

A Top-Secret Artist: Banksy

“This is the first time that the world of art belongs to the people. We need to make it count.” – Banksy



Although his first works are now 30 years old, we still don't know Banksy's real name or identity.

He is an anonymous graffiti (street) artist, activist and film director. He is from England, but his art decorates walls, streets and bridges all around the globe: in the USA, France, Israel, Palestine, and Australia. Banksy's work is focused on political and social issues. The message is usually against war, capitalism and hate. The art technique which he uses is called stencilling, and he sometimes adds slogans. His graffiti often include rats, apes, policemen, soldiers, children, and older people.

Many famous people want to buy his works, which isn't always easy. He doesn't sell photographs or reproductions of his street graffiti. Sometimes, however, he sells original graffiti. This means that people have to remove the part of the wall on which Banksy painted. In 2018, he sold one of his pictures at an auction. After the buyer paid a million pounds, a secret shredder destroyed the picture.

He made his first documentary, *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, in 2010. The next year it was nominated for an Oscar. In 2014, he received the Person of the Year Award. He

became a British cultural icon – young adults from outside England named him one of the people that they associated with UK culture.

Today, he has many followers. There is even the "Banksy effect", which refers to the way his work helped to make street art more popular. It is now a part of culture and daily life.



Answer the questions.

- 1 Does Banksy's work look familiar to you?
- 2 Do you think it is valuable, or is it vandalism? Why?
- 3 Is there a piece of street art you like? Can you describe it?
- 4 In your opinion, why did Banksy destroy the picture after the auction?
- 5 Which questions would you put to him in an interview?
- 6 What topic should Banksy make a graffiti about in Croatia?
- 7 What message do you think is important?
- 8 Try to make a graffiti of your own, in your notebook.