

Banksy is a famous graffiti artist, political activist, and film director from England. His work _____ (spot) in cities throughout the world since the mid-1990s. However, it _____ (be) impossible to confirm Banksy's identity because he _____ (choose) to remain anonymous.

Despite his anonymity, Banksy _____ (reveal) a few facts about himself in interviews with the press. He _____ (begin) spray-painting at age 14, he _____ (expel) from school, and he _____ (spend) time in jail for petty crimes. However, not much else _____ (know) about him. Many people _____ (believe) that he _____ (be) a member of the music group Massive Attack. Other people _____ (think) he _____ (be) an English comic book artist named Jamie Hewlett.

Banksy _____ (be) famous for using stencils in his work. One of his most recognizable stencils _____ (depict) two policemen kissing each other. Another one _____ (show) a man getting ready to throw a bouquet of flowers as if it _____ (be) a grenade.

Banksy's art often _____ (contain) political messages. For example, when he _____ (visit) the Gaza Strip in 2005, he _____ (paint) kittens on the remains of buildings that _____ (bomb). His intention _____ (be) to highlight the destruction of war.

In 2010, Banksy _____ (create) a documentary film, which _____ (premiere) at the Sundance Film Festival. The film, *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, _____ (nominate) for an Academy Award in 2011. Each time the film _____ (open) in a new city, Banksy _____ (create) new graffiti in that place. However, since graffiti _____ (be) illegal, a lot of the art _____ (destroy) or painted over.

Banksy _____ (say) that he _____ (consider) graffiti to be a form of revenge against the privileged members of society. He _____ (use) art to criticize consumerism, war, and fascism. In 2017, Banksy _____ (attempt) to bribe members of the public by offering free prints of his artwork to people who _____ (vote) against Conservative candidates in the UK general election. However, Banksy _____ (withdraw) his bribe when the police _____ (become) involved.

In October 2018, Banksy _____ (perform) an expensive prank. One of his original pieces, which _____ (feature) a girl holding a balloon, _____ (sell) at an auction for approximately \$1.4 million. Before the auction, Banksy _____ (place) a shredder inside the frame. As soon as the highest bidder _____ (determine), the shredder _____ (destroy) the picture. Some critics _____ (describe) this as the biggest prank in art history.