

STREET ART: Art or not?



A It's a Woolly World

These days, it is not only grannies who knit. In cities such as New York, London and Berlin, community art groups are busy 'graffiti knitting', creating colourful decorations for lampposts, parking meters, cars and statues. The craze was started by Magda Sayeg in the USA, when she decided to brighten up the steel and concrete landscape of Austin, Texas with her knitted creations. Now knitting needles are clicking worldwide and cities are inviting the knitters to transform their public spaces. Most people's reactions are positive and even though it isn't strictly legal, Sayeg says, 'You'd have to be the most bored police officer to want to arrest me.' So, next time you walk past a city statue, take a look - it might be wearing a scarf!

D Flower Power!

Guerrilla gardeners plant flower gardens and vegetable patches on neglected land without permission. They believe it improves inner-city communities. The designs are made as artistic as possible; flowerbeds are planted in skips and sunflowers down pavement grating! While some people see this as a way to bring new life to forgotten spaces, others point out that, pretty or not, it's still illegal. However, it seems that no action is usually taken by the public or the police. One group of guerrilla gardeners were busy on a rundown London street recently when an old lady called out her approval to them: 'Thank you for the sunflowers. They were lovely!'



B We built this city... with LEGO® bricks

Most people remember playing with Lego bricks as a child. It seems, though, that toy towns aren't the only things they are used to construct. 'Lego repair work' was created by German artist Jan Vormann. Jan spent three years travelling the world, fixing crumbling walls and monuments with Lego. Jan took his project to New York and together with a team of volunteers, constructed Lego repairs all over the city, including at Brooklyn Bridge and Central Park. Cracks in buildings soon disappeared and were replaced with bright Lego shapes. Most New Yorkers are pleased with the Lego-look.

C On the wall

Most big cities have their fair share of graffiti, but, like it or not, one British graffiti artist is now considered to be a worldwide phenomenon. The true identity of Banksy is surrounded in mystery, but his art is instantly recognisable. Some of his most famous images include a young girl with a heart-shaped balloon and a dove of peace wearing a bulletproof vest. Banksy's work has even been exhibited in art exhibitions and a lot of his works have been sold. Because of his striking images and comments on social problems, public opinion is divided. Some find Banksy's work offensive, while others think he is one of the most important artists today.

a) Read the text again and mark the sentences

T (true) or F (false). Correct the false sentences. ...

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Some old ladies started the first graffiti knitting group. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 2 You can only see Lego repair work in New York. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 3 Many New Yorkers don't like the Lego repair work. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 4 No one is certain who Banksy really is. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 5 Banksy's work can only be seen on the streets. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 6 Guerilla gardeners have permission for what they do. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |
| 7 The police often arrest guerilla gardeners. | <input type="button" value="T"/> | <input type="button" value="F"/> | |

STREET ART: Art or not?

Fill in: ...

strictly

instantly

bulletproof

brighten up

crumbling

divided

immediate

neglected

- 1 The local council is taking action to _____ the town centre and improve its appearance. ...
- 2 Smoking is _____ prohibited. ...
- 3 There are easy ways to fix _____ walls so that they don't fall apart. ...
- 4 His style is so distinctive that it is _____ recognisable. ...
- 5 Police officers wear _____ vests to protect themselves. ...
- 6 His paintings are controversial so critics' opinions are _____. ...
- 7 The park was _____. It had broken benches and long grass. ...
- 8 The police were asked to take _____ action. ...

b) Match the words in bold in the text to their meanings: ...

brighten up

pleased with

instantly

public

transform

fair share

divided

rundown

reactions

identity

offensive

approval

crumbling

surrounded

neglected

responses = _____ ...

happy with = _____ ...

name = _____ ...

people = _____ ...

immediately = _____ ...

rude and upsetting = _____ ...

agreement = _____ ...

derelict = _____ ...

worn out = _____ ...

split = _____ ...

enclosed = _____ ...

more than enough = _____ ...

breaking into pieces = _____ ...

add colour to = _____ ...

change = _____ ...

STREET ART: Art or not?

Vocabulary

1 ★ Match the type of art to its description. ...

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------------------|
| 1 | ... | pottery |
| 2 | ... | sculpting |
| 3 | ... | photography |
| 4 | ... | collage |
| 5 | ... | graffiti |
| 6 | ... | painting |
| 7 | ... | computer graphics |
| 8 | ... | drawing |

- A Pictures made by hand using a pencil.
- B Pictures made by sticking pieces of paper and cloth onto a paper.
- C Making objects by carving a material such as stone.
- D Pictures that are drawn in public places.
- E Pictures created by using a camera.
- F Making pictures by brushing colour liquid onto a surface.
- G Making objects out of clay.
- H Images created by using high-tech equipment.

2 ★ Fill in: ...

- | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| public | brighten up | crumbling | fair |
| phenomenon | transform | offensive | rundown |

- 1 He lives in a poor and ... neighbourhood. ...
- 2 Colourful street art helps ... the community. ...
- 3 She refuses to go to the gallery as she finds the artwork
- 4 He repairs ... walls with colourful Lego bricks. ...
- 5 This neighbourhood has its ... share of graffiti with lots of colourful walls. ...
- 6 The artist became a worldwide ... and his work is recognised everywhere. ...
- 7 ... opinion differs on what is street art and what is vandalism. ...
- 8 Street artists want to ... public spaces into more attractive areas. ...