

PSI - CONCOURS BLANC SYNTHESE DE DOCUMENTS

TYPE CENTRALE – durée de l'épreuve : 4h00 -

18 décembre 2025

Rédiger en anglais et en **500 mots** une synthèse des documents proposés, qui devra obligatoirement comporter un titre. Indiquez avec précision, à la fin du travail, le nombre de mots utilisés (titre inclus), un écart de 10 % en plus ou en moins sera accepté.

Merci de rédiger une ligne sur deux et de faire deux marges (de part et d'autre de la feuille)

Ce sujet propose les 4 documents suivants :

- **Document 1:** un photomontage intitulé “Dalí, Why do you paint? Because I love art”, réalisé en 1954 par Philippe Halsman.
- **Document 2:** un article intitulé “Banksy street stall prints, sold for \$60, set to make small fortune at Bonham's” publié dans The Guardian, le 12 juin 2014, écrit par M. Kennedy.
- **Document 3:** un article intitulé “Love it or hate it? Artists on the crypto-art craze » écrit par Avishay Artsy, publié par UCLA, le 29 avril 2021
- **Document 4:** un article intitulé “Banksy tried to destroy his art after it sold for \$1.4 million. The shredded version just went for \$25.4 million”, écrit par Jonathan Edwards, publié dans the Washington Post, le 15 octobre 2021.

L'ordre dans lequel se présentent les documents est arbitraire et ne revêt aucune signification particulière.

Document 1 –



Philippe Halsman "Dalí,
Why do you paint?
Because I love art" 1954

(PHILIPPE HALSMAN ESTATE 2023,
IMAGE
RIGHTS OF SALVADOR DALI
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FUNDACIO GALA -SALVADOR DALI)

Document 2 – Banksy street stall prints, sold for \$60, set to make small fortune at Bonham's

It was not surprising that for most of the day the man selling black and white Banksy prints in New York got no takers. Coming from a pop-up stall in Central Park, among many others selling cheap tourist souvenirs, they were outrageously expensive at \$60 each. Gift shops were selling artists' posters, greeting cards, mugs and coasters for a fraction of the price.

A man who had bought two canvases from the stall, proved, by mid-afternoon, to be only the second customer for the prints.

But this buyer now stands to make a small fortune. The pictures have been authenticated by Banksy; they are going to auction at Bonham's, in London, and they could fetch up to £120,000. From the pile of canvases stacked up on the trestle table, and hung from its metal framework, the buyer had selected *Kids on Guns* – two sweet little children standing on a hillock of guns and bombs – and *Pooh Bear*, a version of AA Milne's winsome creation sitting weeping under a tree, honey pot (labelled with a dollar sign) discarded and his foot stuck in a bear trap.

The two pictures will be in Bonham's contemporary art sale next month, and the estimates are that they will make up to £70,000 and £50,000 respectively.

They were bought during Banksy's visit to New York last year, when he played hide and seek with both the authorities and fans. He created street art, including a shoe shiner polishing Ronald McDonald's boots, the location of which was revealed daily before admirers rushed to try to take selfies or the authorities went in to destroy the work. On one day the art site's message was: "Today's art has been cancelled due to police activity."

The Central Park stall was authenticated the day after the sale, with a message on Banksy's website saying: "Yesterday I set up a stall in the park selling 100% authentic original signed Banksy canvases. For \$60 each." The website also warned: "Please note: this was a one off. The stall will not be there again today." Perhaps he was anticipating an entrepreneur stepping in to fill the sudden demand for art in the park.

Gareth Williams, head of contemporary art at Bonham's, said the Central Park stall was a coup. "The fact that his paintings were original and were being offered at a tiny fraction of their true retail value, raises real questions about the perception of worth and the nature of art as commodity within the marketplace – something that the artist must be acutely aware of."

Banksy also reveals concerns about his ongoing struggle to strike a balance between commercial success and artistic integrity. He hints at the possibility of abandoning galleries entirely and permanently returning to his roots as a street artist.

"I started painting on the street because it was the only venue that would give me a show," he writes. "Now I have to keep painting on the street to prove to myself it wasn't a cynical plan. Plus it saves money on having to buy canvases.

"But there's no way round it—commercial success is a mark of failure for a graffiti artist. We're not supposed to be embraced in that way. When you look at how society rewards so many of the wrong people, it's hard not to view financial reimbursement as a badge of self-serving mediocrity."

He realizes, though, that his early triumphs and the resulting bounty put him in a unique position to dictate how his work is displayed. Starving artists aren't afforded the same luxury.

"Obviously people need to get paid—otherwise you'd only get vandalism made by part-timers and trust-fund kids," Banksy says. "But it's complicated, it feels like as soon as you profit from an image you've put on the street, it magically transforms that piece into advertising. When graffiti isn't criminal, it loses most of its innocence."

Maev Kennedy, *The Guardian*, 12 June 2014

Document 3 – Love it or hate it? Artists on the crypto-art craze

The rapid rise of crypto art and non-fungible tokens (NFTs) has sparked both enthusiasm and skepticism within the art world, particularly among digital artists who have long struggled with how to sell work that is infinitely reproducible. Unlike physical artworks, digital pieces can be endlessly copied, making ownership and value difficult to define. NFTs offer a technological solution by using blockchain technology to create a verifiable, tamper-proof record of ownership. Rather than owning the digital file itself, collectors purchase a digital certificate that confirms authenticity and provenance, while artists can earn royalties from future resales.

For many artists, NFTs have been transformative. They provide new revenue streams, greater independence from traditional gatekeepers, and direct engagement with collectors. High-profile successes have drawn widespread

attention, most notably digital artist Beeple, whose NFT collage sold for over \$69 million at Christie's in 2021. While critics dismissed the sale as a publicity stunt, it undeniably brought crypto art into the mainstream.

Emerging artists have also benefited. Nate Mohler, a recent design media arts graduate, began selling NFTs in early 2021 and quickly found success, with some of his works reselling at many times their original prices. Mohler views NFTs as the long-awaited validation of digital and video-based art forms that had previously circulated online without institutional recognition or resale value. His experience has allowed him to focus on art full-time, a shift mirrored by many creatives whose traditional income sources—such as live music visuals—were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Several social and economic factors have fueled the NFT boom. Pandemic-related job losses pushed artists to explore alternative income sources, while lockdowns left some collectors with surplus disposable income. Social media platforms, particularly the audio app Clubhouse, played a key role in building hype and community, enabling artists to promote their work, connect with collectors, and benefit from celebrity attention.

Despite these opportunities, NFTs have attracted strong criticism. The marketplace is often described as speculative, dominated by celebrities, opportunists, and scams. Even more pressing are environmental concerns. The energy-intensive process of cryptocurrency mining—especially on proof-of-work blockchains like Bitcoin and Ethereum—has raised alarms about NFTs' carbon footprint. These concerns have discouraged some artists, such as Matthias Dörfelt, from participating, citing climate change as an overriding ethical issue.

In response, both platforms and artists are exploring more sustainable approaches. New blockchains using proof-of-stake systems dramatically reduce energy consumption, and major cryptocurrencies have pledged to transition toward greener practices. Renowned digital artist Refik Anadol, whose NFT works have achieved significant resale value, acknowledges the environmental issues but emphasizes that artists can choose less harmful platforms. Anadol has also donated NFT proceeds to environmental causes, signaling a growing awareness within the community.

Beyond economics, NFTs have helped revive and reconnect digital art communities. Artists who once shared experimental work on platforms like Tumblr are rediscovering each other and monetizing creations made years earlier, fostering a renewed sense of collaboration. NFTs have also drawn interest from pioneers of early computer art, such as Rebecca Allen, who sees the current moment as overdue recognition of digital art's long history.

Still, inequalities persist. While some artists earn substantial sums, many others struggle to gain visibility, mirroring—and sometimes amplifying—the inequities of the traditional art market. Casey Reas, artist and co-founder of the NFT platform Feral File, remains cautiously optimistic. He believes NFTs will endure despite market volatility, predicting that speculative excess will fade while serious artists and collectors remain.

Ultimately, NFTs represent both promise and peril: a powerful tool for artistic empowerment, community building, and historical recognition, alongside unresolved issues of sustainability, speculation, and fairness. Whether loved or hated, crypto art has permanently altered how digital creativity is valued and exchanged.

Avishay Artsy, UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles April 29, 2021

Document 4 - Banksy tried to destroy his art after it sold for \$1.4 million. The shredded version just went for \$25.4 million.

The auctioneer slammed his gavel, ending a 2018 bidding war at Sotheby's in London. For \$1.4 million, someone had bought one of street artist Banksy's most iconic works: a silhouetted girl reaching for a red, heart-shaped balloon as it floats away.

Right then, the painting started beeping inside the packed auction house, and a secret shredder Banksy had built into the bottom of the picture frame whirred to life. Onlookers watched — eyes widening, mouths dropping — as “Girl With Balloon” slid down into its blades, slicing the bottom half of the canvas into dangling strips.

“The urge to destroy is also a creative urge,” Banksy wrote in an Instagram post after the event. Art prankster Banksy shredded a framed canvas at a London auction on Oct. 5, 2018. Moments before, the artwork sold for \$1.4 million.

On Thursday, three years after Banksy’s act of destructive creation, the anonymous buyer put up for auction “Girl With Balloon,” or rather, its successor — the retitled “Love Is in the Bin.” After nine bidders battled for 10 minutes, the semi-shredded artwork sold for \$25.4 million. That’s more than three times the auction house’s top estimate going into Thursday’s auction and more than 18 times what the spray-paint-on-canvas creation sold for in 2018 when it was intact.

“It has been a whirlwind to follow the journey of this now legendary piece and to have it back in our midst, offering it tonight in the very room it was created by the artist,” said Alex Branczik, Sotheby’s chairman of modern and contemporary art.

The prank was “a brilliant comment on the art market,” London art dealer Acoris Andipa told the New York Times in 2018, adding that if he were the buyer, he would leave the painting in semi-shredded condition. “It’s a part of art history.”

BBC News arts editor Will Gompertz called the stunt “brilliant in both conception and execution” in its indictment of the art world, one in which people aren’t disappointed that a piece of art was destroyed but concerned only with how that destruction has changed its value as an “asset.”

To highlight this, Gompertz said, Banksy staged “an attention-grabbing spectacle [the shredding] taking place within an attention-grabbing spectacle [the auction], which highlighted through dark satire how art has become an investment commodity to be auctioned off to ultra-wealthy trophy-hunters.”

“It will come to be seen as one of the most significant artworks of the early 21st Century,” Gompertz said.

The irony of the shredding, though, is that, instead of punishing a buyer looking to secure a Banksy by leaving that person with only a surprise heap of worthless tatters, it may have rewarded the purchaser with a far more valuable piece of art, Joey Syer, the co-founder of MyArtBroker.com, told the Evening Standard in the days after the first auction. Back then, Syer estimated the stunt could have added 50 percent to the artwork’s value.

Syer’s guess turned out to be far too conservative.

Over the past two decades, Banksy has grown into one of the most famous street artists in the world. The British graffiti artist, who’s maintained his anonymity over the decades, gained prominence through his many anti-establishment pieces, which he often paints secretly in public places. He has spray-painted two police officers kissing, one snorting cocaine off the ground, and several dressed in riot gear with yellow smiley faces. In 2019, his “Devolved Parliament” sold for \$12.1 million — the Victorian-style painting depicted the British House of Commons filled with chimpanzees weeks before Britain was set to leave the European Union.

Early in his career, Banksy combined graffiti with performance art. In a 2003 exhibit, he painted on the bodies of live pigs. During another at a London gallery in 2005 featuring cheekily altered replicas of famous artists such as Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh, he released 200 live rats in the gallery. That same year, he disguised himself so he could secretly install his own works on the walls of major museums in London and New York without getting caught.

Jonathan Edwards, *The Washington Post*, October 15, 2021