

## Street Art:

What is Street Art?  
How is it different from Graffiti?  
Why can it be perceived as controversial?

### LESSON OVERVIEW/OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about Street Art, its history and evolution. They will explore the differences between Street Art and Graffiti and talk about why Street Art can be controversial. Students will learn about a well known street artist named Banksy and his work and style as well as look at samples of street art from around the world. Students will use stencils, paints and pens to create their own personal brand in the form of street art.

### KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO VISUAL ARTS CORE CURRICULUM:

#### Based on Utah State Visual Arts Core Curriculum Requirements (3rd Grade)

**Standard 1 (Making): The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.**

**Objective 1: Explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes.**

- b. Use simplified forms, such as cones, spheres, and cubes, to begin drawing more complex forms.
- d. Make one color dominant in a painting.
- e. Create the appearance of depth by drawing distant objects smaller and with less detail than objects in the foreground.

**Objective 3: Handle art materials in a safe and responsible manner.**

- a. Ventilate the room to avoid inhaling fumes from art materials.
- b. Dispose and/or recycle waste art materials properly.
- c. Clean and put back to order art making areas after projects.
- d. Respect other students' artworks as well as one's own.

**Standard 2 (Perceiving): The student will analyze, reflect on, and apply the structures of art.**

**Objective 1: Analyze and reflect on works of art by their elements and principles**

- a. Determine how artists create dominance in their work; e.g., size, repetition, and contrast.
- b. Examine significant works of art and point out how the artists have created an illusion or feeling of depth.

**Objective 2: Create works of art using the elements and principles.**

- a. Identify dominant elements.
- c. Discover how an artist has thoughtfully used all of the space within an artwork.
- e. Create a work of art that uses contrast to create a focal point. Use that to convey the most important idea or part of the work.

**Standard 3 (Expressing): The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.**

**Objective 1: Explore possible content and purposes in significant works of art**

- a. Explain possible meanings or interpretations of some significant works of art.
- c. Discuss how an artist's work might be different if it is displayed publicly as opposed to being displayed at home.

## Street Art:

Exploration of the history and evolution of Street Art and its current manifestations.

**Objective 2: Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for their own artworks.**

- Group significant works of art according to theme or subject matter
- Judge which works of art most clearly communicate through the use of symbols.
- Create symbols in art that express individual or group interests.
- Create a work of art that uses a similar subject matter, symbol, idea, and/or meaning found in a significant work of art.

### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:

#### Students will:

- Understand what Street Art is, how it is different from Graffiti Art
- Discuss what makes Street Art controversial
- Understand why Street Art is an art form
- Discuss where Street Art may be found
- Learn how to make Street Art

### FOR THE TEACHER

Introduce the concept of street art to the students and discuss the history and evolution of Street Art (below). Talk about how street art is made with items such as spray paint, stencils, paints and paintbrushes, and paste. Street art can be covered up by other paint, city officials or left to fade on its own over time. Images to support the lesson are provided at the end of this lesson.

### History and Street Art

#### 1. CA. 15,000 BCE: CAVE PAINTINGS LIVEN UP THE STONE AGE

From the earliest evidence of human creativity to the birth of the first modern graffiti writer, street art has shown a remarkable ability to change the world. These moments have had long-lasting and profound repercussions, deeply shaping the artists, issues, outputs, and interactions of today.



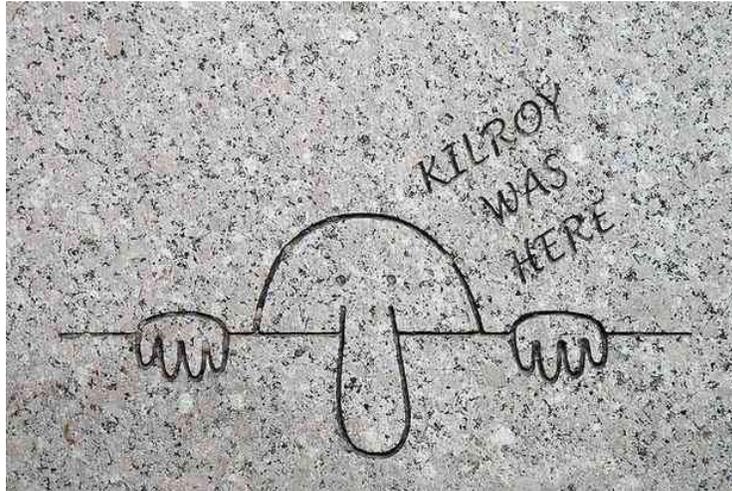
Gabriela Ruellan

The caves at Lascaux, in southwestern France, have almost 2000 images painted on their ceilings and walls, dating back to circa 15,000 BCE, a.k.a. the Stone Age. A mix of abstract signs, people, and animals, the cave paintings demonstrate the very human need to use art to both make sense of and manipulate our environment, two of street art's varied purposes.

## Street Art:

Exploration of the history and evolution of Street Art and its current manifestations.

### 2. 1942: KILROY GOES HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE



Luis Rubio

During World War II, the phrase “Kilroy was here,” usually accompanied by a drawing of a bald figure with a big nose, began appearing wherever US servicemen were stationed (even the VIP bathroom at the Potsdam Conference, where it caused Stalin to freak out). While the origins of the phrase remain somewhat murky, Kilroy was likely a real person, and his declaration constitutes an early instance of tagging. Plenty of people scribbled their names in obscure places before Kilroy got there, but his tag was the most widespread.

### 3. 1967: CORNBREAD FALLS IN LOVE



Lindsay T

In 1953, Darryl McCray is born in North Philadelphia. Fourteen years later, Cornbread, considered by many to be the first modern graffiti artist, was born. To win the heart of a young lady, McCray scribbled “Cornbread loves Cynthia” in several places she’d see. It worked: they dated until she moved away. More importantly for our purposes, Cornbread almost single-handedly took the idea of tagging away from gangs, who’d been using signatures and visual motifs to demarcate areas, and transformed it into an attention-grabber available to anyone. At the height of his fame in the 1960s and 1970s, no target was safe from Cornbread’s tag, not even an elephant at the Philadelphia Zoo or the Jackson 5’s private 747.

## Street Art:

Exploration of the history and evolution of Street Art and its current manifestations.

### 4. 1979: MARTHA COOPER MEETS DONDI



Garrett Zeigler

A photographer since the age of five, Martha Cooper started taking shots of kids spray-painting around the Lower East Side in the 1970s. But it wasn't until she met Donald White, better known as Dondi, that she truly found her subject. Her photograph of Dondi painting as he balanced precariously between two subway cars, included in her seminal book *Subway Art* (1984), co-written with Henry Chalfant, just might be her most famous. A self-proclaimed "ethnographer," she seeks to capture both the production and the products of an ephemeral form, and succeeds. She treats her subjects seriously and, as a result, her viewers do too.

### 5. 1981: BLEK LE RAT APPEARS IN PARIS



Garrett Zeigler

Beginning in 1981, rats crawled like crazy around the streets of Paris, courtesy of Blek le Rat, considered to be the father of modern stencil art. "My stencils are a present, introducing people to the world of art, loaded with a political message," he told *The Independent* during a 2008 interview. "This movement is the democratization of art: if the people cannot come to the gallery, we bring the gallery to the people!" His stencils' blend of dark humor and political commentary has impacted scores of artists, including Banksy and giff!

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### 6. 1982: KEITH HARING GOES FROM SUBWAY TO GALLERY



Garrett Zeigler

Keith Haring wasn't the only artist to make the leap from street to gallery during the late 1970s and early 1980s—indeed Jean-Michel Basquiat arguably had even more of a meteoric rise from graffiti writer to sought-after painter—but Haring was definitely one of the most prolific and remains one of the most popular. In 1980, he began doing quick drawings in white chalk on the black matte paper found in New York City subway stations. These “subway drawings” helped him hone his signature style of squiggles, figures, and symbols, leading to shows at major museums, large-scale public works projects, and great fame.

### 7. 1983: STYLE WARS PREMIERES



Garrett Zeigler

One of the earliest documentaries devoted to hip hop culture and urban art, *Style Wars* examines the intersection among graffiti, rapping, and breakdancing on the streets of New York City. It memorably portrays graffiti writers who “are not motivated by a desire for money [but who] want to make their mark on the city they live in and transform it into a canvas, into a work of art,” as New York Times film critic A.O. Scott explained when re-evaluating the film in 2009. Completed in 1982, it first aired on PBS in 1983, and has gained a tremendous cult following in the decades since.

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### 8. 2000S: STREET ART GOES LEGAL



Garrett Zeigler

In the 2000s and 2010s, street art went legal. Huge city-wide festivals in Stavanger, Norway, and Melbourne showed city officials that street art need not be criminalized—in fact, it could be encouraged in a way that benefited both the city (tourism, ornamentation) and the artist (exposure, safe circumstances in which to execute large-scale or intricate pieces). Today, cities from Atlanta to New York to Łódź to Cape Town have sponsored festivals of street art, designated significant areas as open-air legal galleries, and generally helped a multitude of artists gain exposure.

### 9. 2001: WOOSTER COLLECTIVE IS FOUNDED



Garrett Zeigler

In the aftermath of September 11, Marc Schiller walked around taking photographs of the art he found along the streets of his Soho neighborhood. In 2003, Schiller and his wife, Sara, created Wooster Collective, one of the first on-line celebrations of street art. The blog blossomed, and other websites devoted to promoting and cataloging street art around the world sprang up. Today, amateur and professional photographers alike post their street art finds to Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, and elsewhere, just about every artist worth his or her Sharpie has a website, and mainstream media like the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal regularly cover street art, largely due to the influence of Wooster Collective.



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### SUPPLIES

- Large sheets (11 x 14”) of scrapbook paper with brick, wall, wood etc. type of pattern on it
- Thick paper to mount scrapbook paper on as needed
- Ready made stencils
- Tempera or acrylic or watercolor paint
- Sponges
- Toothpicks
- Cups and or plates for water and paint
- Pencils and copy paper for sketches
- Paint Pens

### VOCABULARY

**Street art** - is any art developed in public spaces. The term can include traditional graffiti art work, as well as, stencil graffiti, sticker art, wheatpasting and street poster art, video projection, art intervention, guerrilla art, flash mobbing and street installations.

**Graffiti** - is writing or drawings that have been scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface, often in a public place.

**Symbol** - Is an object or thing that has meaning more than the thing itself. A dog might represent fidelity in addition to being a pet; it is a visual sign for an idea or concept.

**Elements of art** - Are color, line, shape, form, space, value, and texture. Artists use these tools to create all visual art—representational, abstract, and non-representational.

**Personal Symbols** - A symbol or symbols one uses to represent oneself to others.



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### INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

#### Quick Writing and/or discussion

Before beginning the lesson, give students a few minutes to respond to one of the following prompts:

- When they hear the words Street Art, what comes to mind? What do they think it means?
- Describe a Street Artist you may have heard of and/or describe any street art you may have seen.

#### Introduction

Introduce this lesson by asking students to describe some ideas of Street. What constitutes Street Art and why? Have they ever seen any Street Art and if so, where? How is Street Art different than Graffiti? Refer to the attached information and pictures to discuss how Street Art has had a remarkable ability to change the world. Ask them if they know of any famous Street Artists.

Street Art is found in most major cities all over the world, with New York being one of the best cities to explore street art, followed by Berlin in Germany and London in the United Kingdom. There is street art from Melbourne to Cape Town, and from San Paolo to Tehran, its everywhere! Tell students that they are going to be Street Artists and make their own personal brand/symbol that tells something about them. We will be using stencils, paint and markers.

#### Observe: Look and Discuss

Show students examples of Street Art. Talk about the different techniques such as spray paint, stencils and pasting an image on a surface. A more temporary form of street art is with chalk and baby powder. Introduce Banksy to the class and remind them that Park City has its own Backsy on Main Street! Banksy uses stencils like we will use.

#### About Banksy:

Banksy is the pseudonym of a “guerrilla” street artist known for his controversial, and often politically themed, stenciled pieces. Banksy, a street artist whose identity remains unknown, is believed to have been born in Bristol, England, around 1974. He rose to prominence for his provocative stenciled pieces in the late 1990s. Banksy is the subject of a 2010 documentary, *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, which examines the relationship between commercial and street art.

#### Artistic Career

Banksy began his career as a graffiti artist in the early 1990s, in Bristol’s graffiti gang DryBreadZ Crew. Although his early work was largely freehand, Banksy used stencils on occasion. In the late ‘90s, he began using stencils predominantly. His work became more widely recognized around Bristol and in London, as his signature style developed.

Banksy’s artwork is characterized by striking images, often combined with slogans. His work often engages political themes, satirically critiquing war, capitalism, hypocrisy and greed. Common subjects include rats, apes, policemen, members of the royal family, and children. In addition to his two-dimensional work, Banksy is known for his installation artwork. One of the most celebrated of these pieces, which featured a live elephant painted with a Victorian wallpaper pattern, sparked controversy among animal rights activists.

Other pieces have drawn attention for their edgy themes or the boldness of their execution. Banksy’s work on the West Bank barrier, between Israel and Palestine, received significant media attention in 2005. He is also known for his use of copyrighted material and subversion of classic images. An example of this is Banksy’s version of Monet’s famous series of water lilies paintings, adapted by Banksy to include drifting trash and debris.



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Banksy's worldwide fame has transformed his artwork from acts of vandalism to sought-after high art pieces. Journalist Max Foster has referred to the rising prices of graffiti as street art as "the Banksy effect." Interest in Banksy escalated with the release of the 2010 documentary *Exit Through the Gift Shop*. The film, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, was nominated for an Academy Award.

### Create:

Give students scratch paper and show them some symbol ideas. Talk about a personal brand or symbol. Let them sketch a few ideas. Hand out stencils for students to choose. Hand out the scrapbook paper. Have students decide where their symbol/stencil will go. Using sponges dipped in paint, students can sponge their color on over the stencil, being careful not to make it too wet or it will run. Depending on how fast the paint dries will determine if you can use more than one color to paint. When finished, lift the stencil straight up so prevent smudges. When the painting is dry and/or while it is drying, students can use markers or paint pens to write their name or a saying and also add details to their stencils.

If students prefer to draw/paint their own image instead of using stencils, they can use the paint pens on the paper to create their own brand and street art.

### Reflect

When students have finished, give them a few minutes to look at each other's images. Talk about what kind of personal brand and street art they created. Have them discuss why art like this can be controversial if it appears in public spaces. Talk about also how this kind of art brings attention to what is going on in our world and offers a way of expressing and describing it. Also talk about how a lot of street art is temporary, that it gets covered up or removed. Students can compare this to art in a gallery or a museum.

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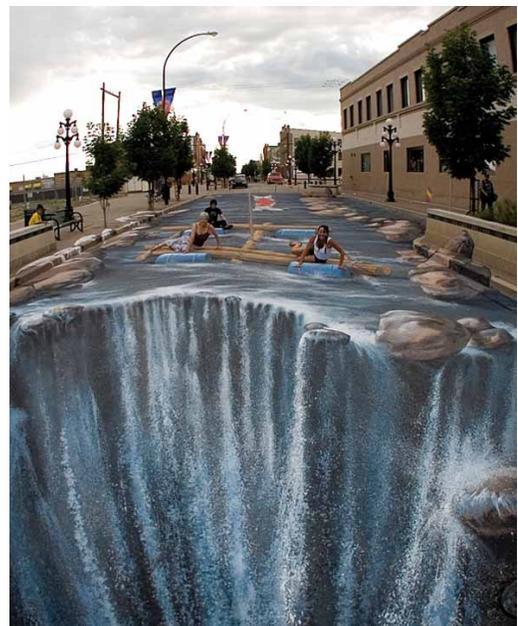
### Sample Banksy Street Art Images



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### Sample Street Art Images





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### LESSON EXTENSIONS

#### Visual Arts and Writing

- Ask students to pick a place to create their own Street Art. Have them draw their idea and write about it describing what it would be made of, how it integrates into the site and describe its significance.
- Have students look at other Street Artists and have them design a piece of street art in the style of the artist. Write about what statement it is making if any and discuss why that topic is important to them.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://streetartutopia.com>

<http://streetartview.com>

<http://redtedart.com>

<http://streetart.withgoogle.com>

<http://theartofed.com>

<http://www.artandcointv.com/blog/2011/10/the-history-and-evolution-of-street-art/>

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/58725/9-game-changing-moments-history-street-art>