The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Graffiti That's Art and Allowed: Alec Monopoly Comes to Moscow

By Ruth Moore

February 22, 2016



The American graffiti artist Alec Monopoly uses and pseudonym and scarves to conceal his real identity.

Los Angeles based street artist Alec Monopoly will hold a public lecture in Moscow on Thursday and paint a wall at the Winzavod Centre for Contemporary Art on Tuesday and Friday as part of the Viber Sticky Fingers "My City, My Vibe" contest.

Alec Monopoly, an alias used to maintain the artist's anonymity, is best known for his reinvention of the childhood icon "The Monopoly Man" and various other pop culture figures including Richie Rich and Donald Duck. Sometimes called the American Banksy, he has also gained acclaim for his interpretations of celebrities including Madonna and Michael Jackson.

Monopoly began tagging walls in New York when he was still a teenager, but he rose to international fame during the economic crisis when people identified with the social commentary in his artwork.



Courtesy of Alec Monopoly

The Monopoly Man images caught something of the zeitgeist in the U.S. during the 2008 economic crisis.

The Sticky Fingers competition is for new virtual stickers and emojis for Viber, an app and program that allows free texting, picture-sharing and phone calls to other network members. This particular competition is for stickers that somehow convey the "vibe" of cities around the world. Monopoly is one of the judges for the Viber's Sticky Fingers competition, which had scores of entries from budding Moscow artists.

In an interview about the Sticky Fingers initiative published by Talenthouse, which launched the Sticky Fingers competition, Alec commented on the public's perception of his artwork. "I started painting 'The Monopoly Man' in 2008 during the height of the economic recession, as a satire against capitalism. Richie Rich followed shortly after. The beauty of art is that people interpret it in their own way, and now I feel that my art has become more of a symbol of ambition and success and motivation."

For a non-traditional way to spend Defenders of the Homeland Day, head over to the Winzavod Centre for Contemporary Art. On Tuesday from 12:30 p.m to 4:30 p.m Monopoly will be painting a wall. He'll continue on Friday from noon to 4:00 p.m. All art enthusiasts are welcome to come and see him in action.



Courtesy of Alec Monopoly

Monopoly's bright, pop-art paintings look right on an inner city wall and in an uptown living room.

On Thursday at 7.p.m Monopoly will hold public interviews about his art and his involvement with the project at the DI Telegraph conference venue in the center of Moscow. He will also graffiti a canvas as part of the event. The DI Telegraph venue will be hosting an exhibition to showcase entries to the competition until March 3.

You can register for the public lecture on Thursday at ditelegraph.com/events/359. Public lecture held at DI Telegraph, 7 Tverskaya Ulitsa, enter via Gazetny Pereulok. Metro Okhotny Ryad.

Winzavod Centre for Contemporary Art, 14th Syromyatnichesky Pereulok, Bldg. 6, Metro Chkalovskaya, Kurskaya.

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Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/02/22/graffiti-thats-art-and-allowed-alec-monopoly-comes-to-moscow-a48279