

*Artworks by Thierry Guetta (aka Mr Brainwash)*

*2009 - 2021*



*Body of Work*

*(Can be used for Independent Oral Presentation or HL Essay)*

## Contextual Information / Timeline

- Thierry Guetta, otherwise known as Mr. Brainwash, was born in France in 1966. Formerly a videographer and owner of a vintage clothes store, Guetta was introduced to the street art scene in the late '90s on a trip to Paris. After encouragement from Banksy to pursue a career in art, Thierry Guetta swiftly reinvented himself as artist 'Mr. Brainwash'.
- Mr. Brainwash was the main feature of Banksy's award-winning documentary, *Exit Through the Gift Shop* (2010). The documentary follows Thierry Guetta as he becomes increasingly involved in street art and its surrounding culture. The film features cameos from a whole host of established street artists such as Shepard Fairey and even the elusive Banksy himself. The climax of the documentary sees Guetta transforming into Mr. Brainwash and launching his street art career.
- The documentary premiered at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival and went on to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Following the film's release, Mr. Brainwash was catapulted into the public eye and his artistic career has thrived ever since. Many critics remain sceptical about whether or not Mr. Brainwash is a PR stunt engineered by Banksy. However, on several occasions, when asked on the topic, Banksy has insisted that Mr. Brainwash is an authentic and independent artist.

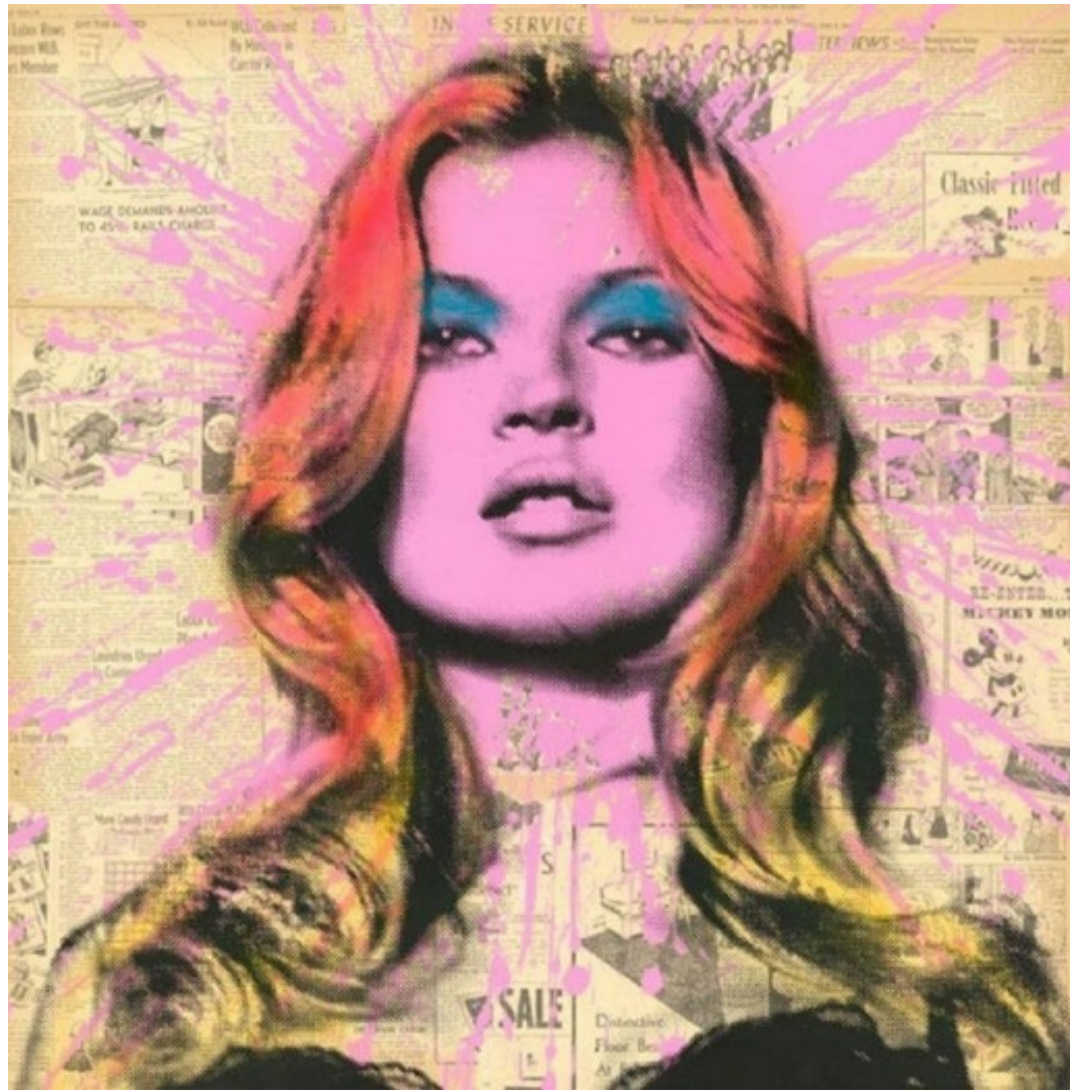
- Over the past 10 years, Mr. Brainwash has expanded into the world of collaborations. He has partnered with Coachella, Mercedes-Benz and Marvel Comics, to name just a few. In 2015, Mr. Brainwash was commissioned to create a billboard celebrating the 100th anniversary of Coca-Cola in Times Square, New York. The soft drink company has had a continuous, long-standing billboard in Times Square for more than 80 years and it was one of the first electric outdoor advertisements in history. Mr. Brainwash's campaign played over the holiday season, celebrating the iconic American brand using only red, white and black. The collaboration with the brand also paid homage to Mr. Brainwash's pop art roots with Coca-Cola being the main feature of many of Andy Warhol's works.
- From musicians to fashion icons, Mr. Brainwash has been collected by the world's rich and famous. Johnny Depp, Lindsay Lohan, and Kim Kardashian have all bought his works, with the artist even making a cameo on *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*. In addition to actors and reality stars supporting the artist, famous musicians such as Michael Jackson and Madonna all are known to have avidly collected his work. Madonna commissioned Mr. Brainwash to design the cover for her 2015 album *Celebration*.



Art Is Not A Crime 2009



Spock Monroe 2010



Cover Girl – Kate Moss 2011



Mickey and Minnie 2014



Champ 2016





Banksy Thrower 2017



Not Guilty 2019



Everyday Life – Follow Your Dreams 2020



Einstein 2020



Helping Hand – Snopy and Banksy Thrower 2020



Brother's Advice – Love Is The Answer 2021



Juxtapose Red 2021



Smile – Life Is Beautiful 2021





No Posts, No Bills 2021



Flowerh\$ 2021

## Appendix 1

Source: <https://the-talks.com/interview/mr-brainwash/>

### ***MR. BRAINWASH: “IF I BELIEVE IT, IT’S ART FOR ME”***

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#### **Mr. Brainwash, are you an art piece by Banksy?**

What's an art piece? Maybe I am. If you think about it, why not? I'm real; I am who I am. I'm continuing. What you see now is mine, Banksy has nothing to do with it. I'm here, it's me. My life is my life; nobody's going to take that from me. His life is his life. I mean, we have a connection, we have something that connected us for a movie, but life goes on.

**Do you introduce yourself as Mr. Brainwash or Thierry Guetta?**

Both names are the same - Mr. Brainwash a.k.a. Thierry Guetta. People know me as both names. It's the same person.

**What is the most important thing you've learned from Banksy?**

If I learned anything from him, it would be passion. You know, two people meet each other and they connect. That's why there is a movie about it because there was a connection from him to me and me to him. There is this connection that made something.

**Were you ever tempted to tell people who he really is? A lot of people are interested in that and would pay a lot of money.**

I don't get bought out. I'm a real person with real trust and that's how it is. You don't need to know; it's not going to make a difference if you know. It's just going to serve a little problem in your head but it doesn't make a difference.

**How do you feel about Banksy stealing your film?**

He didn't steal my film.

**So you let him have it?**

No, we were involved together.

**But it was your footage that he then turned into a movie.**

So? It doesn't matter. It's that kind of film; he kind of put it together. It's teamwork. It's something that is done. A movie is not done by one person, it's done with a lot of people. The editor did his work, the filmmaker did his work – it's a whole thing all together.

**Were there moments when you thought that this whole thing would go wrong and not work out?**

I didn't care, you know. I mean I go all the way and whatever happens happens. At least I don't regret that I didn't do it.

**But there was money involved, right?**

There is money involved. But money you can always make back. I think in life a situation cannot happen all the time. You have one moment in life that you decide to do something and you go all the way. I work with a passion and my passion is what drives me into craziness and sometimes craziness makes you do things that you don't do normally.

**Has making money changed the way you make art?**

No, sometimes art without money is better art. Sometimes you do something better without money so money doesn't make a difference. Money makes it happen that you can do bigger things. You can fly, you can go anywhere. It's something that keeps you rolling and keeps you doing what you want to do in life.

**But without money you wouldn't be able to put on the exhibitions you do. You don't actually make the art pieces yourself, you have people doing them for you, correct?**

Not really the art, but some installations that's for sure. I have a mind that is bigger than what people think. Sometimes I want something that is 20 feet high and it's a television and I'm not going to be the one putting it together. It would take me the whole show to do it. So hiring some people to have what I have in my mind – it's whatever it is. I get things done the way that I want it. So it doesn't matter. Like, somebody who built the Eiffel tower, it's not the artist who is going to build it. He's going to have some other people that are going to build it for him and he's going to be there to see the evolution of it and I guess everything else too. Like building a building, you know? Some people have it in their mind, they design it, and some people help to create it.

**Can you draw?**

Yeah, you know I'm good for me. I don't know if I'm good for you. Art doesn't have any way – art is freedom and you can do it any way you want. I can take a bottle and put it on top of this table and say this is art. If I believe it, it's art for me, and it can be art for other people.

**So what is the goal of your art?**

What I want to bring to people is something that people can smile at and something that can be funny. It's not playing jokes or being funny, it's to be real and to do whatever you want. There are no rules in life, nobody can tell you the rules. You live your life and you're trying to be the best at it and you're trying to follow your dream and nobody's going to stop it.