

# Street-art stroll



Street art is best appreciated in the Shoreditch/Hoxton borders, where new paintings, stencils and flyposters go up constantly, often under cover of darkness, says **Ossian Ward**

Time  
**30 minutes**  
Start **Brick Lane**  
Finish **Black Rat Press**  
Miles **1**



**1 BRICK LANE BAGELS**  
As you cover this walk, London grey will be replaced by resplendent multicolour. Every surface of the city colonised by an all-over tattooing of self-expression.

All you have to do is look up. It's transient fly-by-night vandalism, so be warned that some of the pieces in this walk may well not be there tomorrow and may already have been whitewashed or tagged over, part of a territorial graffiti practice known as 'lining' or 'dogging' someone else's work. As there's no accounting for taste, wandering the streets looking for good art on the walls is like going to a frustratingly uneven gallery show without a curator, one where the brash, shoutiest artists (rather than the best) usually prevail. Begin at Brick Lane by fuelling yourself at the bagel shops. Glance down Bacon Street at **Mighty Monkey's** mural and then carry on past **Brick Lane Gallery** and **NOG Gallery** (there's cash to be made by these artists in the



**Wall games** (from left to right) *Invader, Shepard Fairey and JR*

weekend for a collective graffiti jam called **Meeting of Styles**, before coming to the junction with Great Eastern Street. Briefly look up and left at the painted-up tube trains (now artists' studios) seemingly suspended above the buildings next to some peeling **Judith Supine** screen-print posters.

**3 CURTAIN ROAD**  
Walk down Great Eastern Street on to Curtain Road. Turn right at Bateman's Row until you get to an overhead train bridge. High up underneath there's a poster by US street artist **Shepard Fairey** warning that '**Big Brother is watching you**'. Street artists, unsurprisingly, really hate CCTV. Turn back to Curtain Road to soak up the huge black-and-white diving man and staring eye that covers the whole building in front of you, which is most likely by **JR**, from Paris. Wander up Curtain Road, but make sure you're on the left-hand side, being vigilant for a tiny blue-and-red-tiled work at eye level (opposite Dereham Place) by **Invader**.

off-street art business) and head right down Slater Street. This is a changeable graf alley, so look behind Cygnet Street car park at work by **Nylon** and **Sickboy**, then left at pieces by **Seks** and **Sno** and a huge '**Supervillain**' letter piece by **TRP**.

**2 ELEVATED TUBE TRAINS**  
As you come on to Bethnal Green Road, quickly cross the main road into Ebor Street for a stencil of **George Bush** about to blow his head off. Not great art, but a sentiment many of us can agree with. Turn back and continue along Bethnal Green Road to Shoreditch High Street. Cross over into Holywell Lane. Watch **London burning** in a huge, fiery red-and-black work painted one

**4 RIVINGTON STREET**  
Turn right on to Rivington Street and then left into Rivington Place for the huge old-school 2001 graffiti wall by **Mear** and **Stylo** behind the David Adjaye-designed gallery's smart café. Back on Rivington Street, you'll have to scour at knee height for **Nick Walker's 'Moona Lisa'** stencil, but stop before **EINE's** huge '**Scary**' mural under the bridge. Turn left into **Cargo's** garden and hasten past **Banksy's 'Designated Graffiti Wall'** and some more Shepard Faireys. If you've been inspired, pause for some street art shopping at the **Black Rat Press** at the back of the yard. I told you there was money in them thar streets.  
*Still unconvinced? Join me on August 15 at Tate Modern, when I'll be defending the humble art of the spraycan in a debate entitled 'Graffiti: Utopia or a Bit Boring?'*



**EAT AND DRINK HERE** **Cargo** 83 Rivington Street, EC2 (020 7749 7840/cargo-london.com).  
**Apostrophe** 42 Great Eastern Street, EC2 (020 7739 8412/apostropheuk.com).