

Shredded Banksy goes under the hammer in London

A partially shredded canvas of one of British artist Banksy's most celebrated works is expected to sell for millions when it goes under the hammer yesterday. The artwork—now called “Love is in the Bin”—will be offered by London auction house Sotheby's at its contemporary arts sale. The work, formerly called “Girl With Balloon”, has an estimated selling price of £4-6 million (\$6-8 million, 5-7 million euros). The original canvas sold for nearly £1.1 million at the same location in October 2018 when it dramatically passed through a shredder hidden in its frame moments after bidding ended.

The stunt, which poked fun at the staid world of fine art, is typical of the graffiti artist's irreverent style after his work began appearing on the streets of Bristol in southwest England in the 1980s. It was the latest in a long history of unpredictable moves for the provocative guerilla artist, whose work has appeared across Britain and around the world. The partially shredded canvas shows a small child reaching up toward a heart-shaped red bal-

loon. The original, which first appeared on a wall in east London, has been reproduced endlessly in prints and online, and appropriated by some of the world's best-known brands.

It had been called one of the most significant artworks of the early 21st century in the British press, before the shredded version was granted a new certificate and date by Pest Control, Banksy's authentication body, and given the new title. Alex Branczik, Sotheby's contemporary art chairman, said Banksy's stunt at its last sale “did not so much destroy an artwork by shredding it, but instead created one”. “Today, this piece is considered heir to a venerated legacy of anti-establishment art,” he added, calling it “the ultimate Banksy artwork and a true icon of recent art history”. His latest works have appeared recently in several British seaside towns. Meanwhile in March, a work honoring caregivers during the coronavirus pandemic fetched a record £14.4 million at auction, which was donated to the state-run National Health Service (NHS). — AFP



In this file photo assistants pose alongside an artwork titled ‘Love is the Bin’ by British street artist Banksy during a photocall at Sotheby's auction house in central London. — AFP

Rolling Stones drop hit ‘Brown Sugar’ from US tour

The Rolling Stones have cut their popular track “Brown Sugar” from their US tour, at least for now, in the wake of criticism over its lyrics referring to slavery. “You picked up on that, huh?” Keith Richards told the Los Angeles Times in a recent interview, when asked about the song's absence at the British band's stadium shows. “I'm trying to figure out with the sisters quite where the beef is. Didn't they understand this was a song about the horrors of slavery? But they're trying to bury it. At the moment I don't want to get into conflicts,” the superstar told the paper. “I'm hoping that we'll be able to resurrect the babe in her glory somewhere along the track,” Richards, 77, added.

The gritty rock chart-topper officially

released in 1971 opens with the lyric “Gold coast slave ship bound for cotton fields” and references beating enslaved people, and sex with young enslaved women. In recent years magazine critics and others in the industry have criticized the song as “racist,” including one writer for New York Magazine who called the track “gross, sexist, and stunningly offensive toward black women.” “We've played ‘Brown Sugar’ every night since 1970, so sometimes you think, We'll take that one out for now and see how it goes,” frontman Mick Jagger told the LA Times.

“We might put it back in,” he said, adding “the set list in a stadium show, it's kind of a tough one.” In 1995 Jagger told Rolling Stone magazine that “I never would write that song now.” “I would probably censor myself. I'd think, ‘Oh God, I can't. I've got to stop’. God knows what I'm on about on that song. It's such a mishmash. All the nasty subjects in one go.” The Stones resurrected their “No Filter” tour in September after a long pause due to the coronavirus pandemic. They will play a string of dates into November 2021 including in Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Detroit. — AFP



(From left) Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, and Ronnie Wood of The Rolling Stones touch down at Hollywood Burbank Airport ahead of their shows at SoFi Stadium on October 14, 2021 and October 17, 2021 for their NO FILTER Tour. — AFP

Bali reopens to international flights but no tourists in sight

Bali reopened to international flights from select countries yesterday, including China, Japan and France, as the pandemic-struck Indonesian holiday island took a step toward welcoming back tourists. But authorities in Bali, which lost its primary source of income as tourism dried up, said there was no international flights expected yesterday. Foreign visitors must be vaccinated, quarantine in a hotel for five days and follow strict visa requirements under new entry rules for travellers.

“We're ready and waiting for international flights,” said airport spokesman Taufan Yudhistira. “But so far there's nothing scheduled today.” Bali's Ngurah Rai International Airport was open to travellers from 19 countries including South Korea, China, Japan, France, the United Arab Emirates, Dubai and New Zealand, authorities said. The partial reopening, however, does not include Australians—a key source of the millions of tourists who flocked to the palm-fringed island before the pandemic. —AFP



Adele's new album out November 19

The much-anticipated new album from Adele, her first in six years, will be released on November 19, the British singer announced on Wednesday. The recording of “30” began three years ago, she wrote on Twitter, at a time when her life was “a maze of absolute mess and inner turmoil”. Given that Adele has sold millions of albums around the world and won a slew of awards, including an Oscar and 15 Grammys, the release is arguably the most anticipated of the year. She broke a five-year silence with an interview for Vogue, published last week, that spoke of her “year of anxiety” and living like a recluse.

It began with two cancelled shows at London's Wembley Stadium in 2017 due to problems with her voice, and led to her retreating completely from the public glare. It was also during this time that her marriage fell apart. “I've learned a lot of blistering home truths about myself along the way. I've shed many layers but also wrapped myself in new ones,” she wrote in the Twitter post. —AFP