



A Free Course on the History of Western Art

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60-17 STREET ART

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Banksy
Girl with Balloon
2002



This is section 60 on recent art and this talk is on Street Art. It emerged from the graffiti movements of 1960s and 70s New York and Philadelphia, where young artists used public walls to assert identity and challenge authority. What began as simple tags evolved into elaborate murals, stencils, and installations transforming urban landscapes worldwide. Street art democratises creativity, placing it outside gallery walls and into everyday life, sparking dialogue on politics, culture, and social justice. Its influence now permeates fashion, advertising, and contemporary fine art. Central to this legacy is Diego Rivera, whose monumental Mexican murals of the 1920s and 30s pioneered public art as a vehicle for political storytelling and collective memory.



Diego Rivera (1886-1957),
The History of Mexico,
1929-1935,
Fresco on walls,
Three walls
approximately
450 x 900 cm total,
National Palace, Mexico
City

Diego Rivera (1886-1957), *The History of Mexico*, 1929-1935, Fresco on walls, Three walls approximately 450 x 900 cm total, National Palace, Mexico City

- This monumental mural by Diego Rivera transformed public art forever. Spanning three vast stairwell walls, it depicts Mexico's entire history from pre-Columbian Aztec civilisation through Spanish conquest to the 1910 Revolution. Over 450 square metres of fresco showing hundreds of figures.
- Government minister José Vasconcelos commissioned Rivera and fellow muralists José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros - "Los Tres Grandes" - to create accessible art for Mexico's largely illiterate population. The murals educated citizens whilst celebrating indigenous heritage after centuries of European colonialism.
- Rivera worked six years, painting in traditional fresco technique - pigment on wet plaster. He included Aztec pyramids, Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés, revolutionary heroes Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, his wife Frida Kahlo as a teacher, even Karl Marx.
- The composition deliberately avoids linear narrative. Viewers construct their own historical understanding. Rivera flattened pictorial space, creating dense visual mosaics. Fat priests and corrupt bureaucrats contrast with noble peasants fighting for "Tierra y Libertad" (Land and Liberty). Mexican Muralism influenced American public art including FDR's New Deal programmes.
- Although they are inside rather than on the street the interior was open to the

public without tickets or restrictions. His murals influenced many later artists.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

José Vasconcelos - ho-ZAY vas-kon-SEH-los

José Clemente Orozco - ho-ZAY kleh-MEN-teh oh-ROHS-koh

David Alfaro Siqueiros - dah-VEED ahl-FAH-roh see-KAY-ros

Hernán Cortés - er-NAHN kor-TESS

Emiliano Zapata - eh-mee-lee-AH-noh sah-PAH-tah

Pancho Villa - PAHN-choh VEE-yah

Tierra y Libertad - tee-EH-rah ee lee-behr-TAHD

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Cornbread (Darryl McCray) (b. 1953)
Cornbread Loves Cynthia
 1967
 Spray paint on wall
 Various locations
 Philadelphia, USA

Cornbread (Darryl McCray) (b. 1953), Cornbread Loves Cynthia, 1967, Spray paint on wall, Various locations, Philadelphia, USA

- This legendary tag launched modern graffiti. Teenage **Darryl McCray** plastered "Cornbread Loves Cynthia" across North Philadelphia to impress his eighth-grade crush at **Strawberry Mansion Junior High**. The romantic gesture sparked a citywide phenomenon as McCray continued tagging buses, police cars, and postal trucks.
- Critics dismissed it as vandalism. The **Philadelphia Inquirer** ran stories about the mysterious tagger, inadvertently making him famous. By 1971, the **New York Times** declared Philadelphia the "graffiti capital of the world" thanks largely to Cornbread's relentless visibility campaign.
- McCray earned his nickname in juvenile detention after pestering kitchen staff for his grandmother's cornbread recipe. Released in 1965, he turned tagging into performance art, seeking increasingly audacious locations. His work predated hip-hop culture by several years.
- The most sensational stunt came in 1971 when newspapers falsely reported Cornbread's death in gang violence. To prove he was alive, McCray snuck into **Philadelphia Zoo** and spray-painted "Cornbread Lives" on an elephant's side, ensuring maximum publicity.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Darryl McCray - DAR-uhl muh-KRAY

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TAKI 183 (b. 1954)

TAKI 183 Tags

1969-1971

Marker and spray paint on walls

Various sizes

New York City subway system

TAKI 183 (b. 1954), TAKI 183 Tags, 1969-1971, Marker and spray paint on walls, Various sizes, New York City subway system

- **TAKI 183** transformed New York's visual landscape through sheer persistence. Working as a messenger, Greek-American teenager **Demetrius** (nicknamed Taki) tagged his name and street number throughout all five boroughs. His simple signature appeared everywhere: subway platforms, lamp posts, shop shutters, building facades.
- The **New York Times** tracked him down for a 1971 article titled "Taki 183 Spawns Pen Pals," which inadvertently legitimised tagging as cultural expression. The piece sparked competitive writing across the city. **Writers** began developing elaborate styles to stand out.
- Taki worked during New York's fiscal crisis when neighbourhoods felt abandoned. His tags claimed public space for youth voice. He used cheap markers initially, graduating to spray paint as his confidence grew. The act was quick, almost meditative.
- Fellow writers like **JULIO 204** competed for visibility, but Taki's media exposure made him legendary. His tags weren't artistic masterpieces - they were territorial markers asserting "I exist." This ego-driven visibility became graffiti's foundation.
- The movement Taki sparked would evolve from simple tags to elaborate subway car murals by the mid-1970s. **Phase 2** and **Super Kool 223** took tagging into full artistic expression with colours, shadows, and style.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Demetrius - dih-MEE-tree-us

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Phase 2 (Michael Lawrence Marrow) (1955-2019)

Subway Car Piece

1972

Spray paint on subway car

Full subway car exterior

New York City subway

Phase 2 (Michael Lawrence Marrow) (1955-2019), Subway Car Piece, 1972, Spray paint on subway car, Full subway car exterior, New York City subway

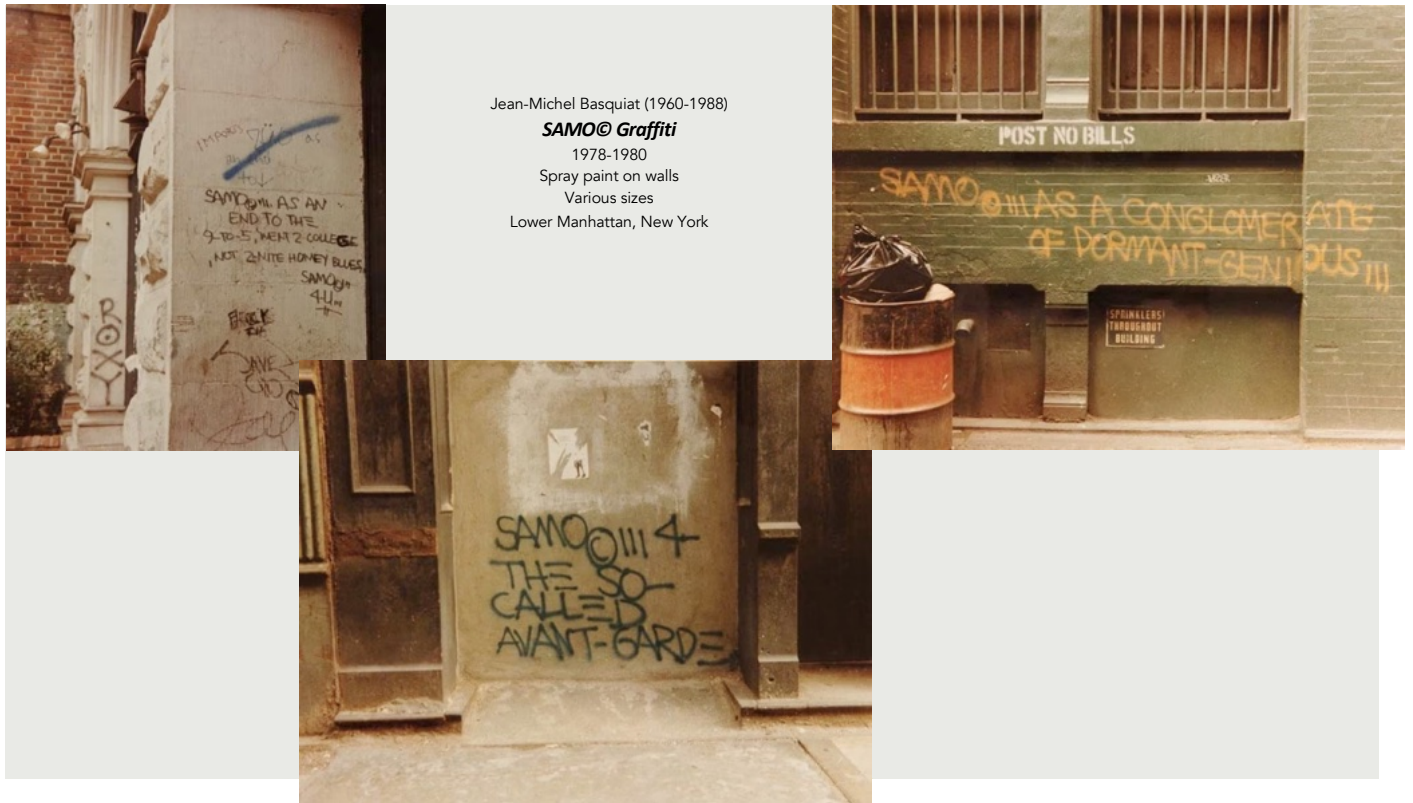
- **Phase 2** revolutionised graffiti by adding style to substance. He pioneered the **bubble letter** technique and introduced design elements - arrows, stars, cloud backgrounds - that transformed simple names into visual spectacles. His work represented graffiti's evolution from territorial marking to artistic expression.
- Critics in the early 1970s viewed subway graffiti as municipal vandalism. The **Metropolitan Transportation Authority** spent millions removing tags. Mainstream media portrayed writers as criminals destroying public property. But underground, **Phase 2** earned respect as an innovator.
- New York's 1970s economic collapse left the subway system decrepit. Trains rattled through neglected neighbourhoods where young Black and Latino artists saw blank canvases. **Phase 2** worked at night, dodging police and transit workers, risking arrest for his art.
- He introduced **3D effects** and **character integration**, moving beyond flat letters. His innovations included the **softie** style (rounded bubble letters) and masterful use of negative space. Fellow writers studied his techniques obsessively.
- **Phase 2** later became a respected figure in hip-hop culture, designing album covers and collaborating with musicians. His influence extends through generations of street artists who learned that style matters as much as visibility.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Phase 2 - FAYZ TOO

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Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988)

SAMO© Graffiti

1978-1980

Spray paint on walls

Various sizes

Lower Manhattan, New York

Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), SAMO© Graffiti, 1981, Spray paint on walls, Various sizes, Lower Manhattan, New York

- **Basquiat** and schoolmate **Al Diaz** created **SAMO©** (Same Old Shit) as philosophical graffiti around SoHo and the East Village. Unlike traditional taggers seeking visibility, they wrote cryptic, poetic statements: "SAMO© AS AN END TO MINDWASH RELIGION" and "SAMO© SAVES IDIOTS."
- **The Village Voice** praised the mysterious SAMO tags as "sophisticated gibberish." Art world figures noticed. This wasn't territorial marking - it was conceptual street poetry challenging capitalism, religion, and establishment thinking. The copyright symbol added sardonic commentary on commodification.
- Basquiat lived rough, selling hand-painted postcards and T-shirts. The SAMO project reflected his outsider perspective - brilliant, angry, alienated. When the collaboration dissolved in 1980, Basquiat spray-painted "SAMO IS DEAD" across Manhattan.
- The SAMO period established Basquiat's voice: raw, confrontational, intellectually dense. He layered text, symbols, and imagery addressing racism, power, and authenticity. His work bridged street culture and Neo-Expressionism.
- Within two years, Basquiat exhibited at prestigious galleries alongside **Keith Haring**. He befriended **Andy Warhol**, collaborated on paintings, and became art world royalty. His meteoric rise and tragic death at 27 from heroin overdose cemented his legend.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Jean-Michel Basquiat - zhon mee-SHEL BAS-kee-aht
- SAMO - SAY-moh

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Keith Haring (1958-1990)
Untitled (Subway Drawing)

1982
White chalk on black paper
Approximately 107 x 152 cm
New York City subway

Keith Haring (1958-1990), *Untitled (Subway Drawing)*, 1982=84, White chalk on black paper, Approximately 124.5 x 172.4 cm, New York City subway

- **Haring** discovered his canvas in subway advertising spaces covered with black paper. Between 1980-1985, he created thousands of chalk drawings featuring his iconic vocabulary: radiant babies, barking dogs, dancing figures. The work was spontaneous, public, democratic.
- **The New York Times** initially dismissed subway drawings as vandalism, but **Andy Warhol** championed Haring's pop sensibility. Gallery interest followed. Haring's clean lines and universal symbols made street art accessible to mainstream audiences. Critics praised his energy and immediacy.
- Haring drew during rush hour, performing for commuters. He faced arrest numerous times but considered it worthwhile. The subway became his classroom - he studied how people reacted to art in transit, refining his visual language.
- His **radiant baby** symbolised purity and potential. The crawling infant surrounded by energy lines became Haring's signature. He borrowed the radiating lines from **SJK 171**, an early graffiti writer, transforming them into optimism incarnate.
- Diagnosed with AIDS in 1988, Haring channelled grief into activism. His later work addressed safe sex, drug abuse, and apartheid. He died at 31, leaving thousands of public works across five continents. The **Keith Haring Foundation** continues his legacy.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Keith Haring - KEITH HAI-ring

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Blek le Rat (Xavier Prou) (b. 1952)

First Stencil Rats

1981

Spray paint stencil on walls
Approximately 30 x 20 cm each
Paris, France



Blek le Rat (Xavier Prou) (b. 1952), First Stencil Rats, 1981, Spray paint stencil on walls, Approximately 30 x 20 cm each, Paris, France

- **Xavier Prou** revolutionised street art by introducing stencils for images rather than text. Inspired by Italian political murals, he spray-painted small black rats across Paris. The rat symbolised underground resistance - both he and rodents operated in darkness.
- French authorities initially ignored the rats as minor nuisances. **Le Monde** later recognised **Blek le Rat** as the "father of stencil graffiti." His technique offered advantages: quick application (reducing arrest risk), crisp detail, infinite reproduction.
- Prou studied architecture at **École des Beaux-Arts** but felt disconnected from gallery elitism. Paris's blank walls called to him. He wrote: "Rats are the only wild animals living in cities - only rats will survive when humans disappear."
- The stencil technique allowed complex imagery impossible with freehand spray painting. **Blek** progressed from rats to life-sized human figures, creating poignant social commentary about homelessness and poverty. His work was beautiful, deliberate, subversive.
- **Banksy** acknowledges **Blek le Rat** as his primary influence. The British artist adopted stencils after seeing Blek's work, transforming the technique into worldwide phenomenon. Blek continues creating, now exhibiting in galleries while maintaining street credibility.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Blek le Rat - BLEK luh RAH
- Xavier Prou - zav-YAY PROO
- École des Beaux-Arts - ay-KOL day boh-ZAR

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Shepard Fairey (b. 1970)

**André the Giant
Has a Posse**

1989

Copy of the original,
Screen-printed sticker
7.6 x 10.2 cm

Providence, Rhode Island
(first placement)

Shepard Fairey (b. 1970), André the Giant Has a Posse, 1989, Screen-printed sticker, 7.6 x 10.2 cm, Providence, Rhode Island (first placement)

- **Fairey**, a **Rhode Island School of Design** student, created his first sticker as a joke teaching friends screen-printing. The image of wrestler **André the Giant** with cryptic text "André the Giant Has a Posse" bewildered viewers. The absurdity was intentional.
- Skateboard culture embraced the stickers immediately. Fairey printed thousands, mailing them worldwide to supporters who plastered them everywhere. Critics dismissed it as juvenile vandalism. But **cultural theorists** recognised its genius: meaningless propaganda exposing how symbols gain power through repetition.
- Fairey refined the concept into **OBEY Giant** in 1994, influenced by **John Carpenter's film "They Live"** which critiques mindless consumerism. The simplified face and single word became globally recognisable. He placed stickers in 60 countries.
- Legal battles with **Titan Sports** (André's estate) forced design modifications. Fairey reframed each lawsuit as proof the establishment feared public art. His campaign demonstrated that street artists could build brands rivalling corporate advertising.
- The **Obama "Hope" poster** (2008) transformed Fairey from underground provocateur to mainstream icon. The red, beige, and blue portrait became the campaign's visual centrepiece. Fairey distributed 300,000 stickers and 500,000 posters, proving street art's political power.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Shepard Fairey - SHEP-urd FAIR-ee

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Danny Devenny (b. 1960),
Bobby Sands Mural,
1998,
Spray paint on wall,
Approximately 400 x 300
cm,
49 Falls Road, Belfast

Danny Devenny (b. 1960), Bobby Sands Mural, 1998, Spray paint on wall,
Approximately 400 x 300 cm, 49 Falls Road, Belfast

- Danny Devenny painted this iconic portrait of Bobby Sands on the gable end of Sinn Féin's Belfast office. Sands smiles warmly despite his tragic history - he died in 1981 aged 27 after 66 days on hunger strike in Long Kesh Prison. He demanded recognition as a political prisoner, not a criminal.
- Northern Ireland's mural tradition began early 20th century with Loyalist murals celebrating King William III's 1690 victory at the Battle of the Boyne. Republican murals emerged during The Troubles (1960s-1998) as visual displays of resistance. Belfast alone has over 700 political murals.
- Devenny, a former IRA prisoner turned artist, created this in 1998 during the peace process. The mural accompanies text: "Everyone, Republican or otherwise, has their own particular role to play" and "Our revenge will be the laughter of our children" - Sands's own words.
- The International Wall on Falls Road features murals supporting Palestinian rights, Nelson Mandela, and global liberation movements. These works transformed working-class neighbourhoods into open-air political galleries, maintaining collective memory whilst asserting community identity.



Banksy (b. 1973/74)
Girl with Balloon
2002
Spray paint stencil on wall
Approximately 120 x 100 cm
Waterloo Bridge, South Bank, London

Banksy (b. 1973/74), *Girl with Balloon*, 2002, Spray paint stencil on wall, Approximately 120 x 100 cm, Waterloo Bridge, South Bank, London

- **Banksy's** most iconic image shows a small girl reaching towards a red heart-shaped balloon drifting away. The stencil appeared on Waterloo Bridge with text: "There is Always Hope." Simple, devastating, perfect. The monochrome child contrasts sharply with the vivid red balloon.
- A 2017 **Samsung poll** voted it Britain's favourite artwork, beating **Turner**, **Constable**, and **Hockney**. Critics praised its emotional directness - the universal experience of loss transformed into optimism. The balloon represents childhood innocence, dreams, love.
- Banksy created the piece during Britain's Iraq War involvement. The work suggested hope persists despite political cynicism. Its message resonated globally. He later created variations for Syrian refugees (2014) and Brexit commentary (2017).
- The artwork's power lies in ambiguity. Is the girl releasing or losing the balloon? The question creates emotional tension. Banksy's stencil technique produced clean, reproducible images perfect for mass circulation through prints and photographs.
- The 2018 **Sotheby's auction** became art history's wildest moment. Seconds after selling for £1.4 million, the framed print self-destructed through a hidden shredder. Banksy renamed it "**Love is in the Bin**". The shredded version sold for £18.6 million in 2021.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Sotheby's - SUH-thuh-beez

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Banksy (b. 1973/74)

***The Flower
Thrower (Love is
in the Air)***

2003

Spray paint stencil on
wall

Approx: 150 x 120 cm
Jerusalem, West Bank
barrier

Banksy (b. 1973/74), *The Flower Thrower (Love is in the Air)*, 2003, Spray paint stencil on wall, Approximately 150 x 120 cm, Jerusalem, West Bank barrier

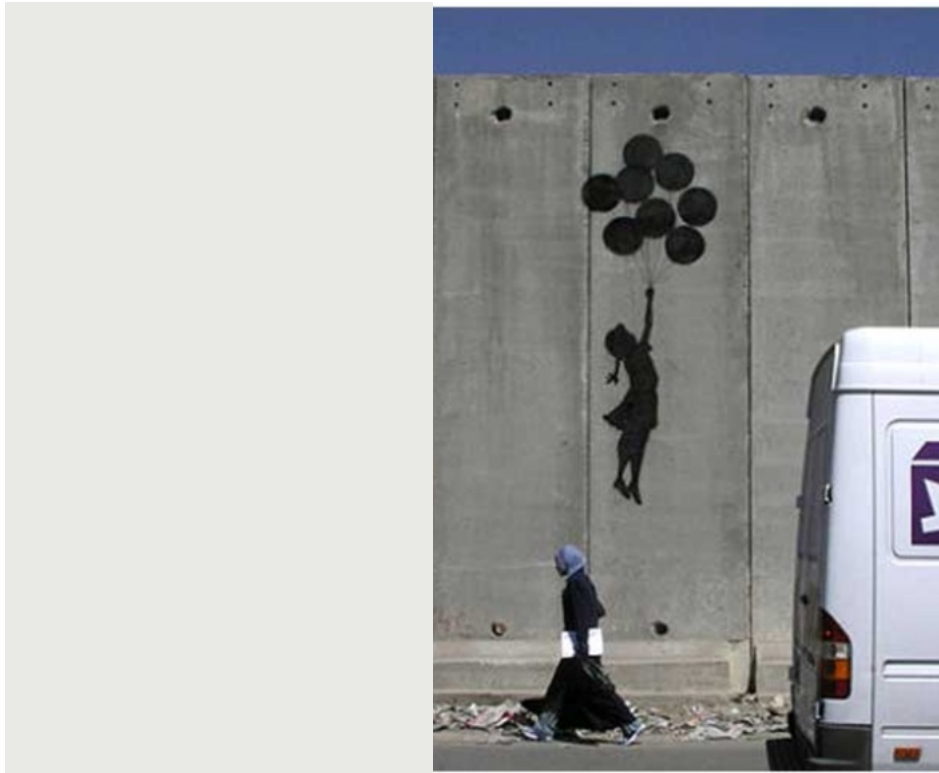
- A masked protestor winds up to hurl a Molotov cocktail - except he's throwing a bouquet of flowers. **Banksy** painted this powerful anti-war statement on Jerusalem's separation wall during the height of Israeli-Palestinian violence. The juxtaposition was immediate, visceral.
- **The Guardian** called it "one of the defining images of the peace movement." The masked figure suggests violent resistance, but the colourful flowers subvert expectations. Banksy's message: choose peace over conflict, beauty over destruction.
- A Palestinian resident told Banksy during creation: "We don't want this wall to be beautiful, we don't want this wall, go home." The comment revealed street art's complicated politics. Can decorating oppression legitimise it?
- The work exists in multiple versions: on the West Bank barrier, as screen prints, and painted on various walls worldwide. Its viral spread demonstrated street art's power to communicate across language barriers. The image adorns protest signs globally.
- Banksy's stencil shows the figure in dynamic motion - body torqued, arm extended, face covered. The flowers burst with hand-painted colour against black-and-white stenciling. This contrast technique became his signature, creating maximum visual impact with minimal elements.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Molotov cocktail - MOL-uh-tof KOK-tayl

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Banksy (b. 1973/74)

Flying Balloon Girl

2005

Spray paint stencil on wall

Approximately 500 x 150 cm

West Bank barrier near

Qalandia checkpoint, Palestine

Banksy (b. 1973/74), *Flying Balloon Girl*, 2005, Spray paint stencil on wall, Approximately 500 x 150 cm, West Bank barrier near Qalandia checkpoint, Palestine

- A small girl clutches seven balloons lifting her above the eight-metre-high concrete barrier. **Banksy** painted this variation of his balloon motif directly on Palestine's separation wall. The girl floats upward, transcending physical and political boundaries.
- **The New York Times** called it "poignantly simple" - a child's magical escape from harsh reality. The work references Palestinian freedom of movement restrictions and possibly the right of return. The balloons symbolise hope, dreams, childhood innocence defying oppression.
- Banksy created nine murals on the West Bank barrier in 2005. Local responses varied. Some appreciated international attention to their plight. Others resented a Western artist profiting from Palestinian suffering. The works sparked crucial debates about art, politics, and privilege.
- The piece demonstrates **magic realism** - impossible events treated as normal. The girl's supernatural flight suggests escape requires fantastical intervention. Critics note the work's universal appeal dilutes its specific political message about Palestinian rights.
- **Flying Balloon Girl** became the first West Bank wall graffiti to achieve international acclaim. Its imagery circulated globally through photographs, establishing the barrier as an important canvas for political street art. Numerous artists followed Banksy there.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Qalandia - kah-LAND-ee-uh

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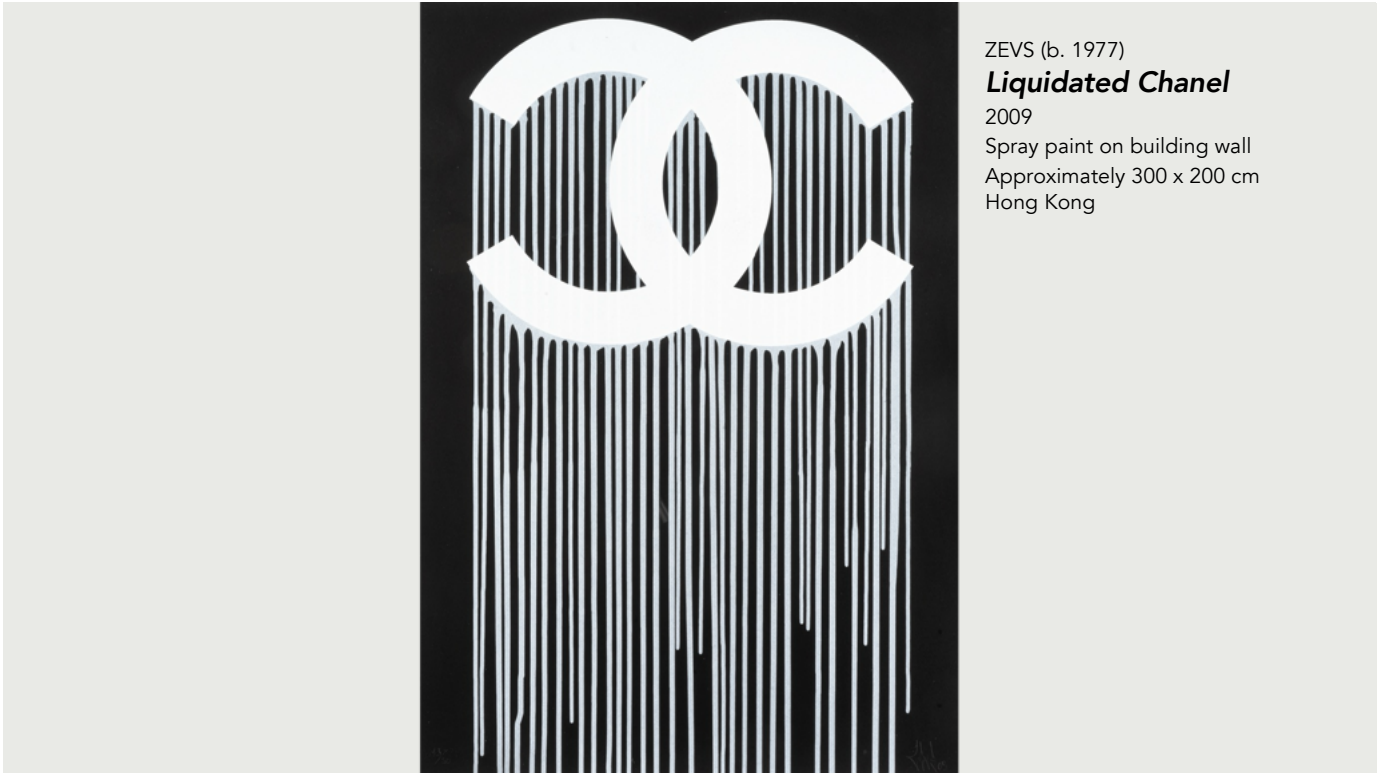
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ZEVS (b. 1977)

Liquidated Chanel

2009

Spray paint on building wall
Approximately 300 x 200 cm
Hong Kong



ZEVS (b. 1977), *Liquidated Chanel*, 2009, Spray paint on building wall, Approximately 300 x 200 cm, Hong Kong

- French street artist **ZEVS** spray-painted Chanel's interlocking logo with black paint dripping downward like oil. He created this "liquidated logo" on a **Giorgio Armani** shop wall in Hong Kong - the ironic location amplified his anti-corporate message.
- Hong Kong police arrested ZEVS immediately. **Chanel** pressed charges for vandalism and intellectual property violation. Critics praised the work's "visual terrorism" against luxury brands. Curator **Carlo McCormick** called ZEVS "the most subversive French street artist."
- ZEVS developed his Liquidated Logos series targeting corporations like **McDonald's**, **Chanel**, **Louis Vuitton**. He applied water-based paint allowing dramatic drips - the logos appeared to melt, bleed, dissolve. The technique suggested corporate decay and greed.
- The Hong Kong arrest generated international media coverage, exactly ZEVS's intention. He questioned: if advertisers pollute public space legally, why can't artists respond? The case highlighted street art's ongoing tension with property rights and free expression.
- ZEVS later recreated Liquidated Logos on canvas for galleries like **De Buck Gallery** in Chelsea. **Art historian Claire Bishop** noted gallery versions lost their subversive power - confronting Chanel on a shop wall differs vastly from viewing it in white cube spaces.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- ZEVS - ZEVZ
- Giorgio Armani - JOR-joh ar-MAH-nee

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JR (b. 1983)

Women Are Heroes

2008-2010

Large-scale photographic
wheat-paste

Varies, buildings up to 20 x 30
metres

Kibera slum, Nairobi, Kenya



JR (b. 1983), Women Are Heroes, 2008-2010, Large-scale photographic wheat-paste, Varies, buildings up to 20 x 30 metres, Kibera slum, Nairobi, Kenya

- French photographer **JR** pasted enormous portraits of women's eyes and faces across **Kibera**, one of Africa's largest slums. The monumental images covered entire buildings, trains, bridges. Local women's dignity and strength dominated their landscape.
- **The Guardian** praised the project as "art with genuine social impact." **JR** photographed women affected by war, poverty, violence in Kenya, Brazil, India, Sierra Leone. He wheat-pasted their portraits in their communities, giving invisible people unmissable visibility.
- Women in Kibera embraced the project. They saw themselves represented monumentally - their stories, struggles, resilience celebrated publicly. **JR** worked collaboratively, gaining permission, building trust. The portraits transformed degraded spaces into galleries of human dignity.
- The technique involves photographing subjects, printing images on massive paper sheets, then wheat-pasting them to buildings. Rain eventually destroys the work. **JR** considers impermanence essential - street art should be temporary, ephemeral, democratic.
- **JR** won the **2011 TED Prize**, using funds to create the **Inside Out Project** where anyone globally can paste portraits in their communities. His work bridges fine art photography and street art activism, proving the medium's capacity for profound social engagement.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Kibera - kih-BAIR-uh
- Nairobi - ny-ROH-bee

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Blu (b. 1980)

Muto

2008

Animation created from painted murals

Various walls, final video
8 minutes

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Blu (b. 1980), Muto, 2008, Animation created from painted murals, Various walls, final video 8 minutes, Buenos Aires, Argentina

- Italian street artist **Blu** created animation history's most ambitious project. Over months in Buenos Aires, he painted sequential images on walls, photographed each frame, painted over them, repeated. The resulting stop-motion film "Muto" shows evolving creatures devouring everything.
- **The New York Times** called it "mesmerising." The animation went viral online, viewed millions of times. Critics marvelled at Blu's commitment - creating ephemeral art just to photograph and destroy it. Each frame existed briefly before transformation.
- The film depicts grotesque figures consuming buildings, cars, people - a nightmarish commentary on capitalism and environmental destruction. Blu's creatures morph endlessly, suggesting transformation, mutation, evolution. The soundtrack adds eerie atmosphere to already unsettling imagery.
- **Blu** works anonymously, rarely gives interviews, refuses commercial commissions. He paints massive political murals criticising war, greed, power. His Buenos Aires project demonstrated street art's potential beyond static images.
- The animation required painting hundreds of walls across the city. Blu worked with local crews, building community while creating art. When filming concluded, only photographs remained - the physical murals painted over or weathered away. Perfect street art ephemerality.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Blu - BLOO
- Buenos Aires - BWAY-nos AIR-eez or BWAY-nohs EYE-rehs

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Invader (b. 1969)

Space Invader Mosaics

1998-present

Ceramic tiles on walls

Various, typically 20 x 20 cm to 100 x 100 cm

79 cities worldwide (over 4,000 installations)

Invader (b. 1969), Space Invader Mosaics, 1998-present, Ceramic tiles on walls, Various, typically 20 x 20 cm to 100 x 100 cm, 79 cities worldwide (over 4,000 installations)

- French artist **Invader** transforms cities into massive arcade games. Since 1998, he's installed over 4,000 pixelated **Space Invader** characters from the 1978 video game. The ceramic tile mosaics appear on buildings worldwide - Paris, New York, Hong Kong, Tokyo.
- **The Wall Street Journal** profiled Invader's meticulous planning. He scouts locations, designs mosaics for specific sites, creates ceramic pieces in his studio, then installs them covertly at night. Each "invasion" is documented, mapped, scored like the original game.
- The work celebrates 1980s nostalgia while critiquing urban surveillance culture. Invader literally invades cities, leaving permanent marks. Unlike spray paint, ceramic tiles survive weather and removal attempts. Many installations remain decades later.
- **Invader** developed a points system rating each piece's difficulty and visibility. He publishes maps showing invasion locations, turning cities into treasure hunts. Fans photograph installations, sharing locations online, creating participatory street art communities.
- His work entered mainstream when **Shepard Fairey** featured Invader in documentaries. Museums now exhibit Invader's work, but he continues illegal installations. The **Musée en Herbe** in Paris held a major retrospective. Invader proved street art could maintain artistic integrity while achieving commercial success.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Musée en Herbe - mew-ZAY on AIRB

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Various Artists
Wynwood Walls
 2009-present
 Spray paint, murals on building walls
 Multiple buildings, 80,000 square feet total
 Miami, Florida, USA

Various Artists, Wynwood Walls, 2009-present, Spray paint, murals on building walls, Multiple buildings, 80,000 square feet total, Miami, Florida, USA

- Developer **Tony Goldman** transformed Miami's industrial Wynwood district into the world's premier outdoor street art museum. Since 2009, **Wynwood Walls** has featured murals by **Shepard Fairey**, **Os Gemeos**, **Swoon**, **Retna**, **Kenny Scharf**, and hundreds more.
- **Art Basel Miami Beach** uses Wynwood as its unofficial outdoor venue. Critics initially questioned commercialising street art, but the project's success legitimised the movement. **The New York Times** called it "a game changer for street art's mainstream acceptance."
- Goldman provided walls, supplies, payment - unprecedented support for traditionally illegal art. Artists gained creative freedom without arrest risks. The neighbourhood gentrified rapidly. Property values soared. Some locals resented displacement, others welcomed economic revitalization.
- New murals appear annually during **Art Basel**, ensuring constant evolution. What was once warehouse district became restaurant, gallery, and boutique destination. The project proved street art could drive tourism and economic development.
- **Wynwood Walls** represents street art's complicated present: simultaneously authentic and commercialised, rebellious and institutional. It offers public access to world-class art while raising questions about gentrification, commodification, and whether permitted murals retain street art's transgressive spirit.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE:

- Wynwood - WIN-wood
- Os Gemeos - ozh ZHAY-me-ozh
- Retna - RET-nuh

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60-17 STREET ART

DR. LAURENCE SHAFE

WWW.SHAFE.UK



Banksy
Girl with Balloon
2002



Street art has evolved from a radical act of urban rebellion into a globally recognised art form with a rich and diverse legacy. Diego Rivera's monumental murals established public walls as a canvas for social commentary, inspiring generations. Jean-Michel Basquiat brought raw energy and cultural critique to New York's streets in the 1980s, while Banksy transformed stencil art into sharp political satire. Italian artist Blu revealed the power of large-scale narrative murals worldwide. Today, street art occupies a complex space — simultaneously celebrated in galleries and contested on city walls — challenging who owns public space and who controls the story.

Thank you for watching and I look forward to giving the next talk on the History of Western Art.



A Free Course on the History of Western Art

Dr Laurence Shafe www.shafe.uk

