some artists reject this approach, advertisers exploit it because they recognise that society associates art with novelty. Furthermore, novelty is associated with quality and differentiation, meaning that art can enhance corporate communication and increase creativity. This improves the memorisation and recall of the message and the brand. Therefore, street art can positively influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

5.2. Contribution

The final contribution contains six keys to working with street art from rhetorical and poetic points of view.

1. Street art is effective because it stands out from the competition, boosts creativity, grabs attention, improves memorisation and consumer recall, and is accepted by professionals and society alike.

2. Linking a brand or product with art makes it more appealing and approachable. Consequently, consumers are more willing to engage with the advertising message.

3. Although it is created in the physical world, it has continuity in the digital world because people comment on it, personalise it and continue to recreate it, and it can be stored as art in the collective or target memory. Therefore, it occupies a place in transmedia narratives, which advertisers like so much.

4. Rhetoric provides resources of various origins that can be used to develop solutions tailored to each marketing problem, such as product differentiation, grabbing attention, persuasion, exalting the qualities of a product or brand, creating an emotional connection with consumers, raising awareness, and so on.

5. Poetics makes the brand and product emotionally appealing. This helps consumers to see that they share feelings with the brand or product, which helps them to reconnect with it and trust it again.

6. Social media and electronic devices enable anyone to recreate images. Consequently, street art advertisements, which become part of the collective memory, are revived through personalisation and sharing on social media. This transforms the corporate message into a shared, citizen-led message that reaches more people.

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