

PRESS RELEASE

THIERRY NOIR

A RETROSPECTIVE

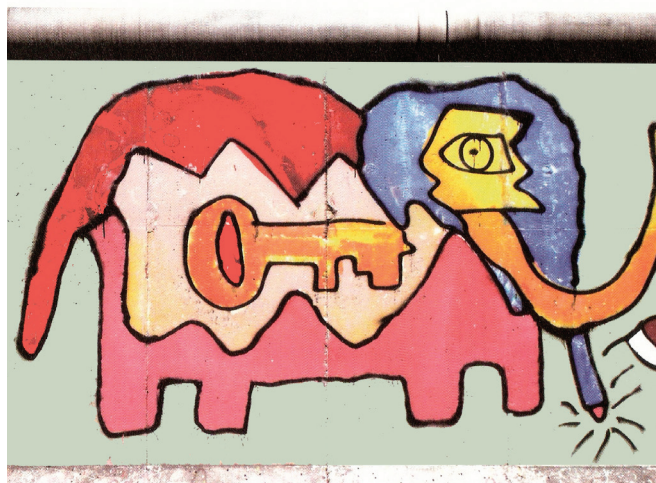
4 April - 5 May 2014
Howard Griffin Gallery

Howard Griffin Gallery presents a retrospective of the life and work of infamous artist Thierry Noir. In 1984, Noir was the first artist to illegally paint mile upon mile of the Berlin Wall. Noir wanted to perform one real revolutionary act: to paint the Wall, to transform it, to make it ridiculous, and ultimately to help destroy it. Noir's iconic, bright and seemingly innocent works painted on this deadly border symbolised a sole act of defiance and a lone voice of freedom. In this landmark exhibition at Howard Griffin Gallery in Shoreditch, the artist's first solo show, original works will be exhibited alongside rarely seen photographs, interviews and films, juxtaposing old and new to reassess Noir's enduring legacy and contribution to society.

Thierry Noir was born in 1958 in Lyon, France and moved to Berlin in 1982 with one suitcase. He settled in a squat at the border of East and West Berlin. One day in 1984 Noir spontaneously started to paint the Wall and continued to do so each day for five years with whatever paint he could scavenge from nearby construction sites.

Noir's exploits and highly distinctive visual language have become world famous and immortalised in popular culture such as Wim Wenders' 1987 film *Wings of Desire*. Noir is today being increasingly recognised as a key forerunner of the modern street art movement and in 2013 worked outdoors in London alongside renowned international street artists of the current generation such as Phlegm and ROA. Noir is also compared with contemporaneous New York pop artist Keith Haring also born in 1958 and who likewise began his career on the streets.

Noir's practice has a strong emphasis on line and aims to simplify forms to their most basic elements. This simplicity reflected the necessity of painting quickly outdoors in a hazardous environment. Noir reacted to his environment and



his monsters are a metaphor for the wall itself, each one relating to his experiences or feelings of what he calls a 'killing machine'. His enormous murals in vivid colours represented both a personal response to the oppressive environment he found himself in and a poignant political monument that is just as relevant in the 21st Century as it was at the height of the Cold War. Visually, his iconic style is the very embodiment of 1980s Berlin and conjures up a timeless nostalgia for this cultural era.

Thirty years later, Howard Griffin Gallery is bringing Noir to London, offering a unique opportunity to look back at the story of this notorious artist

This is the first solo show of Thierry Noir, who is a world renowned artist. There will be a small number of new Noir original artworks available as part of this exhibition.

Further information:
howardgriffingallery.com
info@howardgriffingallery.com
020 7739 9970

HOWARD
GRIFFIN
GALLERY