

SHEPARD FAIREY

STREET ART

CAREER: CONTEMPORARY ARTIST

WEBSITE: WWW.OBEYGIAN.COM



Artwork by: Shepard Fairey

FAIREY'S OTHER WORKS



Shepard Fairey reached national fame as the graphic artist behind a 2008 iconic poster of Barack Obama, a portrait labeled simply “HOPE” and in a style that could be described as Andy Warhol meets Socialist Realism. Fairey, who graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1992, was already well known among graffiti artists thanks to one of Fairey’s early works of “guerilla” art, a stencil design based on an ad for Andre the Giant, a professional wrestler. The stencil has made Fairey popular among hipsters, celebrities, and kids. Fairey decided to add his stencil design onto clothing and named the brand, “Obey”.

Mixing politics with images and bold graphic designs, Fairey works as an artist and designer, with a gallery in Los Angeles and business that reaches into publishing, fashion and urban sports. Supporters call what he does appropriation art, but detractors call it plagiarism, and Fairey’s success has put him in the middle of a legal and artistic debate about who owns what when it comes to images in the public. Fairey’s work combines elements of graffiti, pop

art, business art, appropriation art, and Marxist theory. His supporters point to the viral nature of his images, the DIY ethic behind his operation, and the brute cultural impact of his work. His critics have accused him of everything from being the proverbial sell out to exploiting politically charged imagery too closely appropriating the work of other artists and hastening the over-commercialization of street culture.

Fairey, now 40, remains ambivalent about both achieving art-world validation and retaining his street cred, aware that artists whose works hang in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.—as his own Obama portrait does. The content of Fairey’s work is a call to action about hierarchies and abuses of power, politics and the commodification of culture. Fairey is committed to creating work that has meaning for his audience by using cultural iconography that people can relate to and by bringing his work into the public sphere. Although being an artist hasn’t been easy, Fairey has shown his true love and passion for creating inspirational art.



Fairey made stickers in the late 1980s, along with the scrawl “Andre the Giant has a posse,” and the image went viral, spreading through urban America, on street signs, billboards and walls. Later added the word “obey.”



This piece made back in 2008 for the presidential election made Fairey go viral. He was accused of copyright infringement. He was sentenced to two years probation and a \$25,000 fine.



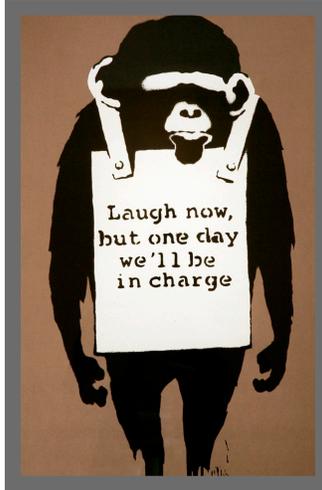
Rock the Vote is a program dedicated to getting people to get politically involved and make a difference. Shepard Fairey has partnered with them and he creates these posters.

BANKSY

STREET ART

CAREER: GRAFFITI ARTIST

WEBSITE: WWW.BANKSY.CO.UK



Artwork by: Banksy

Banksy, a street artist whose identity remains unknown, is believed to have been born in Bristol, England, in 1974. He rose to fame for his provocative stenciled pieces in the late 1990s. 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 into a unique one.

Banksy's artwork is characterized by striking images, combined with slogans. His work 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 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.

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.

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. Although Banksy still remains a mystery to this day, people still appreciate his work and admire his bravery for going against society. Who knows, maybe one day Banksy's true identity will be identified, or will it be too late.

BANKSY'S OTHER WORKS



The London Phone Booth. Appeared overnight on a street in Soho, London, this bent and broken British Telecommunications phone booth laid on its side, axe protruding from its side, blood pooling underneath.



Banksy hit this wall right next to a camera which failed to catch the artist. CCTV cameras keep an eye on all the residents in England.



Banksy titled his showing "Barely Legal." This was in LA back in 2006, although he had the legal papers, he got in trouble for painting the elephant without any permission.