

Blek le Rat.

Danseuse no 2, Blek le Rat, 2011, oil on wood.

1. Read the following cloze passage and complete using the word list below:

Born in 1951, Xavier Prou (known as Blek le Rat), was one of the first _____ artists in Paris, and is the founder of the International stencil art movement. During a trip to the United States in 1971, Blek was introduced to the 'wild style' graffiti prevalent in New York City, which left a lasting _____ on him. Inspired by what he saw in New York, Blek began painting the streets of Paris in 1981, choosing a different technique- the stencil- as a more appropriate for the French architecture. Blek's first stencils were _____, seen to be running along the walls throughout the centre of Paris. The rat, also an anagram for 'art', is in Blek's mind "the only animal to survive the apocalypse". In 1983 Blek began to paint life-size _____, which alongside his rats, have become his trademark and have influenced generations of street artists around the world. Blek considers his images as gifts to the cities of the world, raising awareness of social issues. His heroes are solitary individuals crossing through the urban space – women, children, the elderly and other _____ figures in an urban city. Dedicated to the idea of bringing art to the people, Blek often quotes the old masters like Caravaggio, Michelangelo, Guido Reni and Leonardo da Vinci. "I want the characters of the paintings to walk out of the museums to give them back to the people of the city" he says. In the mid 2000s, Blek's work _____ to become more overtly political. Following the kidnapping of French journalist Florence Aubenas in Iraq, Blek pasted hundreds of prints of her image around Paris. Her _____ appeared everywhere, from her work place at Libération, next to cafés and offices of major newspapers. This activation aimed to attract the attention of the _____ and politicians to raise _____ of her situation. This body of work was a defining moment for Blek, who says, "I became aware of my power and responsibility as an artist working in the public space". That same year, Blek began a series portraying _____ on the street, aiming to shed light on the issue of homelessness. Blek paints the same portrait of a young beggar around the world, from Europe, to the United States to _____, to challenge authorities, because "sometimes images have a bigger impact than reality".

Words:

Impression, Australia, portrait, beggars, stencils, black rats, evolved, awareness, media, Graffiti, contemporary.

2. Highlight at least 5-6 words you do not know the meaning of and add them to the table below, for homework you will need to research the definition and its meaning, write it underneath your Frame work in your VAPD.

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Using the **Subjective** and **Structural** Frame looking at *Danseuse no 2* by *Blek le Rat* answer the following questions in **FULL sentences** in your Visual Art Diary.

(Another interesting portrayal of the ballet dancer found its way closer to the top of the list. *Danseuse no. 2* is *Blek le Rat*'s most expensive piece no. 3. That's right it is the third most valuable artwork by the Father of Stencils ever to be sold at auctions. The piece was sold at Aguttes auction house in Lyon for \$36,000 back in 2011. And it was a great hammer price considering the high estimate was \$26,900.)

The Subjective Frame

Personal psychological experience

What is my first impression?
What do I see, describe?
What is it about?
What do I feel?
What am I reminded of?
Do I like it, why?
What emotions does the artist want to express?
In your opinion why did he create it?

The Structural Frame

Communication, system of signs

Describe the shapes, line, tone (light and dark)
What is the focal point, why?
What materials were used to create the artwork?
What style is the artwork? (Is it a painting, sculpture or drawing)
What year was the artwork created?
Why do you believe *Danseuse no. 2* was his most expensive piece?



Danseuse no 2 by Blek le Rat, 2011. Oil on wood, 150 cm by 150cm.

Have a go practical element:

Using a FULL A4 page in your VAPD you are to create your own stencil on your own social issue as discussed in class.

You can look at the following issues:

- Gender
- Rich vs poor
- Discrimination
- Feminism

You need to include:

- Speech bubble shape
- Multiple images layered
- Interesting composition
- Colour
- Outlining
- Paint choice- label the colours