

## C215

First Retrospective Exhibition entitled "Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood"

October 17 – November 8, 2014

Paris

Opera Gallery Paris is proud to present the very first retrospective exhibition dedicated to the French Street and Stencil Artist, Christian Guémy, aka C215. In just a few years, C215 has become one of the world's favorite talents of the current Street Art generation – and one of the rare French artists to fully assume an international career.

The theme of this exhibition, entitled "Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood" spans the entire period of his ten-year career and includes all of the artist's favorite mediums: posters, cardboard, mail boxes, road signs, recycled wood...

The 35 works of art on display reveal all the intricacy of C215's favorite subjects: travelling, childhood and adolescence, street life and scenes, animals – including his famous cat, world history, literature, the arts and, of course, the artist's daughter Nina, who has become the painted eyewitness of her father's artistic exploration.

### ABOUT C215

Christian Guémy, aka C215, was born in Bondy in 1973. After his mother's death, he was raised by his grandparents in a low-income suburb of Paris. At the time, Christian's grandmother encouraged him to draw. The humble surroundings in which he evolved influenced and inspired Guémy. He wandered the streets of his city and started trying his hand at graffiti art. He quickly abandoned this endeavor, finding the genre "too artificial, not natural". He pursued his education in Paris, first studying art history and the history of art and languages in college before becoming a history teacher for *Les compagnons du devoir*. In 2006, at the age of 32 and after a difficult break-up, the artist decided to return to the street. His favorite model quickly became his daughter Nina and the many "faces without names": vagabonds, children and old people, political refugees and illegal aliens.

"I produce 'contextual' art: there has to be link between a work of art and the environment surrounding it, so that the public can identify with it. It's a form of courtesy." The heart-broken, abandoned characters the artist painted in the beginning of his career have now been replaced by faces filled with hope. In Amsterdam, Lisbon and Rome, his anonymous spray-painted faces decorate the streets, bringing new life and energy to working-class neighborhoods on the fringe. His site-specific works integrate the history and specific aesthetic of each location. "Cities have existed well before my art work, which is an add-on, something that completes and embellishes the place. It's an art form of transformation, constantly evolving." The artist is famous for saying "Street Art is not art *in* the street but art *of* the street".

In 2007, C215 moved into a studio in Vitry-sur-Seine near Paris, a place he likes to think of as an "open skies museum". Thanks to his personal involvement, the city of Vitry, a modest Parisian suburb, became the emblematic setting for Street Art in France, so much so that numerous amateurs the world over flocked to the town to discover an artistically innovative environment boasting the talented expression of national and international guest artists on the streets, despite official "no posting" laws.

In 2008, C215's international career really took off at the *Cans Festival* in London, following a highly publicized invitation by world-reputed Street Artist Banksy. This participation was the artist's first step towards professional recognition and allowed C215 to be considered today as one of the major artists of the Street Art movement in France and around the globe.

**MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS**

- 2015 Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris
- 2014 *Douce France*, Palais Bénédicte, Fécamp  
*The Days of Street Art*, MACRO, Rome  
*POW WOW*, Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii
- 2013 *Avant Garde*, Fine Arts Museum, Tudela, Spain
- 2012 *Prophets*, Saint-Louis Chapel in La Salpêtrière, Paris  
*Beyond Street Art*, Post Office Museum of Paris  
*Ocean Views*, Center for Engravings and Prints, La Louvière, Belgium
- 2011 *B. A. L.*, Post Office Museum of Paris
- 2009 *Stepanska Street Art*, French Institute of Prague, Prague

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS**

- 2014 Moscow Art Fair
- 2013 Nuart Art Festival, Stavanger, Norway
- 2012 Moniker Urban Art Fair, London
- 2010 Contemporary Art Biennial, Moscow
- 2008 Banksy's Cans Festival, International Festival of Stencil, London

**MAIN SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2014 *Douce France*, Itinérance Gallery, Paris  
*Back to Black*, Stolen Space Gallery, London
- 2013 *Mea Culpa*, Wunderkammern Gallery, Rome  
*Vedi cara*, Wunderkammern Gallery, Rome
- 2012 *Orgullecida*, Montana Gallery, Barcelona
- 2011 *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, Shooting Gallery, San Francisco  
*Borderline*, Signal Gallery, London
- 2010 *Community Service*, Itinérance Gallery, Paris  
*Midnight Dreams*, Signal Gallery, London  
*Retrospectiva*, Urban Painting Gallery, Milano
- 2009 *C215*, Pierre Cardin Gallery / Studio 55, Paris  
*Shoe Shiner*, Signal Gallery, London  
*Hummingbirds*, CARF Charity Association Headquarters, Bergen
- 2008 *Junk Store*, Ad Hoc Gallery, New York  
*Nina mon amour*, Plastik Gallery, São Paulo
- 2007 *The Wall*, Paris

**MAIN GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2013 *Ten Years of Wooster Collective*, Jonathan Levine, New York  
*The Public Baths*, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris
- 2012 *Urban Masters*, Opera Gallery, London
- 2011 *Shadows and Reflections*, Magda Danysz Gallery, Paris
- 2009 *Parallel Universe* (with Logan Hicks), Show&Tell Gallery, Toronto  
*Justice*, Bridewell Police Station, Long Arm Gallery, Bristol
- 2008 *Stencil History X*, Ink D Gallery, Brighton
- 2007 *Stencil History X*, Inoperable Gallery, Vienna

**SITE-SPECIFIC WORKS AROUND THE GLOBE**

Vitry-sur-Seine, London, Rome, Lisbon, Port-au-Prince, Sao Paulo, New Delhi, Essaouira, Dakar, Istanbul, Dublin, Brooklyn, Oslo, Amsterdam, Fez, Moscow, Athens, Brest, Tel Aviv, Naples, Marseille, The Vatican, Lagos, Ivry-sur-Seine, Marrakech, Sète, Carugate, Montry, Bergen, Toulouse, Picardie, Tudela, Milano, Lyon, Maastricht, Padua, Berlin, Prague, Mirleft, Casablanca, Zürich, Venice, Barcelona, Warsaw, Vienna, Bratislava, Brighton, Bristol, Newcastle, Jerusalem, Manhattan, Los Angeles, Mulhouse, Bassano del Grappa, Tangier, Stavanger, Le Havre, Madrid, Kingston, *Bring Back Our Girls*, Ministry of Justice, Paris, Paris Tower 13, Paris, *Street Art 13 Itinerary*, Paris

**ABOUT OPERA GALLERY GROUP**

Founded in 1994 by Gilles Dyan, member of the European Chamber of Fine Art Experts (C.E.C.O.A.), Opera Gallery Group is a network of international art galleries with 11 galleries located on 4 continents: North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Since its creation, Opera Gallery Group has striven to offer its prestigious international clients a unique access to a large variety of artists, including works by the Masters of Modern Art such as Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, Bernard Buffet, Henri Matisse, Lucio Fontana and Andy Warhol – to cite just a few – as well as the works of highly sought-after Contemporary Artists like Marc Quinn, Yayoi Kusama, Yue Minjun, David Mach, Gérard Rancinan, Lita Cabellut and Joe Black, amongst others.

Opera Gallery Group is a leader in the development and promotion of young contemporary artists, mainly with the support of prestigious partners: luxury brands such as Fabergé, Matthew Williamson, JEANRICHARD and Ferrari, luxury hotels like the Ritz-Carlton, Mandarin Oriental and Rocco Forte and internationally reputed charitable organizations such as Unicef, MTV RE:Define, Great Ormond Street Hospital and Mission Enfance.

Simultaneously, Opera Gallery Group is dedicated to guaranteeing and protecting the inheritance of established and reputed modern and contemporary artists via partnerships with major international museums and art centers such as the Heydar Aliyev Centre in Bakou, Azerbaïdjan and the Seoul Arts Center in South Korea.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

“Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood »

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A collection of 35 pieces revisiting the major themes of the artist’s career.

Inauguration by invitation: Thursday, October 16, 2014 starting at 6:30 pm.

Exhibition from Friday, October 17 – Saturday, November 8, 2014.

Gallery hours: Monday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm without interruption.

Admission is free of charge.

**PRESS:**

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**LIST OF AVAILABLE VISUALS**

1. Delhi Kids, stencil, spray paint and acrylic on wood fence, 66 x70 cm – 26 x 27.6 in.



2. America, America, stencil, spray paint and acrylic on antique map, 123 x 113 cm - 48.4 x 44.5 in.



3. Bring Back Our Girls, stencil, spray paint and acrylic on cardboard, triptych, 65,5 x 150 cm – 25.8 x 59 in.



4. We All Need Love, stencil, spray paint and acrylic on canvas, 78 x 144,5 cm – 30.7 x 56.9 in.

