



PUBLIC ART



What is public art?

Public art is a reflection of how we see the world – the artist's response to our time and place combined with our own sense of who we are.

Public art is not an art “form.”

Its size can be huge or small. It can tower fifty feet high or call attention to the paving beneath your feet. Its shape can be abstract or realistic (or both), and it may be cast, carved, built, assembled, or painted. It can be site-specific or stand in contrast to its surroundings. What distinguishes public art is the unique association of how it is made, where it is, and what it means. Public art can express community values, enhance our environment, transform a landscape, heighten our awareness, or question our assumptions. Placed in public sites, this art is there for everyone, a form of collective community expression. Public art is a reflection of how we see the world – the artist's response to our time and place combined with our own sense of who we are.

Who is the “public” for public art?

In a diverse society, all art cannot appeal to all people, nor should it be expected to do so. Art attracts attention; that is what it is supposed to do. Is it any wonder, then, that public art causes controversy? Varied popular opinion is inevitable, and it is a healthy sign that the public environment is acknowledged rather than ignored. To some degree, every public art project is an interactive process involving artists, architects, design professionals, community residents, civic leaders, politicians, approval agencies, funding agencies, and construction teams. The challenge of this communal process is to enhance rather than limit the artist's involvement.



OPEN AIR (2012) by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer.

What is the “art” of public art?

As our society and its modes of expression evolve, so will our definitions of public art. Materials and methods change to reflect our contemporary culture. The process, guided by professional expertise and public involvement, should seek out the most imaginative and productive affinity between artist and community. Likewise, artists must bring to the work their artistic integrity, creativity, and skill. What is needed is a commitment to invention, boldness, and cooperation – not compromise.

Why public art?

Public art is a part of our public history, part of our evolving culture and our collective memory. It reflects and reveals our society and adds meaning to our cities. As artists respond to our times, they reflect their inner vision to the outside world, and they create a chronicle of our public experience.

Adapted from Public Art in Philadelphia

What is Public Art?

Introduction

A public artwork is an artwork in any medium, planned and executed outside a gallery context and intended specifically for exhibition within public space.

Public spaces are generally open and accessible to all. They can be indoors – such as foyers, atriums, airports or shopping centres – or outdoors – such as forecourts, parks, squares, freeways or plazas.

There are many types of Public Art:

Permanent



Permanent public artworks are intended stay in position for long periods – sometimes centuries. Two common examples are statues and sculptures. Because they are intended to last, artists create these works from highly durable materials like bronze, marble, granite, steel and basalt (bluestone). The oldest piece of public art in Melbourne is the Burke and Wills Monument by Charles Summers, which has been on display since 1865. Surprisingly, given its size (eight metres tall and three metres across) and weight, it has been moved to different locations in the city no less than five times.

Charles Summers, *Burke and Wills*, bronze, granite, 1865.
Courtesy The City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.

Temporary

Temporary public artwork has a predetermined lifetime that can range anywhere between a few hours to several years. Examples can include installations, projections and performances created for public space. The materials and techniques artists use are diverse and can include plants, paper, chalk, video, sound and performance. Another useful synonym for temporary is ephemeral. Nick Selenitsch's series of artworks titled *Linemarking* 2009-12 are an example of temporary public art making. These drawings were made in several outdoor public locations throughout the city of Frankston, and after a few weeks completely washed away. Today they exist only as photographic documentation.



Nicholas Selenitsch *Linemarking*, site-specific chalk drawing, Central Frankston as part of White Street Project, 2009. Nicholas Selenitsch is represented in Australia by Sutton Gallery, Melbourne. Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery Melbourne.

Stand Alone

Stand-alone artworks are defined by being three-dimensional and independent of other structures, such as buildings. One grand example is *The Great Petition* 2008 by artists Susan Hewitt and Penelope Lee. Its form is derived from the original Women's Suffrage Petition of 1891, which resulted in women gaining the right to vote in Victoria in 1908. When it was submitted to parliament in 1891 the petition bore the signatures of 30,000 women and was 260 metres long, earning it the nickname 'The Monster Petition'.



Susan Hewitt & Penelope Lee, *The Great Petition*, steel, bluestone, 2008. Commissioned by the Victorian government through Arts Victoria, the Community Support Fund and the Office of Women's Policy in collaboration with the City of Melbourne, 2008. Courtesy the artists and The City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.

Site-specific Installation

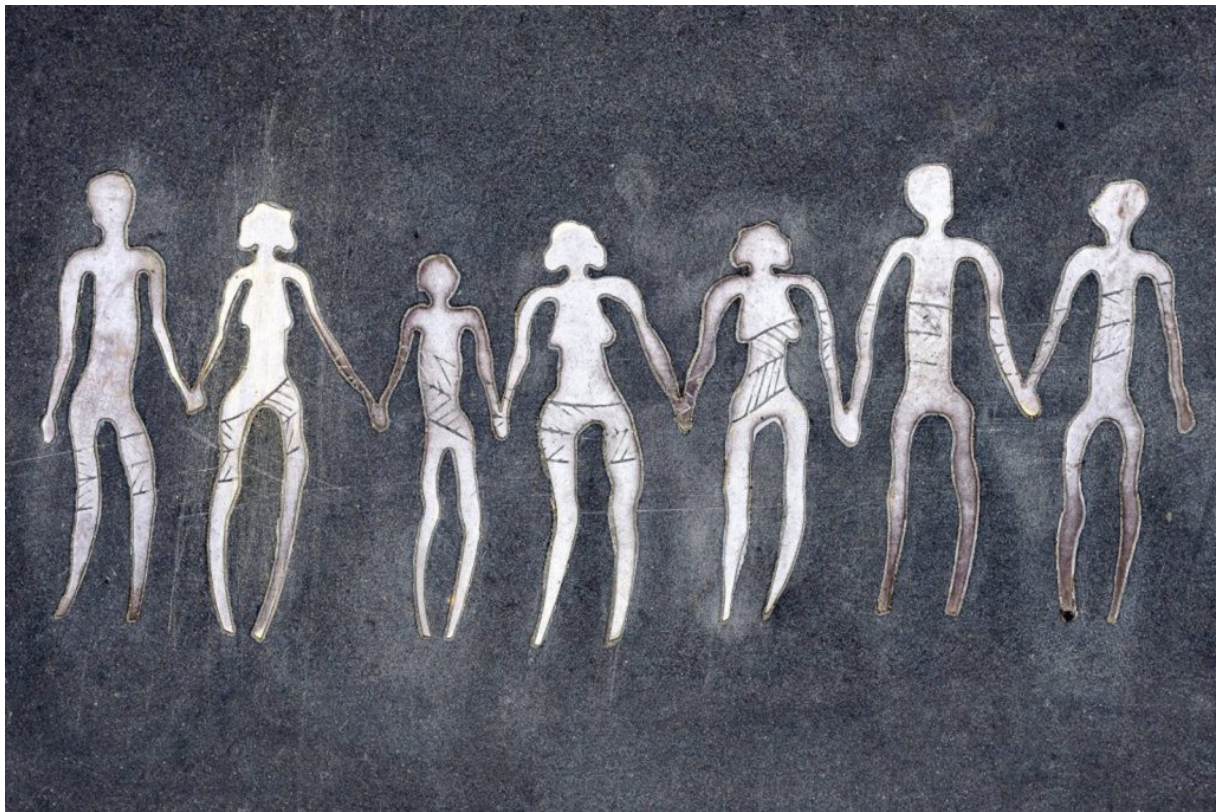
A site-specific installation describes a situation when the artwork and the site are equally important and each informs the other. Like a conversation, which needs at least two people, the elements in a site-specific installation are in dialogue with one another, as each gains meaning from the other in a reciprocal relationship. Julia Davis' site-specific installation *Headspace (Lake Brown)* 2010 was completed by the artist during a creative residency in rural Western Australia, where she was asked to create an artwork that related to either the location or local community. Davis responded by gathering salt from a local salt lake which she then used to cast a bust of her head and upper torso. This sculptural self-portrait was then placed back into the salt lake, which gradually eroded the artwork and reclaimed the salt. This artwork poetically merged the artist's identity and the local landscape. Both elements – the lake and the sculpture – were equally integral to the artwork.



Julia Davis, *Headspace (Lake Brown)*, natural lake salt, 2010. Courtesy the artist.

Integrated

An integrated artwork is one that is incorporated into another structure – such as a building, streetscape or landscape design. Typical examples of integrated public artworks include street paving, sculptural seating, and artist-designed glazing (windows). *Another View Site 17* 1995 by Ray Thomas, a Gunnai artist, is made in bronze that is integrated into the bluestone paving of Collins Street, in Melbourne. It represents the Koorie creation story of the Karak Gurok (Seven Sisters) who were the daughters of Bunjil, the Eagle man, and Gunawarra, the Black Swan woman. The seven figures each represent one of the seven colours of the rainbow. This artwork is one of a series which make up the ‘Another View Indigenous Walking Trail’ that guides visitors through Melbourne’s CBD to sites of Indigenous historical significance. By integrating his artwork directly into the footpath Thomas’ artwork encourages the viewer to consider the ground on which they stand as having both Indigenous and colonial histories, and to reconsider metaphorical stability of that foundation.



Ray Thomas, *Another View Site 17*, bronze, 1995. Courtesy the artist and The City of Melbourne Heritage and Art Collection.

Applied

An applied public artwork is one that is applied directly to the surface, indoors or outdoors, of another structure, and is almost always two-dimensional. Common examples of applied artwork include murals on buildings, chalk drawing on footpaths, legal ‘street art’, and illegal graffiti. The Melbourne Art Trams are a more unusual example of applied public art. Artists are invited to propose ideas for an artwork specifically tailored to feature on the exterior surface of a Melbourne tram. This example is by artist Rose Nolan, who chose to create a text-based composition that wrapped all the way around the tram to form the sentence ‘*It’s okay to be alright*’. Nolan’s artwork acted like a public broadcast, reassuring all viewers that to be average, good enough or ordinary in life is fine and ‘okay’.

Nolan has said about the artwork, “*The sense of circularity and rhythm from the space of being ‘okay’ to the space of being ‘alright’ and back again replicates, in some way, the movement and rhythm of this tram as it winds its way across the city.*”



Rose Nolan, *It’s okay to be alright* Melbourne Art Tram, 2013.
Commissioned by Yarra Trams and Melbourne Festival. Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery. Photograph: Adam Chandler.

Performance Based

Performance-based public artworks can include dance, theatre, music and other live actions in public space. Because performance-based artworks involve live performers they are always temporary. These artworks are often devised in response to the unique features of a public space, and these responses can be expressed using: choreography (for dancers), direction (for actors), or musical scores (for sound). For the off-site exhibition program ACCA In The City in 2015, Israeli performance group Public Movement choreographed the performance *Training Ground* for six contemporary dancers. Conceived in response to the public space of the Melbourne City Square, *Training Ground* referenced Australian Rules Football, and took inspiration from AFL players training drills. The performance was advertised to take place at set times each day, but commenced without warning and was not signposted, meaning that passers-by who were not aware of the performance were surprised by what appeared to be a strange, spontaneous ritual, right in the heart of the city.

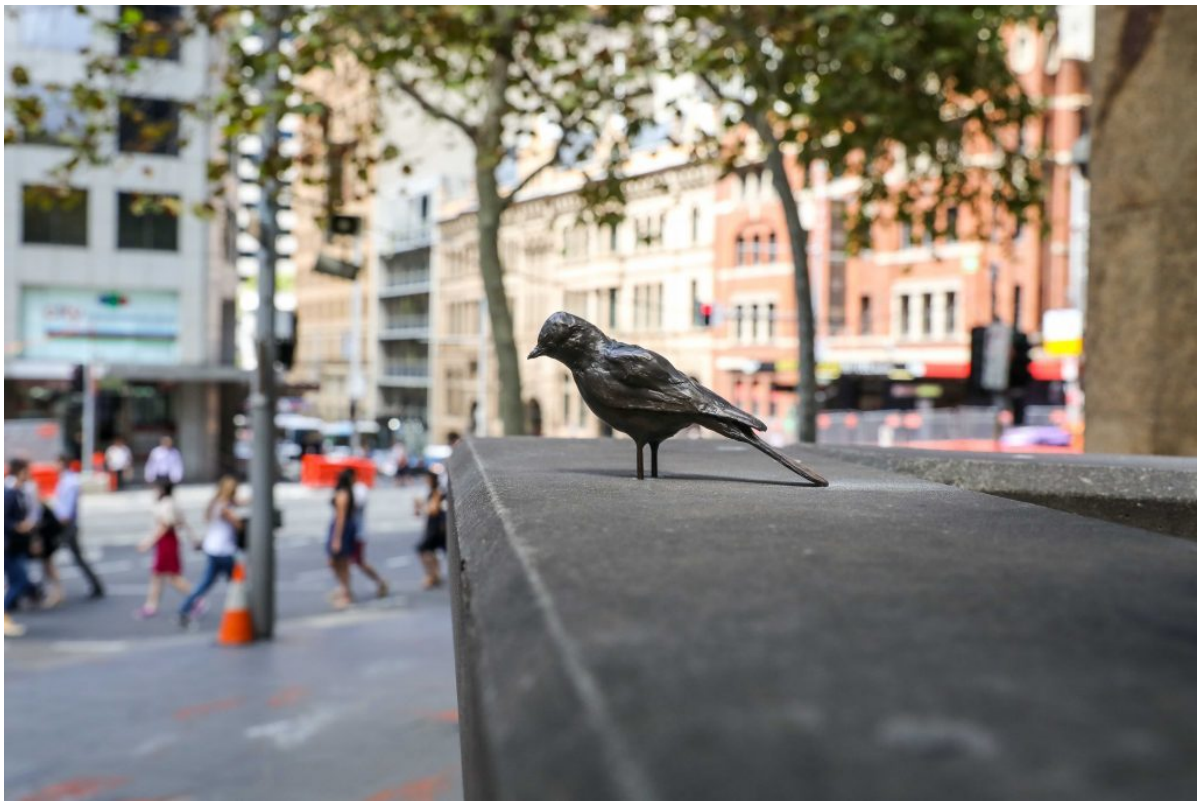


Public Movement, *Training Ground*, 2015.
Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

Large or Small Scale

Most public artworks, new and old, tend to be large scale. This is because in most public contexts artists must account for the expansive scale of the space – open parks, tall buildings and large trees can all visually dwarf artworks placed in their vicinity. By making a work large-scale this effect can be counteracted. A useful synonym for large-scale is monumental. However, many contemporary artists are interested in exploring small-scale artwork in public space. One reason for this is that the encounter with a small-scale artwork can be an intimate experience for the viewer. By contrast, an encounter with a monumental artwork can be an overwhelming or alienating experience.

For her public artwork *The Distance of Your Heart* 2018 English artist Tracey Emin installed over 60 small-scale bronze birds along Macquarie Place, in Sydney. Emin's life-size sculptures are perched like real birds above doors, on public seating, and buildings. The scale of her sculptures, which are small enough to be held in the hand, bring the viewer's attention to the quiet, intimate details of their environment in a way that a large-scale artwork would not.



Tracey Emin, *The Distance of Your Heart*, bronze, 2014.
Courtesy the artist and The City of Sydney.

Static

Static is another word for still, so a static artwork is one that does not move or change. Two commonly found types of static public artworks are murals painted onto walls, or statues carved from marble or cast in bronze. Ron Robertson-Swann's *Vault* 1980, which is located just outside ACCA, is a prominent example of a static sculpture as public artwork.



Ron Robertson-Swann, *Vault*, steel, paint, 1980. 615 x 1184 x 1003cm.
Commissioned by the City of Melbourne,
City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection.

Kinetic

A kinetic artwork is one that moves in some way. One prominent example of a kinetic artwork is *Tree of Life* 2010 by sculptor Phil Price. The 'arms' on this sculpture are carefully engineered to catch even the gentlest air currents and rotate in a convincingly organic motion. Because real trees move and sway in the wind, Price's choice of subject matter is an apt choice for a kinetic sculpture, as the artwork's movement evokes the movement of an actual tree. This sculpture was originally commissioned for the Peninsula Link Freeway in Melbourne, and is now located in the McClelland Sculpture Park.



Phil Price, *Tree of Life*, aluminium, internal mechanism, 2010.

Sound Based

Sound can form a component of a public artwork, such as in a performance alongside dance, or an artwork might be exclusively sonic. Some examples of the ways in which sound can be used in public artwork are as a broadcast, soundscape, voice, or musical performance.

For their contribution to the ACCA in the City 2011 public art program, collaborative artists Sonia Leber and David Chesworth recorded hundreds of people calling and talking to their pets in public parks around Melbourne. These soundbites were then mixed into a soundtrack and broadcast into the space of the Melbourne City Square. The work called out to passers-by with unexpected beckoning, coaxing and controlling commands, highlighting a type of communication that is all around us in public space, yet usually goes unremarked.



Sonia Leber and David Chesworth, *We, The Masters*, 2011. Vinyl, 2 channel audio, up to 14 speakers, digital player, cabling, control gear, size variable approx. 7m x 40m. Commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

Digital

Examples of digital public artworks include video played on an outdoor screen, or computer-generated imagery (CGI) projected directly onto the surface of a building. Some artists specialise in using a CGI technique called light mapping, which allows light projections to be tailored to the architectural features of a particular building. The annual Gertrude Street Projection Festival (GSPF) in Melbourne is dedicated to digital projection artworks in public space. This example, by artist Nick Azidis, convincingly transforms the exterior of this high-rise block of flats by giving it a surface of antique illustrations at a great scale.



Nick Azidis, *Untitled*, 2017. Commissioned by the Gertrude Street Projection Festival, courtesy the artist.

Street and Graffiti Art

Started: 1967

KEY ARTISTS

Banksy
Daniel Buren

Jean-Michel Basquiat
Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Keith Haring
The Guerrilla Girls

"I've always wanted to make work that communicates to the masses, not the minority."

D*FACE

SUMMARY OF STREET AND GRAFFITI ART

The common idiom "to take to the streets" has been used for years to reflect a diplomatic arena for people to protest, riot, or rebel. Early graffiti writers of the 1960s and 70s co-opted this philosophy as they began to tag their names across the urban landscapes of New York City, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. As graffiti bloomed outward across the U.S., Street Art evolved to encompass any visual art created in public locations, specifically unsanctioned artwork.

The underlying impetus behind Street Art grew out of the belief that art should function in opposition to, and sometimes even outside of, the hegemonic system of laws, property, and ownership; be accessible, rather than hidden away inside galleries, museums, and private collections; and be democratic and empowering, in that all people (regardless of race, age, gender, economic status, etc.) should be able to create art and have it be seen by others. Although some street artists do create installations or sculpture, they are more widely known for the use of unconventional art mediums such as spray paint, stencils, wheat paste posters, and stickers. Street Art has also been called independent public art, post-graffiti, and guerrilla art.

KEY IDEAS

- A central aspect of Street Art is its ephemerality. Any unsanctioned public work runs the risk of being removed or painted over by authorities or by other artists. No one can own it or buy it. Viewers are seeing a one-of-a-kind work that is likely not to last. This temporariness creates an immediacy and electricity around the work.
- Street Art can often be viewed as a tool for promoting an artist's personal agenda surrounding contemporary social concerns, with city facades acting in the same role as the old fashioned soapbox; a place to extol the artist's opinion on a myriad issues ranging from politics and environmentalism to consumerism and consumption.
- Many street artists use the public canvas of buildings, bridges, lampposts, underpasses, ditches, sidewalks, walls, and benches to assure their individual messages are seen by a wide swath of the population, unfiltered by target demographics or being accessible only to art world denizens.
- As advertising infiltrates, the communal consciousness on a constant daily basis, Street Art has oftentimes been coined a counter attack. Popular street artist Banksy has said, "To some people breaking into property and painting it might seem a little inconsiderate, but in reality the 30 square centimetres of your brain are trespassed upon every day by teams of marketing experts. Graffiti is a perfectly proportionate response to being sold unattainable goals by a society obsessed with status and infamy. Graffiti is the sight of an unregulated free market getting the kind of art it deserves."



Banksy's iconic image of girl and balloon in South Bank, London

Street Art is supposed to be the ultimate in democratized art; seen by everyone, owned by no-one. But this hasn't stopped a Banksy becoming the movement's ultimate collectible; with celebrities including Justin Bieber, Serena Williams and Angelina Jolie, having acquired the elusive artist's work.

IMPORTANT ART AND ARTISTS OF STREET AND GRAFFITI ART

The below artworks are the most important in Street and Graffiti Art - that both overview the major ideas of the movement, and highlight the greatest achievements by each artist in Street and Graffiti Art. Don't forget to visit the artist overview pages of the artists that interest you.



TAKI 183: Untitled (Tag on Pole) (1973)

Artwork Images Google images

Untitled (Tag on Pole) (1973)

Artist: TAKI 183

Artwork description & Analysis: This work serves as an early example of tagging, the type of graffiti writing in which the writer scrawls his/her pseudonym (also known as their "tag") using spray paint or marker, as quickly as possible in as many locations as possible, with the goal of "getting up", or gaining credibility and fame for proliferating one's name around the city. An artist's tag is a pseudonym, which protects both the individual's identity and anonymity, while simultaneously providing the writer an opportunity to develop a new identity or persona (much like a digital avatar). In fact, TAKI 183 is often credited as being the first tagger (although some argue that CORNBREAD of Philadelphia was the first). As journalist Norman Mailer paraphrased the words of graffiti artist CAY 161, "the name is the faith of graffiti." More than anything else, graffiti writers convey their identity and their existence by painting their tag in public spaces. Although considered more as vandalism than art, tagging proliferated the idea that one could become known by demonstrating their presence in public spaces, thus providing the raw foundation for artists to evolve out from within.

Permanent Marker - New York City



TRAP, DEZ and DAZE: Untitled (New York Subway Graffiti) (1982)
 Untitled (New York Subway Graffiti) (1982)
 Artist: TRAP, DEZ and DAZE

Artwork description & Analysis: The text in this "piece" (the common term for a work of graffiti art) reads "TRAP DEZ DAZE" (the tags/pseudonyms of the artists), although the style and placement of the letters may make it difficult to discern for viewers not familiar with this style of lettering. The text uses several bright colours, and employs outlining and shading to give the impression of three-dimensionality. This

piece, like much New York graffiti of the 1980s, was completed on the side of a subway train. This choice of location would have garnered greater prestige for the artists, as writing on subway cars put them at very high risk of apprehension by the authorities, and thus considered more daring. Writing on subway cars was also a sure way to rapidly increase one's fame, as the artwork would then travel around the city's subway system, being seen by a far greater number of people than would a stationary piece on a wall.

This piece is a typical example of "wildstyle" graffiti, which includes complex, interlocking or overlapping letters, and sometimes cartoon-like characters and other images, all painted in bright colours. Photojournalist Martha Cooper noted in 1982 that "inaccessibility reinforces that sense of having a secret society inaccessible to outsiders [...] a writer will therefore often make a piece deliberately hard to read." As well, graffiti writers frequently attempt to create a sense of depth and three-dimensionality in wildstyle works. These types of pieces garner higher levels of respect for writers as opposed to "throwups" (simpler pieces using maximum two or three colours to create two-dimensional bubble text) or "tags", because wildstyle work involves more artistic prowess and takes longer to complete, thus putting the writer at a higher risk for run-ins with police.

Spray paint - New York City



Blek le Rat: Tango (1985)
 Artwork Images Google images
 Tango (1985)
 Artist: Blek le Rat

Artwork description & Analysis: This work, created by spray-painting onto a wall over a pre-cut stencil, depicts a couple in the midst of dancing. As we can see, the use of the stencil allowed the artist to create a striking, sharp image with clean, crisp lines, using only black spray paint over a

white surface.

In 1971, Blek le Rat took a trip to the United States, where he was amazed by the graffiti he saw all over the city centres. When he returned to Paris, he began to try his own hand at this form of expression. Seeing Fascist stencils in Italy during his youth, as well as political paintings in French Algeria, left a lasting impression on him, and in 1981 he decided to start making his own stencil works around Paris, beginning with small rats. Like Bristol's Banksy, Blek le Rat sees the rat as an ideal symbol for the graffiti artist, as both operate under cover of darkness to evade capture and eradication. Blek le Rat explains, "I began to spray some small rats in the streets of Paris because rats are the only wild animals living in cities, and only rats will survive when the human race disappears and dies out." He then moved on to larger stencil projects, becoming the first known artist to work with stencils to create pictures rather than just text. He explains the benefits of working with stencils, saying, "There are no accidents with stencils. Images created this way are clean and beautiful. You prepare it in your studio and then you can reproduce it indefinitely. I'm not good enough to paint freehand. Stencil is a technique well suited to the streets because it's fast. You don't have to deal with the worry of the police catching you."

Spray paint - Frasso Telesino, Italy



Banksy

British Graffiti Artist, Political Activist, and Film Director

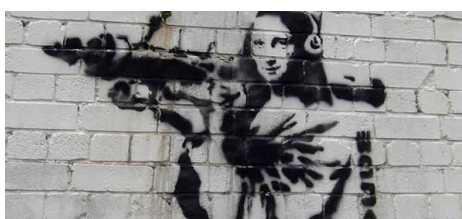
"A wall is a very big weapon. It's one of the nastiest things you can hit someone with."

BANKSY

With tongue firmly planted in cheek, English graffiti artist and international prankster Banksy has managed to become one of the world's most recognized artists while remaining relatively anonymous. Staying true to the credos of street art, he has built a celebrated body of work, both permanent and impermanent, that utilizes satire, subversion, dark humour, and irony to create resonant social, political, and humanist messages for the masses on a populous and public level. His style is universally familiar, founded on a signature stencil aesthetic that has elevated him from mere man with a spray can to a highly creative artist in his own right. He is responsible for catapulting guerrilla work into the mainstream as a viable form of art.

Key Ideas

- Banksy's artistry lies in his ability to use humour and sardonic wit to trick viewers into contemplating the underlying seriousness of his messages about capitalism, advertising, politics, and humanity. It is this very sense of innocent whimsy coupled with daring, glaring truths about our times that lift him to a role as potent social mediator all under the guise of art.
- Because of the volatility and impermanence of Banksy's chosen canvas, i.e. the street and improvisational pop-up public places, he remains true to guerrilla art's philosophy, being that the commodification of art is a blasphemous way to validate an artist within only a specific social sector or market.
- Anonymity has been Banksy's modus operandi, largely because it removes the status of artist as celebrity and instead forces a focus on the artwork. It also allows for the freedom of telling one's unapologetic truth without regard to consequence.
- In an ironic twist of fate, Banksy's subversive mien has only furthered his crossover to mainstream acceptance as the world takes note of his signature style and lack of any noted ego drive toward artistic recognition. The artist himself has become a bridge not unlike the ones his artwork aims to build.
- Because graffiti is illegal, Banksy's work continues to raise questions in the social sphere about the lines between public art and vandalism. If his work on the side of a building becomes a collectible, protected piece while another less known street artist is jailed for performing a similar action, what does this signify about the hypocrisy afforded to fame?



Whether Banksy is one person, or a group of people we do not know. However, it is a fact that he (she, or it) has created some of the most powerful, controversial, witty, and brilliant contemporary art.

Important Art by Banksy



Kissing Coppers (2004)

Spray paint - Originally painted in Brighton, England. Now in private collection

Artwork description & Analysis: In this iconic image, two (seemingly male) police officers in full, typical British uniforms are depicted kissing, in what appears to be a loving embrace. This work was originally spray-painted on the side of the Prince Albert pub in Trafalgar Street near the downtown core of the city of Brighton. Before its creation, one of Banksy's associates approached the pub owner on his behalf to seek permission for the work. The pub owner says, "My first thought was, 'oh no'. I thought we'd get in loads of trouble for it." However, to his delight, after its creation, a group of uniformed officers appeared in front of the pub to view the piece and proceeded to take pictures. In

2011, the piece was replaced with a copy protected by a Perspex case, while the original was flown to the United States to be sold at auction.

The piece can be read in many ways. In one respect, Banksy is advocating for a sexual-identity accepting society by placing icons of authority in a pro-gay position. His use of policemen, rather than ordinary citizens, is intriguing, because the very subjects of his tender portrayal are often the ones working to eradicate his vandalism. While some believe that he is poking fun at policemen, showing them in a vulnerable, intimate moment, others read the work more positively, as showing a human side to the police force, and emphasizing the strong bonds that exist on the police force between partners and teammates. The work is an undeniable testament to Banksy's use of irony to challenge us to build a bridge of understanding between expected enemies of ideology.



Rage, the Flower Thrower (2005)

Stencil and spray paint - Bethlehem

Artwork description & Analysis: This work now covered and protected by a Perspex overlay, features a man dressed up in what we associate with traditional riot gear, with a bandana obscuring his face, and his cap on back-to-front. His stance is one of a person about to lob a Molotov cocktail; he is taking aim and is ready to throw his weapon.

However, instead of a weapon, he holds a bunch of flowers (which are the only part of the mural to appear in colour.) This piece is located on a wall on the side of a garage in Jerusalem

on the main road to Beit Sahour, Bethlehem.

By substituting a weapon with a bunch of flowers, Banksy is advocating peace instead of war, and he opted to install this message of peace in a high-conflict area. The work also carries the message that peace comes with active hard work. The bouquet of flowers in this work, in addition to symbolizing peace, life, and love, may also be understood as commemorating lost lives in an age-old religious conflict. It is a fine example of Banksy's use of art to relay messages of social importance.



Napalm Girl (2004-05)

Screen-print on paper

Artwork description & Analysis: Again, Banksy has taken a pre-existing image - in this case an iconic photograph from Vietnam in 1972, of a girl - Kim Phuc - fleeing from a napalm attack on her village. The original photograph was taken by associated press photographer Nick Ut and has developed into a short hand for the atrocities of the Vietnam

War. Banksy has isolated the image of the horror-stricken girl (originally surrounded by a few other clothed children and seven soldiers running down a road away from the site of the napalm attack) and flanked her with Mickey Mouse and Ronald McDonald. These two instantly recognizable, smiling characters, when juxtaposed with the image of Napalm Girl, give the image a very twisted and sinister feel.

Both Mickey Mouse and Ronald McDonald are two family-friendly faces of American capitalism, the same country that dropped Napalm on Vietnam. Banksy's work then becomes a critique of not just America but also of capitalism. The girl's horror-stricken face is juxtaposed against the two characters' big, bright smiles. In this simple image, Banksy shows both the fun, carefree facade of American culture, and the reality that America also has a very dark, underbelly which drops bombs on people, and both commercializes and glamorizes war. Banksy once stated that "The greatest crimes in the world are not committed by people breaking the rules but by people following the rules. It's people who follow orders that drop bombs and massacre villages."

Biography

Childhood

Very little is known of Banksy's youth, as he continues to keep his true identity a secret. It is reported that he played (as goalkeeper) with the Easton Cowboys football club during the 1990s and early 2000s. According to Will Simpson, another long-time member of the Easton Cowboys, Banksy went on tour with the team to Mexico in 2001 and painted a number of murals in the communities they played in, including one painting that was "raffled off to raise money for water projects in Chiapas in south-western Mexico."

According to investigation of several alleged former schoolmates and associates, along with indication by the geographic locations of Banksy's work, the artist is believed to be Robin Gunningham, a former student at the public Bristol Cathedral School. There has also been

speculation that rather than being a single person, Banksy is a team of seven artists.

Education and Early training

Because of his anonymity, not much can be surmised about Banksy's education or training in art. Yet, from very early on in his career we find a creative proficiency with using original imagery to develop his own unique voice - one that combined controversial and humorous visuals to create anti-war, anti-capitalism, and anti-establishment messages.

In the early 1990s, Banksy began working as a freehand graffiti artist with the DryBreadZ Crew (DBZ) in his hometown of Bristol. Around 1994, he turned to stencil art, inspired by fellow street artist 3D who later became a founding member of the band Massive Attack. Stencils are traditionally hand drawn or printed onto sheets of acetate or card stock, and then cut out by hand. The stencils are then affixed to a surface, such as a wall, and spray-painted. When the stencil is removed, the image remains. This first signature tool allowed Banksy to execute pieces on the fly. Like many street artists, he adopted common recurring motifs such as apes, policemen, soldiers, rioters, children, and the elderly to mark his stamp in public spaces, which quickly began to garner a following. By proliferating these iconic-stencilled images around Bristol and London, he rapidly gained the attention of the street art community and the general public.



The first large wall mural attributed to Banksy is The Mild Mild West, painted in 1997 over an advertisement for a solicitors' office on Stokes Croft in Bristol. Highlighting his activist streak, the mural depicted a teddy bear throwing a Molotov cocktail at three riot policemen and was made in response to the highly publicized violent police reaction to several underground raves at the time.

A prototypical street artist, Banksy justified his vandalism of public space, and his use of the city as canvas, as being a direct response to what he called "Brandalism," or, "any advertisement in public space that gives you no choice whether you see it or not...The people who truly deface our neighbourhoods are the companies that scrawl giant slogans across buildings and buses trying to make us feel inadequate unless we buy their stuff. They expect to be able to shout their message in your face from every available surface but you are never allowed to answer back. Well, they started the fight and the wall is the weapon of choice to hit them back."

Banksy also frequently used rats in his art, as did his predecessor, the street artist Blek le Rat, who once stated, "I began to spray some small rats in the streets of



Paris because rats are the only wild animals living in cities, and only rats will survive when the human race disappears and dies out." In Banksy's work, these nocturnal creatures (to most people associated with disease and infestation) can be understood as a sort of pseudonym or self-portrait of the artist who completes his illegal works under the cover of darkness. Rats are also a sign of resistance, tenacity, intelligence, and survival, as they live in constant conflict with men, under threat of extermination, much like street artists who constantly struggle to evade the authorities and erasure by government anti-graffiti programs. Banksy said, "If you feel dirty, insignificant, or unloved, then rats are a good role model. They exist without permission, they have no respect for the hierarchy of society, and

they have sex 50 times a day." The word "rat" also serves as an anagram of "art," although Banksy has admitted that he painted rats for several years before someone made him aware of this fact.

In the 1990s he met Bristol photographer Steve Lazarides, who began photographing Banksy and his work, and then went on to become his agent until 2009. Lazarides recently stated, "When I first met this scruffy, grumpy guy back in 1997, I would have never guessed that 20 years on he would be the most famous artist of his generation, and that his work would be studied on school curriculums." He also says, "I worked with him [Banksy] for 11 glorious years, during which time we broke every rule in the art rule book along with a fair few laws. He has since gone on to become a global superstar and has retained his ability to shock and make people chuckle."

After Banksy's professional relationship with Lazarides ended, he created his own organization, Pest Control, which acts as sole representative and contact liaison for his work, in charge of verifying authorship of his pieces and issuing documents of provenance to buyers.

Mature Period

A fake British £10 note produced by Banksy in 2004, featuring Diana, Princess of Wales, and the words

In the early 2000s, Banksy evolved from stencilling the streets to creating prankster projects, staging public interventions within well-established art institutions, and organizing exhibitions in addition to continuing with his unsanctioned public works, all the while retaining his carefully cloaked invisibility within the public eye. Much of these efforts poked fun at art as commodity, or made specific statements on the way

we are force-fed popular culture through mainstream mass distribution, and challenged our common culpability in consuming marketing, political, or media messages as truth.

In 2004, Banksy produced £1,000,000 worth of fake British £10 notes, on which he replaced the picture of the Queen's head with that of Diana, Princess of Wales, and changed the text "Bank of England" to "Banksy of England." He threw several of these into a crowd at the Notting Hill Carnival that year, which some recipients attempted to spend in local shops.

In March 2005, he surreptitiously placed modified versions of artworks (such as a Warhol-esque painting of a discount soup can) in the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan, and the Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn.

In August/September of 2006, Banksy placed approximately 500 copies of Paris Hilton's debut CD, *Paris*, in 48 record stores around the UK, modified with his own cover art (Photoshopped to show Hilton topless). Other versions featured Paris with her Chihuahua, Paris with Tinkerbell's head replacing her own, or Paris stepping out of a luxury car amongst a group of homeless people, which included the caption "90% of success is just showing up." Music tracks were given titles such as "Why Am I Famous?" "What Have I Done?" and "What Am I For?" Members of the public purchased many copies of the guerrilla CD before stores were able to remove them. The purchased copies went on to be sold for as much as £750 on online auction websites.

In September 2006, Banksy dressed an inflatable doll in an orange jumpsuit, black hood, and handcuffs in resemblance of a Guantanamo Bay detainment camp prisoner. He then placed the doll below the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad ride at the Disneyland theme park in Anaheim, California, where it remained for 90 minutes before the ride was shut down and the figure removed. By placing a harsh symbol of political reality within a noted escapist environment, Banksy was remarking on our propensity for keeping our eyes wide shut.



Also in September 2006, Banksy held an exhibition in Los Angeles titled *Barely Legal*, billed as a "three-day vandalized warehouse extravaganza," which drew a celebrity crowd that included Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. The exhibition featured a live 38-year-old female East Indian elephant named Tai, painted in the same red and gold floral pattern as the wallpaper behind it. According to

pamphlets passed out at the exhibition, the "elephant in the room" was intended to draw attention to the issue of world poverty. The Los Angeles Animal Services Department had issued a permit for the elephant. However, following complaints from animal rights activists the elephant appeared unpainted on the final day of the show. Her handlers rejected claims of mistreatment, saying that she had done "many, many movies. She's used to makeup," and that she was well taken care of

during the show.

In London, over the weekend of May 3-5, 2008, Banksy hosted an exhibition titled The Cans Festival (a play on words of the famous French film festival Cannes). Stencil artists from around the world (including Faile from Brooklyn, Bandit from the Netherlands, Run Don't Walk from Argentina, and James Dodd from Australia) were invited to paint their original artwork, as long as it did not cover or interfere with anyone else's. It took place in a road tunnel formerly used by Eurostar underneath the London Waterloo station. The location was kept secret while the works were completed, and only then revealed to the public. Eurostar agreed to leave the works intact for at least six months following the event.

In August 2008, three years after Hurricane Katrina and the associated levee failure disaster, Banksy produced a series of work in New Orleans, Louisiana, mostly on buildings that had yet to be repaired. He said, "Three years after Katrina I wanted to make a statement about the state of the clean-up operation." He also painted on the rebuilt levee wall, which according to him offered "the best painting surface in the state of Louisiana."

On June 13, 2009, the Banksy vs. Bristol Museum exhibition opened at Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery. The show featured more than 100 artworks (78 of which were new works), including animatronics, sculptures, and installations. The show drew over 8,500 visitors on the first weekend, and over 300,000 over the course of twelve weeks.

In December 2009, Banksy marked the end of the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference by painting four murals on global warming. One included the phrase, "I don't believe in global warming," submerged in water.

At the London Zoo, Banksy climbed into the penguin enclosure and painted "We're bored of fish" in 7-foot-high letters. He also left the message "I want out. This place is too cold. Keeper smells. Boring, boring, boring." in the elephant enclosure.

In 2010, Banksy's oeuvre expanded into filmmaking after he employed aspiring street artist Thierry Guetta as an assistant and documentarian on several visits to Los Angeles. He encouraged Guetta to pursue making art, which he did, closely following Banksy's example to ultimately become the branded graffiti artist Mr. Brainwash. This journey became the focus of Banksy's 2010 documentary Exit Through the Gift Shop, which was nominated for an Oscar. Banksy released a statement about the nomination saying: "This is a big surprise... I do not agree with the concept of award ceremonies, but I'm prepared to make an exception for the ones I'm nominated for. The last time there was a naked man covered in gold paint in my house, it was me."

From August 21 through September 27, 2015, Banksy opened Dismaland in Weston-super-Mare, United Kingdom. The large-scale group show, which included artists Damien Hirst and Jenny Holzer, was a dark and twisted take on Disneyland. The temporary theme park featured a gloomy castle and an overturned Cinderella's carriage.

Legacy

On May 21, 2007 Banksy was selected to receive an award for Greatest Living Briton. Along with other artists like Shepard Fairey, Zevs, D*Face, and Ron English, he is credited with transforming graffiti from the typical "bubble writing" style of the 1980s to the "narrative-driven street art" of today. This contemporary street art varies significantly in aesthetic and materials, from Banksy's stencils, to Swoon's wheat paste posters, to Zevs' "liquidated logos" technique, to Space Invader's tile art. Other street artists, such as his protégé Mr. Brainwash, have adopted Banksy's particular style of instantly recognizable images such as corporate mascots and famous historical paintings.

This "guerrilla art," also referred to as "post-graffiti art," which Banksy helped develop, often plays heavily upon location and context as part of the work, and seeks to regain power from stronger enemies (such as corporations and governments). These artists accomplish this by carrying out interventions in corporate and government spaces (such as billboards, storefronts, and barrier walls), and by co-opting corporate and government images (such as logos, mascots, political figures, and official currency). Banksy has also pioneered the use of alternative venues for the display of street art, as in his 2003 exhibition *Turf War*, which was staged in a warehouse on Kingsland Road in London's East End.

Moreover, his art has sold for extremely high prices at auction, with pieces being purchased by collectors and celebrities alike for millions of dollars, making Banksy one of the first street artists to become part of the commercial art market. However, this commercial success troubles the artist, who says that "Commercial success is a mark of failure for a graffiti artist," and "We're not supposed to be embraced in that way." He continues to believe that "When graffiti isn't criminal, it loses most of its innocence." This is an ongoing controversy in the art world, with many artists being seen as "sell-outs" when they embrace the mainstream art world success. Banksy's establishment of representatives and liaisons for points of sale of his work has furthered this controversy. However, many other street artists (including equally famous Shepard Fairey) argue that they use this legitimate income to fund further illicit, unsanctioned guerrilla art.

Banksy's reception on a universal scale has also legitimized graffiti as a viable form of public art, furthering debate between vandalism as criminal activity and vandalism as an artist's creative medium (in a way, becoming a symbol of freedom). Many of his works remain on buildings and other public spaces because of their contemporary value, even if at the time of their creation, they were seen as illegally concocted. In fact, many building owners have benefitted from becoming "owners" of an original Banksy.

Banksy auction stunt leaves art world in shreds

Canvas of Girl With Balloon passes through shredder in frame shortly after £1m sale.



Banksy has played what could be one of the most audacious stunts in art history, arranging for one of his best-known works to self-destruct after being sold at auction for just over £1m.

Girl With Balloon was the final item in an auction at Sotheby's in London on Friday night and its sale price equalled the artist's previous auction record of £1.04m.

Shortly after the hammer came down on the item, however, the canvas began to pass through a shredder installed in the frame.

Banksy posted an image on Instagram of the shredded work dangling from the bottom of the frame with the title "Going, going, gone ..."

"It appears we just got Banksy-ed," said Alex Branczik, Sotheby's senior director and head of contemporary art in Europe.

Sotheby's said in a statement to the Financial Times: "We have talked with the successful purchaser who was surprised by the story. We are in discussion about next steps."

The auction house declined to reveal the identity of the buyer.

On Saturday evening, Banksy posted a video on his Instagram page which showed a shredder being fitted to the frame of the painting.

It opened with the caption: "A few years ago, I secretly built a shredder into a painting."

The clip shows a hooded figure putting the finishing touches on the device, before text appears on the screen saying: "In case it was ever put up for auction."

The website MyArtBroker.com, which resells Banksy pieces, said Girl with Balloon had enjoyed annual increases in value of about 20% in recent years. "Prices now are regularly exceeding £115,000 for signed authenticated prints," said its co-founder Joey Syer.

"The auction result will only propel this further and given the media attention this stunt has received, the lucky buyer would see a great return on the £1.02m they paid last night.

"This is now part of art history in its shredded state and we'd estimate Banksy has added at a minimum 50% to its value, possibly as high as being worth £2m plus."

Girl With Balloon, which was last year voted the UK's best-loved work of art, first appeared on a wall in Great Eastern Street in Shoreditch, east London. The 2006 gallery version featured spray paint and acrylic on canvas, mounted on a board.

The true identity of the Bristol-born artist has never been officially revealed despite wide speculation. He rose to fame with graffiti that appeared on buildings across the UK, often marked by deeply satirical undertones.

Two new artworks appeared at the Barbican Centre in central London in September 2017 inspired by an upcoming Jean-Michel Basquiat exhibition.

Announcing the new artworks in a series of Instagram posts, the artist said: “Major new Basquiat show opens at the Barbican – a place that is normally very keen to clean any graffiti from its walls.” The work has since been protected by perspex panes.

One of Banksy’s more elaborate jokes came just over three years ago when he opened Dismaland, a “family theme park unsuitable for small children”, on the seafront at Weston-super-Mare. The Guardian described it at the time as “sometimes hilarious, sometimes eye-opening and occasionally breathtakingly shocking”.



People visit Dismaland.
Photograph: Natasha
Quarmby/Rex/Shutterstock



A woman passes one of
the Banksy murals near
the Barbican Centre.
Photograph: David
Mirzoeff/PA

Urs Fischer

"People seem to fear art. Art has always been a word for this thing that can't be rationalized; when you see or hear something that you struggle to explain. But that's its strength, of course, that's what the word 'art' is for."

SUMMARY OF URS FISCHER

A fascination with the collision of random objects is the driving force behind artist Urs Fischer's artistic endeavours. He admits that this illustrates his passion for the "inner mechanics of duality." When he pairs objects or material together to make his work, he questions what happens when two specific objects meet in an imagined space. Since the 1990s, he's been making artwork, most notably sculpture, which emphasizes the way his chosen subjects, images, or materials relate to, and affect each other. In his hands, seemingly disparate items form a special bond, oftentimes temporary, inviting the audience in to ponder not only the relationship, but also the inevitable decay of all constructions. Although his subversive approach to art reflects influence by earlier anti-art movements such as Neo-Dada, Situationist International or Lost Art, Fischer's unique contribution stems from his ability to infuse items with a life of their own, putting them on a pedestal to jostle our perspectives out from beneath the status quo.

KEY IDEAS

- By approaching art history with a grain of salt, Fischer encourages us to look at artwork in a new way. He challenges the limits of each genre explored by reducing art to its base technical elements, asking the viewer to consider the sum of an artwork's whole rather than just the final visage presented.
- Fischer's work reflects a long investigation of transformation, natural processes, participation, and the subversion of traditional sculpture. For example, his seminal wax pieces are presented as beautiful sculptural works, which are then lit, causing them to melt and morph over the course of an exhibition right before the viewers' eyes. The work's short lives reflect the act of being human with humour and visual wit.
- Non-traditional materials play a huge part in Fischer's work - both in their original and transformational states instigated by the artist's hand. This has included bread, toys, earth, and other random fodder.



When Fischer exhibited his Bread House (2004), he presented a chalet made of baguettes and loaves which over time would mould and collapse. What surprised him was about how different audiences received the work, depending on where it was exhibited. "In Austria, they said it's about the body of Christ. In the US, it's about gluten," he said. Bread is serious in Switzerland he added. "Is the core of everything...it's not a joke."

Bread House (2004-05)



Artwork description & Analysis:

Bread House is a Swiss chalet constructed entirely of loaves of bread and crumbs supported by wood, polyurethane foam, silicone, acrylic paint, tape, screws, and rugs. The installation's design leaves every ingredient exposed for the viewer to see. The bread sculpture was left to rot over the duration of the exhibition, with its strong smell

infusing the gallery space. The viewer was left to ponder the slow destruction of the work.

In some instances of this work being installed, live parakeets were present, picking away at the artwork as viewers watched.

In the article "Roll With It," written for Frieze magazine, Tom Moore emphasized the fact that "Fischer shows us what this world might look like when the rot sets in." This is all too true for Fischer's Bread House as what would have been once a fully formed house inevitably falls and crumbles under its own weight and decay.

This work has been shown multiple times, each with a newly constructed house. The critical reception of the work has varied dependent upon where in the world it was shown. Fischer commented that, "In Austria, they said it's about the body of Christ. In the US, it's about gluten." Food is at the centre of our lives, yet so controversial across cultures. This work not only shines light on the natural process of decay, but also connects us to global issues around food production and waste. When discussing this in an interview with Post Magazine, Fischer stated, "Where I grew up, bread is the core of everything...it's not a joke."

Fischer's use of bread and other non-standard materials in his work challenged ideas about what sculpture could be, bringing a sense of wit and cynical humour into a staid and semi-rigid tradition, and marrying it with Conceptual Art.

Sculpture with bread, wood, polyurethane foam, silicone, acrylic paint, tape, screws and rugs
- In the collection of Angela and Massimo Lauro

Untitled Lamp/Bear (2005-06)



Artwork description & Analysis:

One of Fischer's best known works Untitled (Lamp/Bear) is a seven meter high lacquered bronze teddy bear with a functioning LED light attached to its head. The bear was based on the artist's own beloved teddy bear from childhood. In contrast to the more ephemeral nature of his past works like Bread House, this sculpture weighs almost seventeen tons. At night, the lamp illuminates the bear within its surrounding area, injecting a playful humour into the dark atmosphere of night.

Three bears have been made, two yellow and one blue. The blue bear was placed on loan with Brown University in 2016, its

home on the Simmons Quad. The University described this work as "rooted in playfulness, with an element of irreverence." Untitled (Lamp/Bear) is from a series of works that explore what the artist calls 'the inner mechanics of duality.' By playing with pairing two objects together, Fischer questions what happens when two specific objects meet in an imagined space. In this case the childhood teddy bear, slumped over due to wear, shines bright light late into the evening on a university campus, mimicking many of the students who attend the school. One of the yellow bears was exhibited to great acclaim at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, and still another was sold at auction.

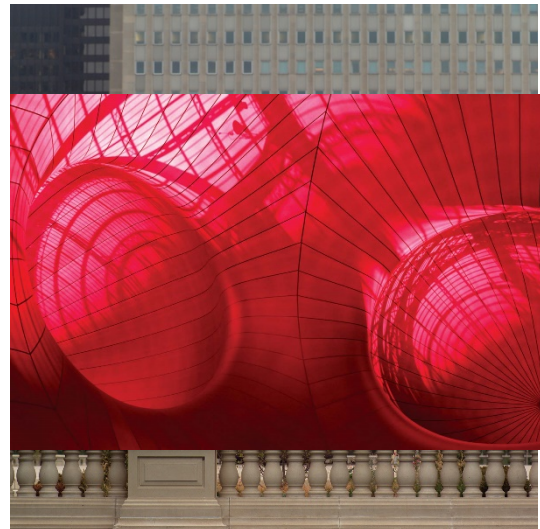
Francesco Bonami, an independent curator who has worked with Fischer for several shows in Europe, categorizes him as a "perfectionist in imperfection," and while he knows Fischer greatly admires fellow artist Jeff Koons, his work is the antithesis of Koons, "Urs's sloppiness is absolute perfect sloppiness...it's almost the platonic ideal of sloppiness." Untitled (Lamp/Bear) shows this well when comparing it to Koons's Celebration series of balloon animals blown up to fantastic proportions. Fischer's work has the characteristic of wear and tear from a childhood of use, and when bisected by the desk lamp not only has the feel of nostalgia for childhood but also a melancholy over its loss.

The large bear, which characteristically would be covered in soft fur, is now hard metal, textured and creasing with life-like realism. Fischer's teddy bear, in its use of beloved childhood nostalgia, contributes to the work of other artists using the motif such as Mike Kelley or Yoshitomo Nara who also use iconic toys to express a connection to childhood and innocence.

Bronze sculpture with acrylic glass and functioning LED - Steven and Alexandra Cohen Collection

Anish Kapoor

Anish Kapoor, (born March 12, 1954, Bombay [now Mumbai], India), Indian-born British sculptor known for his use of abstract biomorphic forms and his penchant for rich colours and polished surfaces. He was also the first living artist to be given a solo show at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.



Kapoor's later works include ArcelorMittal Orbit (completed 2011), a 377-foot (115-metre) tower surrounded by a looping lattice of red tubular steel. The structure, commissioned by the city of London for the 2012 Olympic Games, stood in London's Olympic Park, and an observation deck at the top of the tower opened to the public in conjunction with the sporting event.

Kapoor was made Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2003, and he was named a knight bachelor in 2013. He received the Japan Art Association's Praemium Imperiale prize for sculpture in 2011.

Summary of Anish Kapoor

Anish Kapoor transformed the cool, conceptual, and minimal approach to sculpture by adding lyricism, metaphor, and the heat of the primordial. Objects spill out from their own parameters suggesting an excess of emotion, yet they also stand serenely as in meditative focus for ritual. Typically, the sculptures appear abstract, with Kapoor's intention to promote self-reflection made most obvious when using mirrored surfaces. He does not wish to present a prescriptive idea, but instead to create an environment within which people themselves can consider meaning. As the viewer becomes part of the sculpture, each work speaks of the confined individuality of a single body, but also of the expansive inclusiveness of a shared place. At once celestial and earthy, art by Kapoor evokes untouchable far away planets alongside the soft warmth of a close pregnant belly. His sculptures paradoxically entwine esoteric philosophy with sensual everyday experience.

Key Ideas

- Like sculptors of the same generation, including Richard Serra and Antony Gormley, Kapoor asks his audience to consider how they exist in and move through space. His public works are at once graceful and imposing, raising the question of how human presence impacts upon the natural environment as he seeks to create a respectful and interesting relationship between the two.
- Kapoor repeatedly returns to the notion of origin. Although not explicit, the beginning of life is constantly referenced. Kapoor makes holes, often vulva-like, and curves to illustrate pregnancy, as the journey towards birth from our mother's womb is highlighted. Red becomes the colour of blood, the body, and the initiation of life's journey.
- Kapoor's interest in infinity, void, and endlessness is as much an interest in carving out space to consider meaning, as it is a reflection on the state of no-thing-ness, and a clearing of the mind. The colour black, like an abyss in the cosmos, signifies an opening for new and unpredictable experiences and presents limitless opportunity for self-development and contemplation.
- His is a particularly international body of work, with momentous public sculptures placed as icons all around the globe. Kapoor gives the world a way to speak without words; like the ancient cave painters and the Egyptian's before them, artists recognize that there is a way to communicate in which everyone can understand. Kapoor builds a pictorial language of symbols that translates across cultures and time.
- Viewed from above, Kapoor's pigment sculptures become painterly. They transform to recall Constructivist and Suprematist canvases by Kazimir Malevich as well as abstract paintings by Paul Klee. In this sense, Kapoor achieves a typical artist's goal, to unite metaphysical dualities including light and dark, earth and sky, mind and body, male and female, and in this case, painting and sculpture.

Anish Kapoor Artworks

Sky Mirror (2001)



Artwork description & Analysis:

Commissioned by the Nottingham Playhouse in England, Kapoor's first Sky Mirror is a public sculpture consisting of a 20-foot-wide concave dish angled upwards towards the transient sky. Turning the world upside down, he alters perspective and asks the audience to think differently. The polished, stainless steel surface, planted firmly on earth provides a porthole to watch the ever-changing and passing clouds. By moving away from pigment and stone, to using mirrored surfaces to make his work, Kapoor makes it more obvious that he wants his viewer to reflect upon her surroundings and herself. It is the artist's intention that the audience contemplates the work by becoming a part of it. Kapoor himself refers to the work as a "non-object" because its reflective surface allows the sculpture to disappear within its surroundings.

Concave mirror made of polished stainless steel - Nottingham Playhouse, Nottingham, England

Inspired by the realistically depicted landscapes of Romantic painter, John Constable, Sky Mirror is a conceptual variation of a landscape painting. Like Constable, who believed no two days were alike and tasked himself with capturing the daily variations of the landscape in his work, the self-generating Sky Mirror is a continuously-changing view of a landscape. It is also entirely part of the environment in which it is placed; thus boundaries between things and people are broken down as everything begins to connect to, and to impact on, everything else.

The public's general love of Sky Mirror, encouraging much-needed self-reflection, has generated demand for Kapoor's mirrored sculptures in many cities around the world. Always determined and inclined to push his abilities, Kapoor constructed a colossal 35-foot version of Sky Mirror at the Rockefeller Centre in New York City in 2006. Exemplifying that which makes Kapoor's work so popular among everyday people, however profound, these sculptures are easily accessible and gently introduce what can otherwise be a heavy endeavour, a process of becoming more self-aware. One cannot also - humorously and with a hint of science fiction - help but look forward to and imagine a time when one can enter a Sky Mirror in Nottingham and exit it in New York City. There is an element of the otherworldly at work in such Kapoor creations.

Marsyas (2002- 03)

Artwork description & Analysis:

While the Venice Biennale brought Kapoor international acclaim, it was his sculpture for the Tate Modern in London that is considered his most celebrated work of art, and one of Kapoor's first massive-scale sculptures. Marsyas, named after the ancient Greek satyr who was an expert on the double pipe instrument known as the aulos, consisted of red PVC canvas stretched over a steel framework to create a giant, double trumpet-shaped structure. As music induces contemplation upon listening, a sculptor tries to imitate the same affect using visual stimulus. The trumpet is the instrument that most resembles a megaphone, as though an announcement will be made to command our attention. Furthermore, it also resembles a funnel and suggests scientific usage as much as it introduces visual poetry.



Situated precisely within the confines of the gigantic space, its size and positioning made it impossible for the viewer to perceive the work in its entirety from any one spot. The message seems to be that a full understanding of the work will be hard to grasp. To make a start though, the structure appears genital in nature, both vaguely phallic and very obviously similar in shape to a woman's fallopian tubes. It is through these tubes that a fertilized ovum makes its first journey to reach the womb. Indeed, the installation recalls the themes of Louise Bourgeois, who also took over the Tate Turbine Hall two years prior to Kapoor. Bourgeois situated three towers in the space, which the public could climb and then see themselves in large circular mirrors at the summit. She also included a bell jar in each tower, home to the sculpture of a mother and child. As well as the interest in origin, and in presenting mirrors for reflection to the public, Kapoor also shares Bourgeois interest in towers. In 2012 he designed, Orbit, the tower that is now part of the Olympic Park in London. Similar to Bourgeois's spiral stairs, Orbit is wrapped in woven red metal, as metaphor for the life-giving umbilical cord.

Marsyas instantly became iconic because it was the first time that any artist had filled the Tate's Turbine Hall with one massive work of art. Rather than subtly manipulating space as he had done in the past, Marsyas was Kapoor's first sculpture to utterly consume the space around it, as though somehow the artist's ideas had solidified and demanded further recognition. Understanding that the sculpture's success lies in its size, Kapoor explains, "every idea has its scale. Marsyas wouldn't be what it is if it were a third of the scale. The pyramids are the size they are because they are. Scale is a tool, a tool of sculpture."

Infatuated by notions of space and scale, Kapoor would continue to fabricate various iterations of large-scale red PVC canvas sculptures, both indoors and outdoors. In 2009, Kapoor constructed Dismemberment Site I, a permanent sculpture at Gibbs Farm in Auckland, New Zealand. Set into a recess carved out of a hill, PVC canvas was once again stretched between two steel-framed ellipses to create a double trumpet form. At almost 280 feet long and 82 feet high, the structure is an imposing sight, demonstrating how Kapoor's sculpture has become increasingly more monumental. Interestingly though, although the artist himself feels that such a size increase is essential, the idea at work (surrounding a connective understanding of human origin) is the same as that found in a small red pigment triangle or a non-intrusive pregnant wall made decades earlier. One must raise the question as to whether it is the art that needs to become huge, or if indeed, that is a separate requirement of the man.

PVC and Steel - Tate Modern, London

Cloud Gate (2006)

Artwork description & Analysis: Continuing to utilize a reflective surface and large-scale, Kapoor created Cloud Gate, a site-specific sculpture located in Millennium Park in Chicago. Nicknamed "The Bean" and inspired by liquid mercury's silver colour and thick viscosity, the 33 feet high by 66 feet long sculpture consists of 168-polished stainless steel panels seamlessly welded together to create the illusion of a singular object. Like his Sky Mirrors, the surface of the bean-like structure reflects an altered image of its surroundings, including the famed Chicago architecture. Visitors are encouraged to walk around and underneath the sculpture to observe the way it distorts their reflection.

Encompassing a repertoire of repeated motifs, including voids, bulges, mirrored surfaces, and the manipulation of scale and space, he borrows ideas and materials from Minimalist sculptors like Donald Judd but also incorporates emotion (once again his signature pregnant belly faces the world) into the work to create a distinctive Kapoor sculpture.



Like all of the artist's large-scale sculptures, Cloud Gate was expensive and technically challenging to build. Engineers tasked with creating the sculpture first believed the design would be impossible to construct, while the projected \$6 million cost ended up closer to \$23 million upon completion of the project. Security guards continue to be present 24 hours a day to prevent anything from happening to the expensive object, adding to the

exorbitant cost and raising further debate about the 'worth' of art when money has become so inextricably intertwined.

Stainless steel - Millennium Park, Chicago

Jeff Koons

American Painter, Illustrator, Sculptor

"The job of the artist is to make a gesture and really show people what their potential is. It's not about the object, and it's not about the image; it's about the viewer. That's where the art happens."

Summary of Jeff Koons

Jeff Koons derives inspiration from things you might find at a yard sale: inflatable plastic toys, vacuum cleaners, porcelain trinkets and other items not typically considered fine art. He is the epitome of Neo-Pop, a 1980s movement that looked to earlier Pop artists, particularly Warhol, for inspiration. His steel Balloon Dog sculptures, probably his best-known works, transpose an ephemeral childhood memory into an enduring form. His work looks cheap, but is expensive, an ingenious reversal of economic logic that forms the basis for his stunning commercial success. Rather than offending the art snob, Koons has challenged top collectors to revise their notions of what fine art looks like. This is a brilliant marketing strategy. His work brings the highest prices of any living artist on the auction market. Evidence of a turning point in art history, Koons is a new kind of genius in art. A significant departure from the modernist ideal of the misunderstood visionary, Koons is the anti-modernist, a shrewd, self-proclaimed crowd-pleaser, and avid promoter of his own work.

Key Ideas

- With greater showmanship, and on a grander scale, than any artist before him, Koons presents us with the clash between high art and popular culture.
- Koons is essentially a late-20th-century incarnation of Marcel Duchamp. Like the French Conceptual artist who thought America's bridges and plumbing her finest artworks, Koons strips industrially-made objects of their practical purpose and re-presents them as art.
- His sculptures are not merely conceptual, but aesthetic, in ways that challenge us, especially those of us accustomed to fine art. Kitsch and high culture, religion and eroticism, weightlessness and mass are among the apparent opposites that mix and mingle in his work.
- Koons was among the first American artists to cast himself as a populist. In the rising economy of the 1980s, his message resonated with audiences sick of art world elitism. His outspoken distaste for abstract art, already fading from fashion, vaulted him into the limelight.
- Somewhat paradoxically, his embrace of bad taste has won over the most discerning and ostensibly elitist audiences. By collecting Koons, collectors and museums show that they can take a joke.

Balloon Flower (Red) (1995-1999)



Artwork description & Analysis:

Koons' most famous works to date are the towering sculptures inspired by balloon animals. This one stands over ten feet tall and weighs in excess of a ton. Its sumptuous skin, according to the artist, is intended to "manipulate and seduce," like the Baroque decor of Christian cathedrals. Like the cheap, shiny rubber it is meant to imitate, the surface of Balloon Flower evokes the eternal appeal of precious metal. Since this really is metal, its immaculate, reflective surface and perfectly concealed joints invite us to marvel in the absolute symmetry and perfection of the objects. Up close, however, the overall composition fades, and the viewer is confronted by his or her own distorted, imperfect image.

Koons once remarked that he believed work like the quite similar Balloon Dog to be "a very optimistic piece, it's a balloon that a clown would maybe twist for you at a birthday party. But at the same time it's a Trojan Horse. There are other things here that are inside: maybe the sexuality of the piece." The work recalls the unbridled optimism and wonder of childhood, while functioning simultaneously as a memento mori of this naive state of development, replaced in adulthood by covetousness for luxury and beauty. The idea that commerce is the new religion is in many ways the key to Koons' oeuvre. Building on Duchamp and Warhol, he harnesses religious iconography (especially Catholic) borrowed from the history of Western art. Mirror polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating - Photo from the small park in front of 7 World Trade Centre in New York City.

Puppy (Sydney)



One of the world's most famous contemporary artists, Jeff Koons, created Puppy outside Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art in 1995 as Project 10, celebrating 25 years of Kaldor Public Art Projects. Created as a symbol of love and happiness, Puppy stood 12.4 metres high on the harbourside, carpeted in flowering blooms like a monolithic topiary. Presented as part of the 1996 Sydney Festival, Puppy became one of the most memorable projects and was viewed by more than 1.8 million people in Sydney before relocating to its permanent home outside the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao.

Jeff Koons created a new iconography for late capitalist culture, fusing pop and surrealist traditions with baroque and rococo excess. Constructing his works with a studio of assistants and a team of master craftsmen, Koons assumed the role of artist as a composer or director, creating mythical new amalgams from popular consumer forms.

Novelties, souvenirs, toys, erotica and imagery from postcards and advertising were recodified as icons for the contemporary world. Universally adored, animals and flowers form an important aspect of Koons' vocabulary and these elements were combined in Puppy.

The basis for the work is the small wooden sculpture of a West Highland White Terrier by Koons, White Terrier, 1991, from the Made in Heaven series – chosen for its endearing appearance, unthreatening at any scale.



The first Puppy was created outside a baroque castle in Arolsen, Germany, in 1992. The wood and steel structure contained around 20,000 growing plants. Destroyed at the close of the exhibition, a new version was created in Sydney, designed and constructed for Kaldor Public Art Projects by DW Knox & Partners. The new work was more detailed, supporting 55 tonnes of soil adorned with 60 000 cascading plants. Three-dimensional modelling and the latest computer technologies were used to conceive the enormous structure as a steel armature in 13 levels constructed offsite. This structure was then overlaid with a wire-mesh skin, carefully shaped and moulded to form the curls and folds of Puppy's flowering fur. Onsite the work took more than a month to construct. Concrete foundations were poured in and then segments of the structure were positioned before the hydraulics were installed. Finally, soil and plants were inserted into the frame.

Inside the Museum of Contemporary Art, as part of the 25th anniversary celebrations for Kaldor Public Art Projects, an exhibition of John Kaldor's collection and past projects, as well as Koons' past works, was also displayed, along with documentation of the making of Puppy.

Balloon Dog 1994-2000

mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating
121 x 143 x 45 in. (307.34 x 363.22 x 114.3 cm)



As part of Jeff Koons's Celebration, an ongoing series of paintings and sculptures that memorialize the rituals, icons, and images surrounding birthdays, holidays, and other party occasions, Balloon Dog (Blue) may be the most imposing work. Using the recognizable form of a balloon twisted into the shape of a dog, Koons has frozen a moment in time, exaggerating both scale and material. Balloon Dog (Blue) is literal and abstract. When standing close to it, one's own distorted reflection bends around smooth pert curves. The work is a collection of shapes, each segment alone does not look like part of a dog's anatomy — in fact Koons often references human sexual anatomy — but taken as

a whole Balloon Dog (Blue) is an aloof sentinel cloaked in nostalgia.



Damien Hirst

Summary of Damien Hirst

One of the late-20th century's greatest provocateurs and a polarizing figure in recent art history, Damien Hirst was the art superstar of the 1990s. As a young and virtually unknown artist, Hirst climbed far and fast, thanks to Charles Saatchi, an advertising tycoon who saw promise in Hirst's rotting animal corpses, and gave him a virtually unlimited budget to continue. His shark suspended in a tank of formaldehyde, entitled *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, wowed and repulsed audiences in 1991. In 1995 (the same year that he won the coveted Turner Prize) Hirst's installation of a rotting bull and cow was banned from New York by public health officials who feared "vomiting among the visitors." Hirst, the Sid Vicious of the art world (the Sex Pistols were his favourite band), is the logical outcome of a process of ultra-commodification and celebrity that began with Andy Warhol.

Key Ideas

- From the outset of his career, Hirst devised a fool-proof strategy for grabbing the attention of the public and critics. Rotting corpses appalled and attracted museum visitors, who saw it as a kind of dare. Critics were equally appalled, not so much by the art as by the sky-high prices (often prearranged) paid for it. This kept Hirst at the centre of the art world and augmented the value of his work, which continues to command some of the highest prices on the market.
- Bloody bodies (martyrs and the death of Christ) and mothers and children (the Madonna and Child) are iconic themes in Western religious painting. Hirst, who was raised Catholic, cites this as an important dimension of his aesthetic sensibility.
- Controversial as it is, Hirst's approach is firmly rooted in historical and contemporary sources. In its focus on death, it hearkens back to the memento mori (reminders of mortality) images in European still life. In using biological materials, he joins other contemporary artists of the late -20th century, among them Robert Rauschenberg, with his taxidermied animals, Carolee Schneemann, who covered herself in raw meat, and Joseph Beuys, who constructed *Fat Chair* and other sculptures made of fat. Where Hirst differs from his historical and contemporary predecessors is in his display of entire corpses as visual spectacles.
- Hirst is a great showman. One needn't be an art specialist to appreciate the thrill of seeing a dead shark up close. Not just for art world insiders, these strike a chord with many first-time visitors to museums, introducing them to the challenges of contemporary art in an engaging and immediate way.
- Love him or hate him, Hirst was a visionary in anticipating the needs of the contemporary art market. One could argue, as some have, that this in itself is a form of art.



Damien Hirst at Chatsworth House



'legend' (2011) and 'myth' (2010) by
Damien Hirst at Chatsworth house in Derbyshire,
United Kingdom

Two new sculptures by English artist Damien Hirst is currently on display at the Chatsworth House until 30 October, 2011. Entitled 'legend' and 'myth', the sculptures depict a winged horse and unicorn that have been flayed down their middle to expose the visceral musculature and bones beneath.

Standing on individual platforms, the mythical creatures face away from one another to reveal their insides in opposite directions. The fantasy aspect of the animals is visually debunked by putting on display their anatomy and inner workings. Hirst says, 'in a way, science brings religion down to earth and to cut open mythical creatures and expose them as no different to mortal horses is somehow still magical. It's kind of like exploding a myth to make it real.'

This monumental winged horse stands atop its plinth as an icon of Hirst's new modern mythologizing art. Pegasus, embodying the freedom and nobility of nature, was the legendary beast that Bellerephon rode to defeat the Chimera. However Hirst's Legend has come under the scrutiny of the vivisectionist. One flank has been surgically flayed, exposing its muscles and bare bones, showing the secrets of this mythological animal. An elegant counterpart is another sculpture by Hirst, Myth (2010), which depicts the fabled unicorn. Its shimmering white flank is also flayed to reveal the visceral musculature beneath.

The pieces are a part of 'beyond limits', an annual exhibition which takes place at Chatsworth House.



‘legend’ (2010) by Damien Hirst



‘myth’ (2010) by Damien Hirst

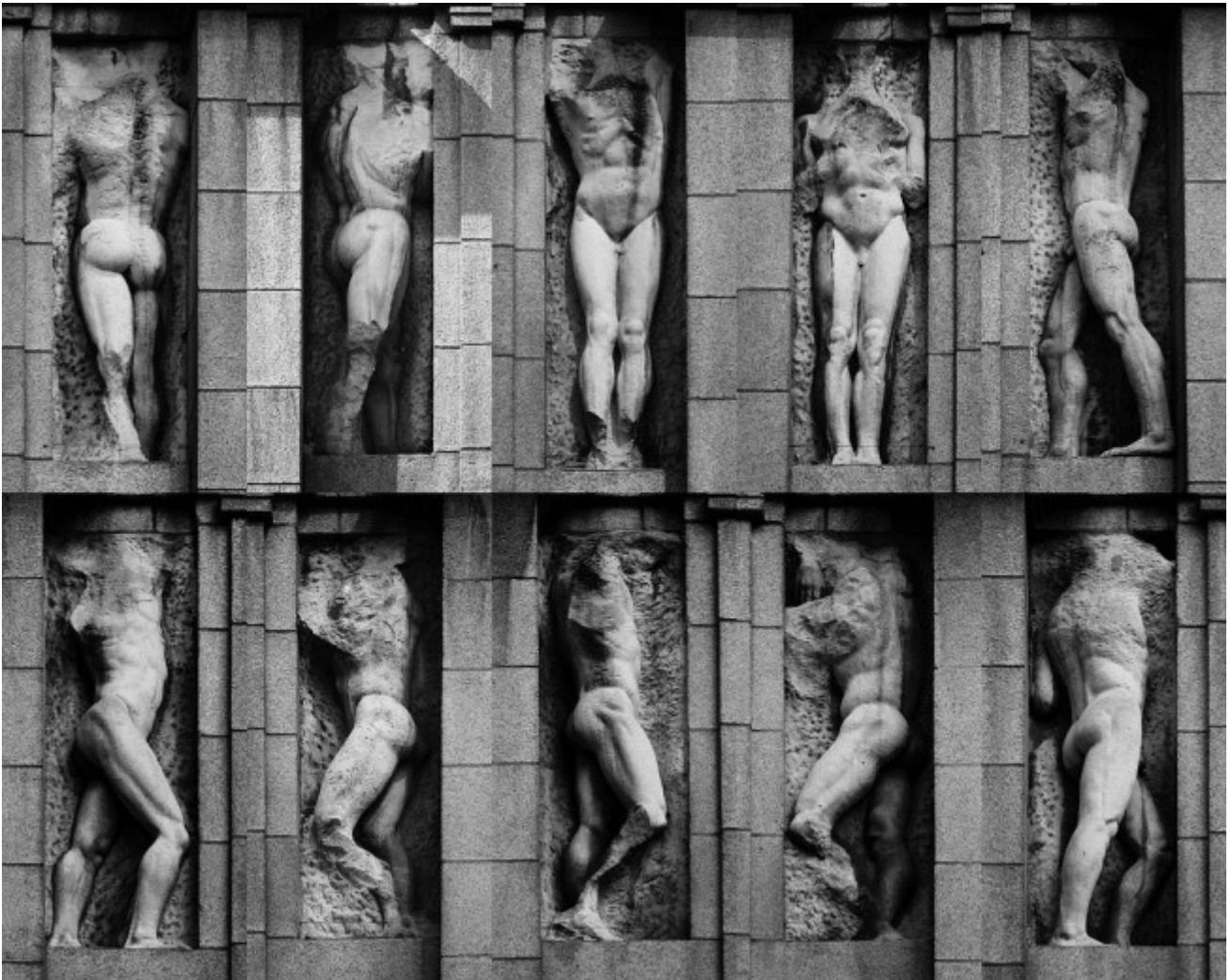


The Power of Public Sculpture

From the pyramids and temples of ancient Egypt to the streets and piazzas of Florence, sculpture in public places has been fundamental in informing the visual consciousness of a society for millennia. Today, there's even more on show than ever and – the best part is – it's all free!

Here are a few of the best sculptural works on public display from around the world, including some lesser-known gems:

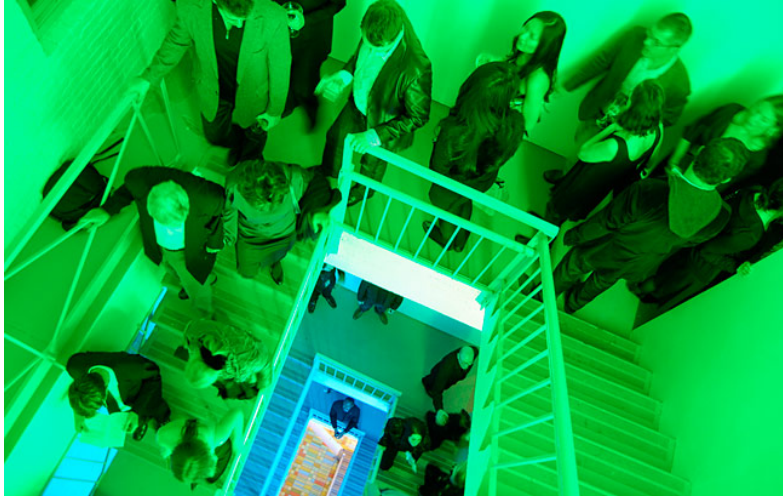
1. Jacob Epstein, Sculptures for the British Medical Association Building (1908)



Location: The Strand, London

Just around the corner from London's Trafalgar Square are these fantastic figures by Epstein, which are placed in niches high atop a building. When they were first proposed, their nudity caused a controversy and public opinion was divided on their appropriateness for display on the street. Thirty years later, when acid rain had made them unstable, some traditionalists relished taking a chisel to these amazing works and reducing them to mere torsos. Even headless and limbless, however, these sculptures remain incredibly powerful.

2. **Dan Flavin, Untitled (1996)**



Location: 548 West 22nd Street,
New York
Official Site:

This site-specific artwork by Dan Flavin is managed by the Dia Foundation and is always open to the public. Featuring Flavin's signature fluorescent lights, the work was completed just before the artist's death. Understated and slightly eerie, the piece demonstrates Flavin's sensitivity to the specifics of the architectural space. Tip: it's particularly atmospheric if you go at night.

3. **Anish Kapoor, Cloud Gate (2006)**

Location: Millennium Park, Chicago



Cloud Gate is hard to miss. This huge sculpture by Anish Kapoor dominates the plaza at Chicago's Millennium Park, where it has been affectionately nicknamed "the bean". The highly polished surface reflects distorted images of the cityscape around it and of the crowds of people who can pass around and under it. It's like a funhouse mirror on steroids. This mirroring visually dissolves the form of the enormous metal structure, simultaneously blending in with its surroundings and asking the viewer to look again.

4. **Joan Miro, Oiseau Lunaire (1966)**



Location: Square Blomet, Paris

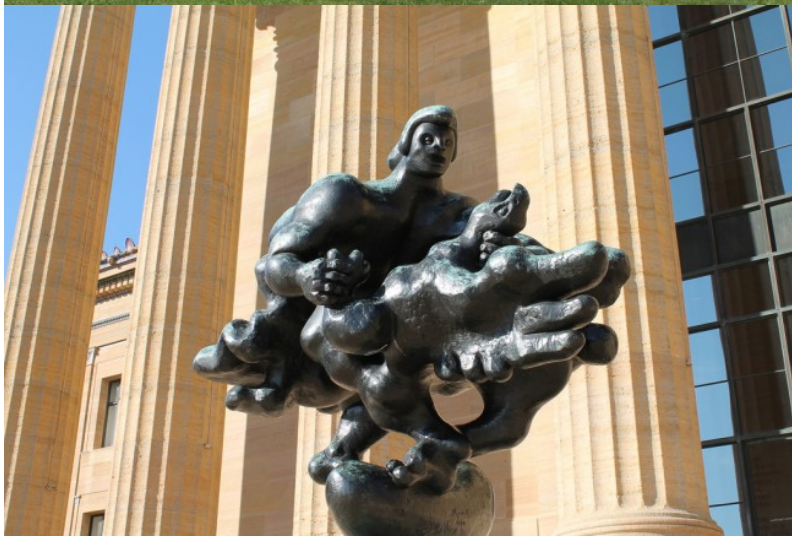
This large work by Joan Miro (92 x 82 x 59 inches) stands in a public park in Paris' Montparnasse area, once home to a plethora of artists living and working there in the 1910s and 20s. Miro's sculpture, designed as a site-specific work, is intended to be a memorial to those artists who promoted avant-garde forms and theories, and influenced the work of generations of artists to come.

5. **Fernando Botero, The Hand (1976)**



Location: Paseo de la Castellana, Madrid

If you're looking for public sculpture, Madrid should be high on your list of destinations. It even boasts a little-known (but enormous) Museum of Public Art, which contains sculptures by Miro and Julio Gonzalez. Elsewhere in the city, you'll find this huge sculpture of a hand by Colombian artist Fernando Botero. The work is characteristic of Botero's voluminous style and was produced soon after the artist suffered a hand injury in a car accident.



6. **Jacques Lipchitz, Prometheus Strangling the Vulture (1943)**

Location: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia
Official

This late work by sculptor Jacques Lipchitz is positioned outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art in a city that boasts more than its fair share of incredible works of art on public display. One of his lesser-known pieces, Lipchitz' sculpture depicts the myth of Prometheus breaking free of his bonds and strangling the vulture who has been pecking at his entrails for an eternity. Lipchitz saw this as symbolic of the human race fighting against the atrocities of Nazi Germany.

7. **Lynn Chadwick, Couple on Seat (1986)**



Location: Canary Wharf, London

Canary Wharf is home to London's tallest, shiniest buildings and to crowds of harassed-looking people in suits. It might not sound like an obvious place to go looking for modern art, but Canary Wharf is also home to Lynn Chadwick's *Couple on Seat*, positioned with its back to a large fountain. It's a powerful work, taking inspiration from Henry Moore, and is well worth seeking out.

Jeff Koons, **Balloon Flower (Red)** (2006)



Location: 7 World
Trade Centre,
New York
Official

Koons created his *Balloon Flower (Red)* as a memorial to those who survived 9/11. It exhibits the highly polished style that can be found in several of his sculptures. Its bright colour and shiny surface make it feel distinctly upbeat, a celebration of moving forwards as well as looking back. Its resemblance to a giant balloon confuses the viewer's eye; you almost expect it to start floating up into the air.

The Background Info:

Public sculpture in the United States saw a revival under the Federal Art Program in the 1930s, designed by the government to help the country out of the Depression and to promote a connection between art and the public. In the UK, public art was similarly encouraged by the post-War Labour government in the 1950s, who chose sculpture as a tool for promoting socialist values across the country.

This strong tradition continues today, and there is consequently a wealth of fantastic twentieth-century and contemporary sculpture on public view around the world. Unfortunately, these works can become sidelined, missed by pedestrians who don't stop to think about the work of art that they are hurrying past. Nevertheless, seeking out public sculpture can be highly rewarding; you'll be surprised what's just around the corner.

Site Specific Sculpture

Giuseppe Licari



HUMUS SECRET GARDENS

Tent Rotterdam

2012

A site-specific installation with trees' roots.

GIUSEPPE LICARI is an Italian born artist who lives and works in Rotterdam, NL.

His works focuses on the space surrounding us trying to convey a message often in an ironic way. The artist's aim is to give the audience an active role in his work through a social experience. He see his work a process of exploration of human perception, people are invited to participate and, with their experience, to contribute to the artwork itself.

The installations provide the public with a unique feeling, which is related to a specific location and an exact moment in time in which the works are generated, forming a collective memory among all participants.



THE SKY IN A
ROOM
Dek 22,
Rotterdam
2012-2013



THE SKY IN A
ROOM
Rotterdam
Sconfinamenti,
Hommes Foundation,
Ro 2007

Nature has always been a big passion and the relation of nature and man-made environments is something I very often try to confront in my work. The Sky in a Room was inspired by the forests' fires that in 2007 destroyed a big part of the south of Europe. They were largely man made fires, intending to generate new land available for building speculation. In order for this to happen, criminals were paid to burn the forests that later become free land for constructors. A sick tree was cut down by the municipality of Rotterdam, given to me and then cut in smaller pieces, archived, burned and re-built inside the exhibition space, against the architectural surfaces of the gallery. The trunk of the tree was removed in order to give the public a different physical relation to the tree itself and to the white sterilized space of the gallery. During the opening, artificial smoke embraced the piece and the public into a dramatic image of these fires.

Jill Chism



**PRESERVE CONSERVE, AN INVOCATION
WATER'S EDGE
2008-2009**

JILL CHISM is an Australian artist who creates environmental and public artworks working across many mediums to create large-scale public sculptures as well as temporary interventions in and around the North Coast of Queensland. Her works is deeply spiritual with questions about how we interact with the cosmos and the human footprint on the environment.

Water is a central element of Chism's work. The series Water's Edge-Creating Environments, started in 2006, reflect on our spiritual relationship with water and also on the negative imprint left by flooding, pollution and drought. The work was carried out in cooperation with regional artists and locals along the way.