



Monday, March 14, 2011

An Open Letter to the Los Angeles Community Regarding Stolen “Banksy” Art

Just before the Academy Awards a number of unique pieces of “graffiti” appeared in Los Angeles, San Diego and neighboring communities. A majority of this art was attributed to world-famous, anonymous British graffiti artist, political activist, film director and painter Banksy.

Unfortunately, much of this art was immediately removed and in most cases stolen from the private property where it was originally painted. Banksy's art has important social, political and cultural implications and we at AllVoices condemn the unauthorized removal or defacement of these valuable contributions to these communities.

We are calling upon the individual or individuals responsible for the theft of this art to come forward and return the art to its rightful owners – the communities that received these unique and spontaneous gifts.

Further, in an effort to support the arts and the cultural value provided when talented individuals like Banksy take it upon themselves to give such art to a community, AllVoices is offering to purchase these stolen pieces and subsequently put them on public display so that the world can enjoy these creations.

While we at AllVoices recognize that the context for each unique work of Banksy art is important for the complete appreciation of the work, we also realize that in many cases this art cannot be restored to its original location. Moreover, even if the art could be restored in-situ, it is highly likely that such art would subsequently be defaced by vandals or stolen by another party.

We believe it is a sad commentary on our society that selfish and destructive individuals would act alone to deprive so many people of the simple enjoyment of these unique artworks and we sincerely hope that those responsible will do the right thing and return these works immediately.

In addition, AllVoices is asking members of the Los Angeles and San Diego Communities as well as people in adjacent areas to photograph items that are either known or believed to be originally Banksy artwork so that we may collect and preserve the images as presented in their original context in the event that these images are later stolen or defaced.



Finally, we are requesting commentary from the community at large as well as from Banksy himself. We would like to get the opinion of the community on what is transpiring with these important artworks. If you're Banksy, or one of his official representatives, we would welcome your point of view. Further we would gladly give you a prominent position on the AllVoices website so that you can share your thoughts with millions of our readers from all over the world.

If you know of or are responsible for the removal and/or theft of a verifiable work of Banksy art, please contact us at AllVoices to discuss terms for the return of the art. If you wish to share your thoughts on this matter, please email us at the address below, or comment on the post associated with this open letter. Lastly, if you are Banksy, please get in touch with us so that we can provide you with a means of accessing our site so that you can easily post whatever messages you'd like to share with people that love, respect and appreciate your art.

Tips and information concerning the return of Banksy art should be directed to: savebanksy@allvoices.com

Sincerely,

AllVoices Editorial Staff and Management