

## Banksy

### NU Artwork– Is it Authentic?



#### Who is Banksy?

Arguably the most controversial street artist in the world, the works of Banksy have become a subculture in their own right. Banksy's political statements and disruptive vision have impacted cities across the globe at vital moments in recent history, provoking alternative viewpoints and encouraging revolution in the art world. His identity remains unknown, even after more than 30 years of involvement in the global graffiti scene. He has worked in many different street art mediums and in many different styles, breaking down the boundaries and expectations of street art critics. His work includes many powerful, often controversial images, encouraging their rapid spread across the internet. Today, his iconic works have been re-shared and repurposed beyond measure.

#### Banksy Artwork

In October 2013, Banksy undertook a month-long residency in New York in 2013 named "Better Out Than In". During this time, he unveiled a new piece of work everyday. On Day 13, the artist disguised himself as a typical street vendor and set up a stand in Central Park, where he sold black-and-white original paintings for \$60. Only eight pieces of art were sold. The following day, Banksy authenticated those eight canvases on his website, alongside the message: "Yesterday I set up a stall in the park selling 100% authentic original signed Banksy canvases. For \$60 each". A year after, 'Winnie the Pooh', purchased during Banksy's New York residency, sold for £56,250 on July 2nd 2014 at Bonhams in London.

In summer 2015, Banksy opened Dismaland in the seaside resort of Weston-super-Mare; a dystopian theme park. Prepared entirely in secret, the project unveiled 10 new works by Banksy as well as works from 58 other artists.

In March 2017, Banksy participated in the designing of the Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem, opposite the Israeli West Bank Barrier. With nine rooms designed by Banksy himself, guests could literally sleep inside a work of art. Originally intended as a temporary and provocative piece of installation art, the

Walled Off Hotel rapidly became a top tourist attraction. Alongside the spot on which Jesus was reputedly born, a traditional pilgrimage site, the controversial 700-kilometre-long wall is now a surprising tourist site.

In October 2018, a painting by the anonymous street artist sold at Sotheby's auction house in London for £1.04 million. Shortly after the hammer came down, the print of Banksy's 2006 'Girl with Balloon' began to pass through a shredder installed in the frame, shredding half of it. "It appears we just got Banksy-ed," reported Alex Branczik, Sotheby's Senior Director and Head of Contemporary Art in Europe. The piece was a famous Banksy print known as "Girl with Balloon" created back in 2006. Banksy's balloon girl, which was voted UK's best-loved work of art in 2017, became the first instance of a self-destructing painting. Banksy posted a video to his Instagram account to confirm the move was intentional and demonstrate how he built a shredding device into the large golden frame. The work was then given a new title: "Love is in the Bin". One less savvy Banksy owner, that actually shredded their own Banksy print in the hope the stunt would add value to their investment, was very disappointed.

While the work found on the NU campus definitely references Banksy's work, in conclusion, no, this artwork is not actually Banksy's.