

WALKING TOUR ARTISTS

Tate Modern presents an urban tour of site-specific art from a group of five Madrid-based street artists. The works all aim to engage the local community and visitors to Tate in aspects of the urban environment that are often overlooked or ignored.

Thank you to the following people and organisations who supported the project, f.a. projects, Bear Gardens Macro Investments – Empire Warehouse, Bear Gardens-Rose Alley Wagamama, Clink Street Hunter Penrose, Redcross Way The Ragged School, Redcross Way The residents of 81-95 Mint Street The Document Centre, Southwark Bridge Road Universal Tyres, Great Guildford Street Rail track and UNION Gallery, Ewer Street Carole Wright and Bankside Open Spaces Trust Southwark Council Culture Service

El Tono & Nuria Signs will be in the below parks between the 23rd and 26th of May:

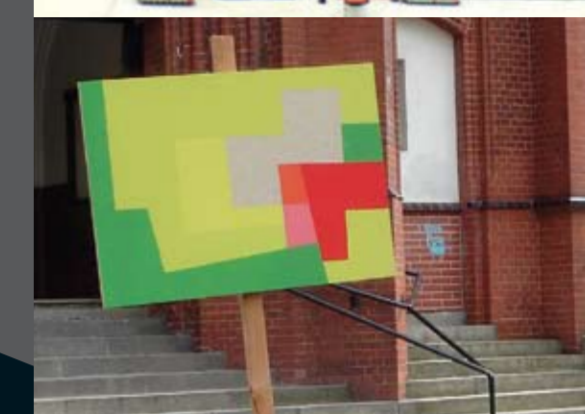
- Nelson Square*
- Gambia Street*
- Copperfield Street*
- Mint Street Park
- Ayer Street/Redcross Street

*just off Union Street



SPOK

Spok is closely associated with the New York tradition of Subway art, and, from his teens, was travelling around Europe and the United States with a spraycan. Already a renowned street-writer throughout Spain, he developed a remarkable photorealist style while studying for a fine-arts degree in his hometown of Madrid. Since then, his skills have been much in demand for decorating shopfront grilles across the city, or for commissions from advertising agencies and companies as diverse as Nike and L'Oréal. 'The work that we do just for ourselves... we're going to go and paint no matter what' he says. 'People don't understand, they say it's vandalism or you're wasting your time or whatever. But for me, it's the only true art form'.



EL TONO AND NURIA

Since 1999, the French artist El Tono and the Spanish artist Nuria have often worked in partnership, though both are also well-known for their solo work. El Tono's name (which means 'The Tone') relates to his personal signature, an image of a tuning fork. Although he started making conventional street art, he now creates geometric shapes that, he feels, contribute positively to the urban landscape: 'The whole point is to intrigue people, to make people reflect in some distinctive way, to produce something for people to wonder at'. Nuria's street art combines forms reminiscent of hard-edged modernist abstraction with softer colours. Her signature image is a key. The two artists usually collaborate for gallery commissions. Their joint work plays with undermining ideas of what is inside and what is outside the traditional gallery space, and often invites visitor participation. For Tate, they have made a number of street signs, which have been posted around the surrounding area. A note on the back of each sign invites you to bring the placard back to the gallery. In exchange, they will be signed by the artists and given back to you at the end of the exhibition.



NANO 4814

Born in Vigo, Nano 4814 has been living in Madrid for about four years. He originally came to street art from a skateboarding background, which gave him a strong relationship with the streets. 'Being there at the precise moment, being able to display on the wall what's in my head, that's why I do it,' he has said of his work. Among his most striking projects are his *City-Lights*, made from disused light boxes in rundown neighbourhoods or by abandoned buildings. He transforms the boxes, originally used for advertising, to carry poetic messages, such as 'It shines and disappears' – a line that captures the ephemeral and transient nature of street art itself. His street images include a series of recurring icons, most notably *El Choquito*, a little squid squirting ink, that he sees as 'a perfect metaphor for the writer in the street'.



3TTMAN

3TTMan's spontaneous, painterly style has affinities with both Pop art and cartoons like Tom and Jerry or Bugs Bunny, combining bold compositions and often garish colours with sometimes brutal imagery. Originally from Lille, he started painting on canvas, and only later began working on the street. His name derives from the French *trois tête man*, or three-headed man – a recurring figure in his work, which reflects a divided, often directly contradictory spirit. He talks about this three-way consciousness as 'three ways of expressing something in the same process, three ways of thinking in the same body'. In Madrid, he often targets billposters as a surface for his work, cutting away and painting over the original advertisement to transform commercial imagery into art. 'We're playing with the city, playing with what we've got around us,' he says. 'We're playing with advertising for advertising something else, a thought, an idea.'

