



Keeping things fresh

In an increasingly crowded Melbourne street art scene, the members of the Everfresh crew have continually stood out for their daring and creativity. Now they've produced a little black book to prove it. By **David Scott**.

REVIEW
 "We eat, breathe, s**t, drink, live Everfresh studio."

So begins *Everfresh: Blackbook*, a chronicle of the life and times of the members of the Everfresh design studio and their creative output over the past six years. It's a statement of their commitment to their teamwork, maintaining rebellious streaks and artistic flair in an increasingly homogenised Melbourne street art scene, themes that are carried throughout the 245-page homage to the joys of 'bombing' train lines, tagging doorways and pasting up most of Collingwood, Fitzroy and surrounds.

No doubt many readers will have seen one of the collective's pieces of work around the city, consciously or not, from Sync's iconic robot-esque Sektapods or Rone's fabled 'weeping woman' paste-ups, to the massive 'Welcome to Fitzroy' mural gracing the side of the Night Cat bar, a true representation of assembled talents in the studio. Certainly, the Everfresh crew have penetrated Melbourne's street art scene as no other, and *Everfresh: Blackbook* provides true testament to their endeavours. It contains literally hundreds of images, lovingly arranged and set by group member Meggs, seemingly covering every wall from Hosier Lane to Hoddle Street.

It's certainly a lush visual experience as you flick through the book, the many walls and behind-the-scenes shots

popping with colour and doing an admiral job of drawing you down the garden path in a sense, mimicking the knack Melbourne's laneways have for encouraging unintended exploration. The addition of replica newspaper clippings, jutting out from the book's spine-like aerials on a city skyline, adds to the feel of the book as a tome of art, and not a mere coffee table throwaway.

And while *Everfresh: Blackbook* acts as a perfectly colourful time capsule to the transient art that graces Melbourne's laneways, underpasses and factories, it never gets bogged down in arguments over vandalism, vanity and validity. This is both the book's key strength and worst weakness, as the text often strays well into the territory of self-congratulatory praise and navel-gazing when the sheer volume of pictorial content speaks for itself. However, the quotes scattered throughout do give much context to the work the crew has done.

Everfresh: Blackbook is a noteworthy entrant in a crowded street-art book scene and immediately stands out with its high standard of presentation, no surprise given the creative minds at work at Everfresh. It's slick, enlightening, and unlike other books in the genre, doesn't seek to challenge or confront the reader on the pros and cons of street art in an overt way. The success of the studio, on and off the street, is all in evidence here, and perhaps that's all we need.



The final Night Cat mural and original sketch, 2009 (30m long x 5m high). This image is taken from Everfresh: Blackbook, published by The Miegunyah Press.