

# OFFSITE-GALLERY @ VIC THE BARBER'S

185 GRAYS INN ROAD, LONDON, WC1X 8UE. [www.offsite-gallery.com](http://www.offsite-gallery.com)

## PRESS RELEASE MIK ARTISTIK: BAGS OF LIFE

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In the last 30 years Leeds-based artist Mik Artistik has drawn over 20,000 portraits on brown paper bags.

Now, an exhibition, called 'Bags Of Life', brings this extraordinary body of work together in one site-specific location for the first time – a working barber's shop in King's Cross, London, called the Off-Site Gallery (April 25-June 15<sup>th</sup>).

Artistik's exquisite works are all made with black biro on brown paper bags, and are drawn in public spaces, such as pubs. As pictures they offer great insights into his sitters, who represent a cross-section of the society which Mik Artistik doggedly and lovingly portraits.



The artist could be seen in the tradition of self-taught 'Outsider' art. Each portrait has its own essence and shows the expectation of each sitter: wonder, pity, concentration, wistfulness, or even displeasure. They have struck some observers as being similar to the 'Tronies' [Faces] of the Dutch school in the 17<sup>th</sup> century: fleeting impressions of the human countenance. Yet such explanations can't convey the absurd charm of seeing so many faces captured so beautifully on an object as throw away as a brown paper bag.

'Bags Of Life' is the first time Mik Artistik has allowed any of this unique collection to be viewed. This multiple portrait series offers a rare glimpse of this unique artist's exceptionally creative endeavor. It is a rare viewpoint that deserves wider recognition.

*"Musician, artist, surrealist and fantastic raconteur... Brilliant!"* Fiona Banner.

**Private view, 18.30- 21.00pm, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.**

**Mik Artistik will be giving a short talk @ 7.30pm, entitled: 'Gelosophy & Biroistism-' the power of the biro & gell-pen as a tool of survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century... Not to be missed.**

**NOTES TO EDITORS: PLEASE CAN YOU LIST THE FOLLOWING:**

Title: **Mik Artistik: Bags Of Life.**

Location: **OFFSITE-GALLERY @ VIC THE BARBER'S, 185 GRAYS INN ROAD, LONDON, WC1X 8UE.**

Date/ Time: **April 25<sup>th</sup>- June 15<sup>th</sup>.2014. Monday to Friday 11am-18.00pm.**

Tube: **Kings Cross**

Tel: **07949381819.**

High-Res pictures are available for print.

Off Site Gallery contact; Tim Burke 07949381819, [waywestpress@netscape.net](mailto:waywestpress@netscape.net)

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **MIK ARTISTIK: BAGS OF LIFE**

### **ABOUT MIK ARTISTIK**

Well known across Yorkshire as 'the brown paper bag man', Mik Artistik, (ageany 57), earns his living by drawing portraits (in Biro) of ordinary people on ordinary brown paper bags, Artistik also writes songs about his world, performing them in the 'Ego Trip Band', with Jonny Flockton on guitar, Benson Walker on bass and Mik singing. Mik Artistik's Ego Trip has drawn wild and enthusiastic crowds at Glastonbury, Latitude, Leeds, and Port Elliot Festival's, & bars and clubs throughout the North of England. *"Sensational." John Cooper Clarke.*

### **ABOUT OFF-SITE GALLERY:**

Art exhibits are considered *off-site* if they are presented outside the traditional art venues or other cultural institutions. This does not necessarily mean the work is uncensored. More specifically the term implies a project that is considered too perhaps too unconventional to be shown in a gallery situation. According to the critic Frank Kermode, off-site projects are "... by their very nature artistic gestures that have continuity with non-art environments, art that circumvents gallery space - usually detached and abstract - and goes straight to a public that often has little or no direct experience of art, thus democratizing *aesthetic opportunities*." Hence the working Barber's shop situation, where everyday faces are always being considered and observed.

'Bag's Of Life' is Off-Site Gallery's first exhibition.

Off-Site Gallery seeks to collaborate with artists who work outside of the studio context.

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Vic The Barber: Vic Johnson 07967035183

Limited signed edition prints will be on sale

Interviews with Mik Artistik by arrangement.

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Web: [www: offsite-gallery.com](http://www.offsite-gallery.com).

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