Street Art

What is Street Art?

Street Art is art that is usually created outside in public areas. It’s everywhere – on buildings, on streets and also on trains. Street Art is different from other art forms because it isn’t permanent and it isn’t easy to collect or exhibit. Sometimes people paint over it, but we can still see it in photographs.

Some people say that Street Art is just graffiti or ‘vandalism’ and it is often illegal. But the art world is beginning to accept Street Art as a real art form. Today, you can sometimes see it in galleries.

Some street artists want to make political statements through their paintings. Others do it for fun, or to make streets and buildings more interesting. Many artists enjoy working outside. They want to produce art that interacts with the environment.
Some artists are very inventive. They paint streets and buildings. The art is sometimes 3D and it’s often very hard to know what is real and what isn’t.

Forms of Street Art

Traditional

Traditional Street Art is done on the walls of buildings with paint and brushes. Today, most artists use spray paints because they’re quicker and easier to use. Some of these paintings consist of simple words and some are more elaborate pictures covering a whole wall.
Many street artists use stencils that they make at home. The stencils are usually made from paper or cardboard. Artists use them because you can paint a large image very quickly.

Stickers

Street artists also use stickers. They also make them at home. Some stickers are painted individually and others are printed and used in large numbers. They’re quick to stick on buildings or walls.
Street installations

Street installations are 3D street sculptures. Artists often take everyday objects and give us a different perspective of them.

Video projection

Artists use projectors to put images on buildings. Projected art is very different because it’s possible to move it to a different place. Sometimes artists even project short films.
Famous street artists

Banksy

One of the most famous street artists is Banksy. Banksy is from Bristol in south-west England. He started to paint street art in the 1990s.

At first he painted in a traditional style. Later, he decided to use stencils because he wanted to work in secret. He doesn’t want people to know who he is, or what he looks like.
Another famous street artist is JR from Paris, France. His art is different to most street artists because he doesn’t use spray paint or brushes in his work – he uses photographs.

JR takes photographs of the people he meets. He then blows up the picture to create the huge images he puts on the side of buildings. The artist is careful to keep his real name a secret, but this hasn’t stopped him from becoming famous all over the world.