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These handout pictures taken in the park of the United Nations office in Geneva shows a giant land art painting by French artist Saype (Guillaume Legros) commissioned by Switzerland to mark the 75th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. Entitled 'World in Progress' the 6000 square meters ephemeral land art painting represents two children drawing their ideal world.—AFP photos

Hey, You! Rolling Stones warns Trump of legal action over song use

British rock legends The Rolling Stones have threatened legal action against Donald Trump for the US president's use of their song "You Can't Always Get What You Want" at campaign rallies. The band has appointed performing rights organisation BMI to try to stop him using the song, according to a statement given to US website, Deadline, overnight Saturday. "The BMI have notified the Trump campaign on behalf of the Stones that the unauthorised use of their songs will constitute a breach of its licensing agreement," read the statement, which was retweeted by the Rolling Stones official Twitter account. "If Donald Trump disregards the exclusion and persists then he would face a lawsuit for breaking the embargo and playing music that has not been licensed."

The letter is the latest in a campaign to stop Trump using the song at rallies which dates back to 2016. It was initially played at Republican party primaries. The BMI added that it has not yet received any response from lawyers acting for Trump. The Stones are not the first major act to call on the president to stop using their songs.

Earlier this month, the family of rock musician Tom Petty issued a cease and desist letter over Trump's use of "I Won't Back Down" at a rally in Tulsa on June 20. His family posted an open letter on Twitter saying the late singer "would never want a song of his used for a campaign of hate". Queen complained when Trump walked on stage to their anthem "We Are The Champions" during a Republican Party event in Cleveland, Ohio, in the run-up to the 2016 presidential election.

Pharrell Williams, Rihanna, Aerosmith, Adele, Neil Young and the estate of singer Prince have all hit out



In this file photo Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones performs as they resume their 'No Filter Tour' and North American Tour at the Soldier Field in Chicago.—AFP

after the use of songs by Trump. And singer Betty Buckley also recently urged composer Andrew Lloyd Webber to stop the president using "Memory" at his campaign rallies. Buckley sang the song in the original Broadway production of "Cats" in the early 1980s. "You Can't Always Get What You Want" was a track first heard 51 years ago, on the 1969 album "Let It Bleed". Written by frontman Mick Jagger and guitarist Keith Richards, it was voted by Rolling Stone magazine as one of the 500 greatest songs of all time.—AFP

France arrests six over Banksy artwork stolen from Bataclan

Six people have been arrested in France over the theft of an artwork by street artist Banksy commemorating the victims of the 2015 Paris attacks that was stolen from the Bataclan concert hall, sources said Saturday. The suspects were arrested across France this week after the artwork, an image of a girl in mourning painted on one of the Paris venue's emergency doors, was found in Italy earlier in the month, judicial and police sources told AFP. On Friday, two were charged with theft while the other four were charged with concealing theft, the sources added. All six were placed in pre-trial detention.

The door with the artwork was cut out and taken in January last year at the Bataclan, where Islamic State gunmen massacred 90 people in one of a series of bloody attacks in Paris in November 2015. French and Italian police said two weeks ago that they found the work—still in good condition—in the attic of an abandoned farmhouse in Italy's central east Abruzzo region.

Its theft—which was caught on surveillance videos showing hooded figures using an angle grinder to cut the door out—had caused "deep indignation," the Bataclan said last year. It was "a symbol of recollection and belonging to all: locals, Parisians, citizens of the world has been taken from us", the venue said.

'Symbolic and emotional value'

One of the French policeman who intervened in the 2015 Bataclan attack was present when the door was found, Christophe Cengig from the Organised Crime Unit at the French embassy in Rome told AFP. "It was a very emotional moment for my colleague," he said. "Coming here, finding it... it has a strong symbolic and



In this file photo Italian Carabinieri pose near a piece of art attributed to Banksy, that was stolen at the Bataclan in Paris in 2019, and found in Italy, during a press conference in L'Aquila.—AFP

emotional value, so we're very, very, very happy". The dramatic white stencil of a sad-faced girl on a black door was created when the artist "blitzed" the French capital with murals during a whirlwind 2018 trip.

Works by Banksy, known for their distinctive style, irreverent humour and thought-provoking themes, have been found on walls, buildings and bridges from the West Bank to post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans. At auction, they have sold for more than \$1 million.

Banksy is believed to have started out as a graffiti artist in London, although he has kept his identity a secret. The Bataclan door is not the only of his works to have been stolen from Paris. Others includes a mural of a businessman in a suit offering a dog a bone, having just sawed the animal's leg off, and an image of a masked rat wielding a box cutter, which disappeared from outside the Pompidou Centre. Some of the stolen works have since been recovered and fans have covered some of his Paris street art with Plexiglass to protect them.—AFP



Assa Traore (left), the sister of Adama Traore, a black man who died in police custody in 2016, and the father of Lamine Dieng (third right), a French-Senegalese 25 year-old who died after his arrest in 2007, shake hands during a demonstration against racism and police brutality and in memory of Lamine Dieng, a French-Senegalese 25 year-old who died after his arrest in 2007, on June 20, 2020, in Paris.—AFP

France's Assa Traore honoured at BET Awards

International activist Assa Traore, whose brother Adama was killed in French police custody four years ago, was given the BET Global Good award on Sunday. Traore thanked BET, an American television channel dedicated to African-American and minority people, for the award, calling it "an acknowledgment of our fight." "It's an acknowledgment for all the victims, for all the families who keep fighting for truth and justice," she said in a video message played during the virtual awards ceremony.

The award is "BET International's recognition of public figures who use their platform for social responsibility and goodness while demonstrating a commitment to the welfare of the global Black community," according to the channel's website. Before her brother's death, Traore, who has been dubbed the French Angela Davis after the US political activist, had never been someone who campaigned for a cause. But the 35-year-old mother of three was thrust into the heart of the global fight against police violence and racism by the death in Minneapolis police custody last month of George Floyd. For four years, she campaigned, organized demonstrations, spoke out publicly and gave numerous interviews after alleging her brother was killed by the police. An investigation is still ongoing. For a long time, the "Adama fight" remained a local battle unnoticed outside France. But the death of George Floyd has catapulted it into the global consciousness.—AFP

Acclaimed Russian director given suspended sentence after fraud conviction

A Moscow court on Friday handed outspoken Russian director Kirill Serebrennikov a three-year suspended sentence following a fraud conviction denounced by his supporters as politically motivated. Known for his daring statements and groundbreaking projects, Serebrennikov has angered Russian conservatives and criticised censorship of the arts in Russia, warning of a return "to the most pathetic Soviet practices". "Serebrennikov's rehabilitation is possible without a real prison term," judge Olesya Mendeleyeva said, adding that the acclaimed theatre and film director would have to pay a fine and be on probation for three years.

Hundreds of supporters who had gathered outside the courthouse broke into applause on hearing news of the sentence. "A huge thank you for your support and for the fact that you believe in my innocence," Serebrennikov, 50, told supporters, wearing sunglasses and a black facemask. "Respect social distancing, do not infect each other. Because you have to fight for the truth," he said. Prosecutors had asked for a six-year prison term for Serebrennikov, who was on Friday found guilty of misappropriating the equivalent of two million dollars in state funds meant for a theatrical project. The judge had said that Serebrennikov and co-defendants Yury Itin and Konstantin Malobrodsky "carried out actions directed at personal enrichment" that misled employees of the culture ministry.—AFP



Russian theatre and film director Kirill Serebrennikov speaks to journalists outside a court building in Moscow on Friday.—AFP



Performer La Kim Quyen (left) of the "Sai Gon Tan Thoi" (Modern Saigon) LGBT LoTo troupe during a lotto show in Ho Chi Minh City.—AFP photos



Photograph shows performers Nha Vy (centre left) and La Kim Quyen (centre right) of the "Sai Gon Tan Thoi" (Modern Saigon) LGBT troupe during a lotto show in Binh Duong province.

Vietnam lotto shows just the ticket for marginalised LGBT community

Each night that Nha Vy steps proudly on stage in her traditional Vietnamese ao dai, or sometimes mini dress and heels, memories grow fainter of the taunts she endured as a transgender woman in her rural village. Nha Vy is one of hundreds of LGBT performers in Vietnam who have found confidence, and a way to earn a living, through lotto shows, a form of entertainment dating back to the French colonial era and now wildly popular in the south. Like many sexual and gender minority people in Vietnam, the 26-year-old has faced stigma and discrimination for much of her life—despite a gradual change in social attitudes in the communist state.

"Not many people from the LGBT community have top class jobs... we generally don't make it to higher education because we are bullied at school," she told AFP, perching on a tired floor sleeping mattress in her rented flat in Ho Chi Minh City. "Even if I had a diploma, I would still feel inferior and not dare (to apply for an office job).

"So I do this performance to earn money... (but also) whenever I am on stage as a woman I feel at ease," said Nha Vy, who goes by this stage name as she sings, dances and deals out lotto tickets at her tri-weekly shows with the Sai Gon Tan Thoi, or Modern Saigon, troupe. Up until the 1990s, such performances were a regular part of rural life in the south but their

appeal began to fade until Sai Gon Tan Thoi burst onto the mainstream nightlife circuit in 2017.

Boosted by a feature film that year and the hugely successful documentary "Madam Phung's Last Journey" in 2014 that detailed the life of a monk turned head of a transgender troupe, Sai Gon Tan Thoi—and other modern rivals—started attracting more than a hundred people each night. Much of the audience at the shows in Ho Chi Minh City and next door Binh Duong province is young, and view the rainbow of swishing gowns through their phone screens.

'Just the entertainment?'

"We perform with our sweat, tears and blood—not just to sell fun but because I want people to understand this is a real profession," said La Kim Quyen, a transgender woman, who has been performing with Sai Gon Tan Thoi and other lotto troupes — known as Lo To in Vietnam—since she was a teenager. "I am happy with my life, with what I have achieved... earning enough for myself and my mother," added the 39-year-old, softly dabbing blusher on her cheeks ahead of the night's show.

Vietnam is seen as relatively progressive on LGBT issues—the one-party state lifted the ban on same-sex marriage in 2015 — although it stopped short of full legal recognition for the unions and a long-promised transgender law to allow legal gender changes has not yet materialised. In schools, misinformation about sexual orientation and gender identity is rife and some children are taught by both teachers and parents that homosexuality is a mental illness, according to a Human Rights Watch report published this year. Vuong Kha Phong, LGBT rights programme officer at Vietnamese NGO iSEE, said shows that help promote visibility of sexual and gender minorities can boost tolerance but warned that while they were "a good first step", they are not enough.—AFP