

THE ART OF BANKSY – THE FIRST EVER FLOWER THROWER

The Art of Banksy – the major exhibition which has brought Banksy's era-defining works to over 1.5 million visitors in 15 cities across the globe – has transferred to Charing Cross Road, with previously unseen artworks. As the world's largest collection of original and authenticated Banksy art, showcasing more than 150 pieces, including prints, canvases, unique works and fascinating ephemera, The Art of Banksy also shows some extra special exhibits, including a global exclusive – the first ever Flower Thrower.



In 2003, Banksy unveiled Flower Thrower – also known as Love Is In The Air – for the first time, becoming one of the artist's most recognisable works. However, Banksy had already created an initial artwork in 1997, depicting a man throwing a bunch of flowers as a Valentine's Day gift for his then girlfriend. This work has never been shown in public until now. The original Flower Thrower is on show, together with information about the origins of the image and testimonies by the photographer who first captured the image that inspired Banksy, not to mention the actual 'flower thrower' himself.

The second public debut is Mona Lisa. This signed, but previously unknown work

was originally bought directly from the artist by a Hollywood A-list actor in 2003. In 2022, it was returned to Banksy, who developed the work further, and created a brand-new artwork, incorporating the original. Earlier this year, it was sold to a collector, who has agreed to lend it to The Art of Banksy collection for a limited time.

Visitors can also expect to see the seminal artworks that brought the infamously anonymous artist international notoriety, such as Girl With Balloon, in three different colour variations and Rude Copper, alongside truly one-off pieces, including stencils created and used by the

artist, hand drawn sketches and personal works that Banksy created for friends, associates and lovers. The exhibition also focuses on Banksy's Dismaland, The Walled Off Hotel in Bethlehem and recent artworks acknowledging the ongoing war in Ukraine. New for London and, for the first time, close associates of the artist share their personal stories, too, giving unique insight into some of the world's most famous images, engrossing background on how those headline-grabbing street art stunts were devised and how, with their irreverent wit and a biting political edge, this visionary took the art world by storm, without ever revealing their identity.

In its new home, The Art of Banksy is an unmissable show for anyone who wants to learn more about one of the world's most important current artists and what their work reveals today; the power of art to affect social change, inspire the public and lay bare the undercurrents of social issues. The Art of Banksy is not curated or authorised by the artist.



Leah, Whitby RNLI lifeboat volunteer, 15th June 2017. Photo: Jack Lowe

WOMEN OF THE RNLI AT THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

To mark the bicentenary of the RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution), the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich is hosting an exhibition celebrating the vital role that women have played in saving lives at sea.

Women of the RNLI highlights the work and success of women in a variety of roles, including their pioneering contributions to fundraising, campaigning, technological innovation, training and as members of onshore and offshore crew throughout the RNLI's history. The exhibition features a series of Jack Lowe photographs, taken from Lowe's ongoing Lifeboat Station Project, an attempt to photograph every RNLI station and members of its crew. Alongside these images, the exhibition includes oral histories from some of the sitters, sharing their experiences of life with the RNLI.

The exhibition runs until 1 December and is suitable for all ages. Admission is free. The National Maritime Museum, Queen's House, Royal Observatory Greenwich, and Cutty Sark are open daily 10.00-17.00 (last admission 16.30).

Further information at the website www.rmg.co.uk