

NOIR Artist press release

"When ART meets NOIR"

October 2017



NOIR Artist (Lucien Gilson) is a young painter and muralist from Belgium (Liège) who trained at Saint-Luc Liège. This 28-year-old artist creates paintings and murals of just about all sizes, across just about all media. There's only one rule, and it's not golden: it's NOIR. Everything is done in shades of BLACK. Paintings, drawings, monumental murals, wall art, optical illusions, decoration and urban design... His art "on the black" is startlingly powerful.

Drawing inspiration from advertising, pop art and Baroque art, NOIR Artist exposes our "fully sentimental" consumer society in the light of his obsession with pictures and his wholly individual way of seeing things.



NOIR artwork

From the moment you meet NOIR Artist, you get a palpable sense of the passion Lucien Gilson feels for art, whether old or new. However, the last thing this young painter from Liège wants to do is repeat what's already been done. Quite the opposite: he takes great pleasure in pushing the limits of pictorial creation by taking the iconographies that fascinate him and making them, unmistakably, his very own.



His pseudonym "Noir", French for "black", springs from the fact that he uses no pigment other than black, not even gray or white. Only NOIR, nuances of black, whether he's using acrylic paint, charcoal, black stone pencil or even aerosols.

But why this absence of colours?

"Colour is not important; for me, the highest form of purity is the contrast between black and white", Lucien "NOIR" Gilson confides. As a painter and muralist, NOIR Artist considers light as matter to be brought forth at the very heart of black.

Strongly influenced by the "fatal romanticism" of pop art icon Robert Longo, famous for his monumental ultra-realistic creations, the work of NOIR Artist strikes you dramatically the moment you lay eyes on it, and draws in you with its technical prowess and mastery of the art of illusion. It seems as though the hand of man has taken the camera's place. And yet...

NOIR Artist's paintings and murals are so infinitely detailed that, the more you look, the more fascinating they become. His manner of taking possession of the space allotted to him, whatever its size, throws monotony aside and allows him to proliferate points of view and interpretations.

In the Warhol 2.0 style, NOIR Artist seeks images that grab his attention in magazines, advertising, super-hero films, comics, online, in the news world, and also in more historical sources such as Baroque painting and Christian iconography. Each raw image is then cropped, mashed up, warped – and thrown into highly narrative visual carnivals. The visual associations between Baroque imagery and modern-day icons work like a hall of mirrors reflecting our era back to us.

"I grew up in the Internet bubble and inside the machinery of the consumer society. I've always been fascinated by the ephemeral quality of things, the speed at which information arrives and leaves again, the adverts at every street corner, on every magazine page. Our eyes become slaves, and we never even notice it. The themes of my work naturally tend towards the idea that modern man, little by little, loses his grasp of what is beautiful, in a world that every day assaults him with more and more superfluous information. In my work, there are no colours, nor are there any obvious links between my characters and the text. My creations are often saturated with information, there's very little breathing space. The eye cannot rest. For me, that's the best way to paint a "mirror" of society such as I experience it. "
(Lucien "NOIR" Gilson)

Video: Creation of the painting "Broken Dreams" (Work exhibited at the Mazel Galerie from 9th February 2017):
<https://youtu.be/snTAt3-GPBw>

NOIR and the wall

Aside from his personal work as a visual artist, NOIR Artist likes to pour his mural painting talent onto private, public or commercial spaces, bringing a good dose of soul to indoor or outdoor walls. Indeed, NOIR's format of choice is grand-scale painting, on vast empty spaces that give him maximum freedom to express his creativity.

NOIR Artist was quick to develop his own techniques. He created an infinite variety of shades of black and this opened up a world of possibilities, allowing him to shape the space, bring forth emotions and set up a dialogue of feelings between the place, its visitors and the work. On the walls, just like on canvas, the muralist shows admirable mastery of depth and light effects, so that his murals are stunningly realistic, with near-surgical precision of detail.

The task of balancing aesthetics, technical constraints and the tastes of the client ordering the work is, obviously, a collaborative one. The artist works closely with the client, creating the piece according to the client's desires and vision, and according to the layout of the site.



NOIR Artist's murals

NOIR Artist's long history of wall decoration projects has left him with a high level of experience. Mural after mural, he's sharpened his skills and created his own style, so unmistakably individual it can be recognised at a glance. NOIR Artist's work has already been commissioned by a number of shops, hairdressing salons, restaurants, night-clubs, as well as by architects and interior designers. He has also collaborated with brands and companies of international renown (Brasserie La Curtius, Philips Healthcare, Microsoft, Sony Music), PR agencies and institutional bodies (Ville de Liège, Liege Together, Belgian Chamber of Commerce in Poland, etc.)



Murals, events and exhibitions

Noir Artist loves an artistic challenge. He's had the opportunity to create murals and paintings at several events and exhibitions in Belgian and abroad. He currently has new artistic projects up his sleeve.

October / November 2017

"Legend", NOIR Artist's new solo show is held at the Mazel Galerie "Jeu de Balle" (Brussels) from the 20th of October to the 19th of November 2017.

August 2017

NOIR Artist exhibits his paintings in Singapore at the brand new "Mazel Galerie Singapore". A great opportunity for the young artist, Singapore has been emerging for several years as the new playground of contemporary art.

After opening a new exhibition space in Brussels (at the Jeu de Balle), the Mazel Galerie, of which NOIR Artist is a resident, opened its own gallery in Singapore. The inauguration of this gallery is marked by an inaugural collective exhibition entitled "From Belgium with Love!" NOIR Artist exhibits his new large format canvases and his recent drawings in the company of 4 other artists selected by the Mazel family (Antoine Rose, Bruno Timmermans, Valentin van der Meulen & Monk).

July 2017

Big fan of hip hop, NOIR Artist was invited to present French rapper **Booba's** portrait, during his visit to the music festival Les Ardentes.

Making of: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yg6sHMFhsSg>

June 2017

25 years have passed since the last studio album of **Roger Waters**. The founder and inspirer of Pink Floyd have finally returned to us this Friday, June 2nd 2017 with a new solo album entitled "Is This The Life We Really Want?".

To mark the occasion, **Sony Music Belgium** collaborates again with NOIR artist, the Belgian muralist. On June 2nd and 3rd, a monumental painting inspired by the recognizable artwork of the album was created in the train station "Gare du Midi" in Brussels.

May 2017

From 11th to 13th May 2017, NOIR Artist is taking part in the "**Sihlcity Street Art Festival**" in Zurich (Switzerland).

This major street art event is being held in celebration of the Sihlcity urban art festival's ten year anniversary. For this occasion, a dozen international artists have been invited to create murals, which will remain in full view for a month, to be seen by nearly 24,000 visitors.

April 2017

The "**Blackstar**" mural (portrait of David Bowie created the day after he died) is put to auction, the proceeds going to the big charity event, **Télévie**.

The Télévie operation, organised every year by **RTL Belgium** (radio and TV channel) raises funds to help the fight against leukemia and cancer in children and adults. Télévie has raised a total of 162,540,832 euros since 1989, and whole lot has gone into scientific research (Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique - FNRS). Télévie has played an important role in popularizing research with the public and has contributed to doubling the funds available to cancer research teams.

Every year, during a great TV "marathon", unique objects are sold at auction for Télévie. The idea is put objects up for sale that can't be found in shops, and that are chosen for their uniqueness or for some exceptional quality (perhaps they belong to a celebrity, or they've been used in an event like the making of a film, or they've been dedicated to someone, or have a special certificate...)

For the 2017 edition, Télévie has chosen NOIR Artist's "Blackstar" mural as the "kingpin" of the evening. This portrait of David Bowie is therefore to be sold at auction on 22nd April 2017 during the big Télévie night, hosted by the actress Virginie Efira.

<http://www.televie.be>

March 2017

The **Centre Commercial Bercy 2 (Paris)** called for candidates to take part in its "**Anamorphose Project**" and NOIR Artist was selected, along with 11 other mural artists from around the world. The jury for the Anamorphose Project was composed of several celebrities of the French art world, including artist Sébastien Arcouet, architect Alain Dominique Gallizia, and journalists Stéphanie Lemoine and Dora Moutot.

The Anamorphose Project gave the spaces of the Bercy 2 shopping centre over to the selected artists, who were entrusted with the mission of creating artworks involving anamorphosis and optical illusions. NOIR Artist, giving free reign to his imagination, created a mural light as air that plays on effects of dimension and shadow.

February 2017

NOIR Artist is now resident artist at the prestigious **Galerie Mazel** (Brussels). In late 2016, he took part in the collective exhibition "50 years after Walt" to mark the 50th anniversary Walt Disney's death.

From the 9th February 2017, NOIR presents his first solo exhibition at the Mazel gallery. This exhibition, entitled "**Fragments**" presents the drawings and large-scale paintings in which NOIR Artist flirts with new techniques and new materials and also veers more towards the abstract in his pictorial discourse.

"Fragments", Galerie Mazel, Brussels

Exhibition opening on Thursday 9th February 2017

Exhibition from 10th February to 15th April 2017

<http://mazelgalerie.com>

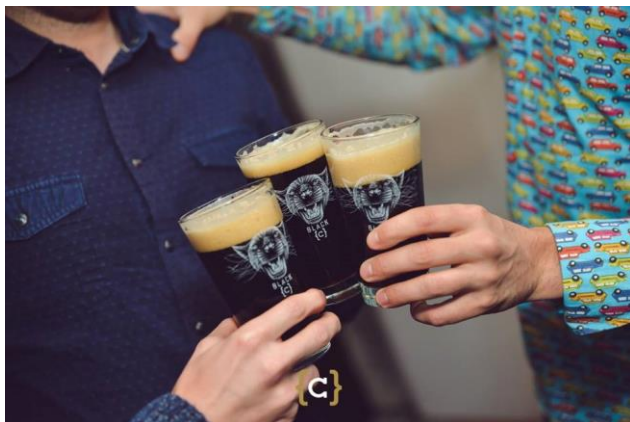


October 2016

NOIR Artist's **David Bowie** mural, created for Sony Music to accompany the release of the Blackstar album, was to exist only temporarily. After the rock star died of cancer in January 2016, this mural quickly became sacrosanct to his fans. A few months on, NOIR Artist and the Galerie de la Toison d'Or came together in an effort to bring the mural to life again. It was returned to Liège in January 2017, where NOIR restored it so as to put it on sale and donate the proceeds to a cancer research charity.

September 2016

Summer 2016, and the talents of Liège come together. The **Liège microbrewery {C}** (La Curtius) brings out "Black {C} ", the first stout of the house. The young brewers chose NOIR Artist to create the illustration for the bottles of their new beer. NOIR Artist and Black {C}: two worlds that were simply destined to meet. The Curtius team was won over by NOIR Artist's wholly individual drawing style and, of course, by the appeal of having such similar names, NOIR and Black {C}. NOIR Artist draws the roaring black panther that now adorns the Black {C} bottles and all its promotional material.



May 2016

In Spring 2016, on the occasion of the **Festival Métamorphoses** (inauguration of La Belle Liègnoise bridge and La Boverie museum), NOIR Artist is commissioned by "**Liège Together**" to create a monumental mural in Parc de la Boverie, to the delight of the crowds, who showed a particularly lively interest.

Making of: <https://youtu.be/ldVB5iODZj4>

At the same time, the Belgian program "**C'est pas le bout du monde**" - "It's not the end of the world" - (subsidised here by **Wallonia-Bruxelles International**) does a reportage on NOIR's work that's broadcast on **Rtbf** and more than 200 countries via TV5Monde, reaching several million viewers around the world.

March 2016

NOIR Artist is chosen by **Microsoft**, via the international street art collective "Pow Wow", to create a mural for the release of the new **tablet Surface Pro 4**, as part of a vast project destined to inspire artists all around the world thanks to the new technologies of today.

NOIR is selected to represent Belgium and create an original mural in Brussels. The artists selected (from New-York, Sydney, Melbourne, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Paris, Berlin, Tokyo, Lisbon, Madrid, etc.) are promoted on Microsoft's social media networks.



Video : Making of the mural painting for Microsoft :
<https://youtu.be/se4dk3MJUOA>

January 2016

NOIR Artist is chosen by **Sony Music Belgium** to take part in the promotion of **David Bowie's "Blackstar"** album. In just two days, the 8th and 9th of January, NOIR creates an imposing portrait of the artist in Galerie de la Toison d'Or (Brussels). He obviously could never have foreseen that the death of the legendary artist, announced on 11th January, would give it near-sacred status. The time-lapse video (see below) showing the creation of this mural is, in fact, the very last post on David Bowie's official facebook page before the announcement of his decease. This video has been viewed online more than 2.5 million times.



Video of the Making of: <https://www.facebook.com/davidbowie/videos/10153175474047665>

October 2015

NOIR Artist launches his **street-wear** line: T-shirts and hoodies printed with a selection of his artworks.

March/April 2015

NOIR Artist enters the "**Art & Care**" contest organised by **Philips Healthcare and Artsper**. With a piece entitled, "Progrès Infini" (Endless Progress), he's selected among the 40 finalists. "Progrès Infini" is exhibited in April at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris.

Making of: <https://youtu.be/5i9WWJKD9K4>



November 2014

As part of the **Belgian Days** project, NOIR Artist is commissioned by the **Belgian Chamber of Commerce in Poland** to conceive and create a monumental mural in Warsaw symbolising the trade and culture relations between Poland and Belgium.



NOIR Artist exhibitions

2017

Solo exhibition entitled "Fragments", Galerie Mazel, Brussels
Exhibition opening on Thursday 9th February 2017
Exhibition from 10th February to 15th April 2017
<http://mazelgalerie.com>

2016

Collective exhibition, "50 years after Walt", Galerie Mazel, Brussels

2015

"Ellipse", Galerie Cinema, Brussels

2014

"Ceci n'est pas un Salon" (This is not a Lounge), Liège
"Sur le Papier" (On Paper), Galerie Mazel, Brussels
"Chic and Cheap", Galerie Chic&Cheap, Liège

2013

"Chic and Cheap", Galerie Chic&Cheap, Liège

2012

"Chic and Cheap", Galerie Chic&Cheap, Liège
Biennial of photography, Galerie St-Luc, Liège

2011

Galerie MAC, Liège
"Chic and Cheap", Galerie Chic&Cheap, Liège

CONTACT NOIR ARTIST

contact@noir-artist.com

You'll find a great many of his creations and making-of videos on the website:

<http://www.noir-artist.com>

NOIR Artist is also very active on social media networks. Follow his daily news on the Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/noirartist1>

PRESS CONTACT

Catherine Colard / Copycat (Belgium)

cat@nobug.be

+32 495 357 351

Please don't hesitate, of course, to get in touch with Catherine for any additional information, to request images or even to arrange a meeting with NOIR Artist.

